

SOCIOMETRICS PROJECT NO. 222

PSYCHOLOGICAL SCREENING INSTRUMENTS FOR OLDER ADULTS IN MEDICAL SETTINGS PHASE I

There is substantive evidence of significant psychiatric illness among primary care patients, including older adults, mainly in anxiety and depressive disorders (Mitchell et al., 2009) and a marked proportion of primary care patients with behavioral and mental disorders remain unrecognized by their general practitioners (Joukamaa et al., 1994). It is essential that primary care health providers are able to quickly screen older patients for such disorders during routine appointments. Psychological and behavioral screening instruments—applied to measure/quantify behaviors and symptoms—are designed for that very purpose and are intended to be used as tools for screening mental illness and behavioral and cognitive problems in clinical settings. In the past decades many research projects have been conducted that have resulted in the development of behavioral and psychological screening instruments designed for use with older adults, often specifically within a medical setting. While these screening tools have been shown to be effective, most have not been well used or integrated into primary care settings. This project aims to translate the research findings and resulting instruments from those studies into everyday clinical practice and health decision-making in geriatric medicine. *PsyScreen Sr.: Psychological Screening Instruments for Older Adults in Medical Settings*, will result in the development of a mobile device application (tablet, iPad, smartphone), that will assist health care providers in identifying and using appropriate screening instruments from a bank of carefully curated instruments designed specifically for use with older adults. The application allows for searching of the instrument bank, touch screen administration by physician or patient, provides guidelines for the health care provider based on results, and can optionally, provide tailored multimedia health education to the patient based on their answers. The health care provider can choose to trigger a standard set of assessments as part of the patient intake process, which can be self-administered by the patient or medical assistant, or the health care provider during the course of an appointment, can call upon the application to do a quick and effective screening, and provide immediate physician guidelines based on the results. In Phase I the project will develop 1) a needs assessment survey with medical professionals; 2) a curated database of screeners designed specifically for use with older adults related to mental and behavioral health, including the identification of mental and behavioral health topical areas and screener domains of most interest to health care providers; 3) a prototype version of the product which will include three sample screeners, including the search interface, automated and fully audio enhanced screener for use on the touch screen mobile device, multimedia educational content for the patient based on screener results, and physician guidelines based on patient responses; and 4) usability test of the prototype with older adults and medical professionals.

Sponsor: National Institute on Aging
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Grant No: R43 AG043072-01

Project Officer: John G. Haaga

Duration: 08/01/12—01/31/13

Budget: \$149,861

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