

# Clinician Cognitive Review of the Patient-Rated Substance Use Checklist

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## SUBMISSION DETAILS

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**Methodological Issue Being Addressed** We present the results of clinicians' cognitive interviews of the novel Patient-Rated Substance Use Checklist (PRSUC), a patient-reported outcome (PRO) measure intended to assess the frequency of use, and functional impact of substance use disorder (SUD) symptoms. The PRSUC offers a multidimensional approach that integrates both symptom frequency and impact on patients' well-being across psychological, behavioral, and functional domains.

**Introduction** Many existing substance use assessments largely focus on consumptive aspects of substance use. The proposed novel Patient-Rated Substance Use Checklist (PRSUC), is at the stage of development where conceptual clarity, comprehensibility, and usability must be established. We are conducting a content validation study -a structured cognitive review of the PRSUC, using clinician feedback to refine the items.

**Methods** Clinician cognitive interviews were designed to evaluate the conceptual clarity, clinical relevance, and usability of the Patient-Rated Substance Use Checklist (PRSUC) through structured written debriefing and item-level review. 6 clinicians with expertise in psychiatry, psychology, or primary care, and with experience treating substance use disorders, participated in 60-75-minute cognitive review sessions. Participants then independently reviewed the PRSUC instrument, which was presented in its electronic (ePRO) format, and provided systematic feedback on item comprehension, wording, content validity, and response structure. Written probe reviews followed Willis' cognitive interviewing framework, focusing on comprehension, retrieval, judgment, and response formulation processes. Clinicians rated clarity, relevance, and feasibility of each item and indicated any redundancy, missing content, or potential sources of confusion. Findings from clinician feedback informed the refinement of PRSUC item wording, structure, and scoring conventions prior to patient cognitive testing.

**Results** Cognitive debriefing interviews with six clinician reviewers revealed several areas requiring refinement in the Patient-Rated Substance Use Checklist (PRSUC). Overall, the clinicians' responses indicated that while the checklist demonstrated adequate coverage of substance use-related experiences, it was a) overly lengthy (38 items), 2) conceptually needed refinement, 3) lookback time clinicians responses were disparate: suggested lengthening it from 1 to 3 months lookback. In contrast, others felt that the lookback should be shortened to a week. 4) The scale lacked definitional precision regarding key functional domains. The combined assessment of

functioning, behavior, and relationships within a single “impact” construct was viewed as conceptually needing refinement, as these represent distinct domains.

**Conclusion** The clinician cognitive review of PRSUC provided critical insights into the instrument’s conceptual structure, usability, and clinical relevance. Overall, the PRSUC was recognized as a comprehensive and innovative tool capable of capturing both the frequency and functional impact. The evaluation identified issues that must be addressed. Specifically, the integration of behavioral, functional, and relational outcomes into a single ‘impact domain’ needs further refinement. Revisions to the frequency—particularly the use of more precise temporal anchors will be necessary. The proposed one-month recall lookback may require a revision. The scale also will need to be shortened to include fewer items, simplifying language. In sum, the findings underscore the need for iterative revision of the PRSUC . The forthcoming phase of development should integrate both clinician and patient feedback.

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**Guidelines** I have read and understand the Poster Guidelines

**Disclosures** Larry Alphas, Larry Alphas Consulting

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