

Visual CARE Measure – Information sheet

The Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure is a consultation process measure that has 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, McConnachie A, Maxwell M, Heaney DH, and Watt GCM. Relevance and performance of the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure in general practice. *Family Practice* 2005, 22 (3), 328-334
- Mercer SW, Watt, GCM, Maxwell M, and Heaney DH. The development and preliminary validation of the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure: an empathy-based consultation process measure. *Family Practice* 2004, 21 (6), 699-705
- 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;

Dr Stewart Mercer
General Practice and Primary Care, Division of Community-based Sciences,
University of Glasgow, 1Horselethill Road, Glasgow G12 9LX
Email: Stewart.Mercer@glasgow.ac.uk

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 developed by Joan Murphy at the Talking Mats Centre, Stirling. For further information about the adapted version please contact:

joan@talkingmats.com

01786 479511