

VALIDATION OF SCREENER AND OPIOID ASSESSMENT FOR PATIENTS WITH PAIN

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Objective/Aim: There has been a need for a brief assessment tool for providers treating chronic pain patients to determine potential risk of abuse when prescribed opioids for pain. The purpose of this study was to develop and begin the validation of a self-administered, brief screening tool (Screener and Opioid Assessment for Patients with Pain; SOAPP®) for chronic pain patients considered for long-term opioid therapy.

Methods: A consensus of 26 pain and addiction experts was obtained on important characteristics of chronic pain patients that predict future medication misuse using concept mapping. Eight conceptual clusters were defined: (1) psychosocial problems, (2) psychiatric history, (3) substance abuse history, (4) antisocial behaviors/history, (5) doctor-patient relationship factors, (6) medication-related behaviors, (7) emotional attachment to pain medication, and (8) personal care and lifestyle issues. A 24-item SOAPP (version 1.0) was developed based on this consensus and was administered to 154 patients who were taking opioids for chronic pain. After six months, ninety-five of these patients were re-administered the SOAPP and interviewed using the Prescription Drug Use Questionnaire (PDUQ). Also ratings were obtained from staff of serious problems with medications and records were reviewed for urine toxicology results.

Results: A composite of the PDUQ, staff ratings and urine toxicology results we used to classify patients as positive or negative for aberrant medication-related behaviors. Of the original 24 items, 14 appeared to predict subsequent aberrant behaviors. Coefficient α for these 14 items was acceptable for a short scale (.74). Receiver Operating Characteristics (ROC) curve analyses yielded an Area Under the Curve (AUC) of .881 ($p < .001$).

Conclusion: These reliability and predictive validity figures suggest that the SOAPP is a promising step toward determining risk potential for substance misuse among persons with chronic pain. Further refinement and testing of the scale are planned.