

## Caregiver Strain Index for Providers of Home Health Care

Overview: The Caregiver Strain Index is a questionnaire given to a person caring for someone at home. It can help identify problem areas that might benefit from changes or interventions.

Questionnaire: I am going to read a list of things which other people have found to be difficult in helping out after somebody comes home from the hospital. Would you tell me whether any of these apply to you? (PLEASE GIVE EXAMPLES)

- (1) Sleep is disturbed because \_\_\_\_\_ is in and out of bed or wanders around at night.
- (2) It is inconvenient (e.g. because helping takes so much time or it's a long drive over to help)
- (3) It is a physical strain (e.g. because of lifting in and out of a chair; effort or concentration is required)
- (4) It is confining (e.g. helping restricts free time or cannot go visiting)
- (5) There have been family adjustments (e.g. because helping has disrupted routine; there has been no privacy).
- (6) There have been changes in personal plans (e.g. had to turn down a job; could not go on vacation).
- (7) There have been other demands on my time (e.g. from other family members).
- (8) There have been emotional adjustments (e.g. because of severe arguments).
- (9) Some behavior is upsetting (e.g. because of incontinence; \_\_\_\_\_ has trouble remembering things; or \_\_\_\_\_ accuses people of taking things).
- (10) It is upsetting to find \_\_\_\_\_ has changed so much from his/her former self (e.g. he/she is a different person than he/she used to be).
- (11) There have been work adjustments (e.g. because of having to take time off).
- (12) It is a financial strain.
- (13) Feeling completely overwhelmed (e.g. because of worry about \_\_\_\_\_; concerns about how you will manage).

Responses	Points
No	0
Yes	1

caregiver strain index = SUM(points for all 13 items)

Interpretation:

- minimum index: 0
- maximum index: 13

- In the study population the typical score was 3-4 (mean of scores 3.5)
- A score  $\geq 7$  indicates a greater level of stress.

Limitation:

- It would be interesting to see how the index would perform with a more graded responses (Likert scale) rather than just black and white.

References:

Robinson BC. Validation of a caregiver strain index. *J Gerontol.* 1983; 38: 344-348.