Visual CARE Measure – Information sheet

The Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure is a consultation process measure has that been developed by Dr Stewart Mercer and colleagues in the Departments of General Practice at Glasgow University and Edinburgh University. It is based on a broad definition of empathy in context of a therapeutic relationship within the consultation. The wording reflects a desire to produce a holistic, patient-centred measure that is meaningful to patients irrespective of their social class, and has been developed and applied in over 3,000 general practice consultations in areas of high and low deprivation in the west of Scotland.

The scoring system for each item is ‘poor’=1, ‘fair’ = 2, ‘good’ = 3, ‘very good’ = 4, and ‘excellent’= 5. All ten items are then added, giving a maximum possible score of 50, and a minimum of 10. Up to two ‘Not Applicable’ responses or missing values are allowable, and are replaced with the average score for the remaining items. Questionnaires with more than two missing values or ‘Not Applicable’ responses are removed from the analysis.

The theoretical background and validation of the CARE measure can be found in:

- Mercer SW and Reynolds W J. Empathy and quality of care. BJGP 2002, 52 (Supplement); S9-S12.

The CARE measure can be used free of charge. The Intellectual Property rights rest with the Scottish Executive. The measure may not be used on a commercial basis without the consent of the author and the Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Executive Health Department, on behalf of the Scottish Ministers. If you would like more information, please contact;

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In order to allow people who may have difficulties with literacy and/or communication this adapted version, known as the Visual CARE Measure, has been has been developed by Joan Murphy at the Talking Mats Centre, Stirling. For further information about the adapted version please contact:

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