

THE KINGSTON SCALES

FOR GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRY ASSESSMENT

Thank you for your interest in the Kingston Scales. The scales are designed for the assessment of geriatric patients suspected of having a progressive dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease. The scales are: the Kingston Standardized Cognitive Assessment - Revised (Cognitive Assessment), the *Brief* Kingston Standardized Cognitive Assessment - Revised (Cognitive Assessment), the Kingston Standardized Behavioural Assessment (Behavioural Assessment), the Kingston Caregiver Stress Scale (Stress Assessment), and the Kingston Dementia Rating Scale (lower functioning assessment)

KINGSTON STANDARDIZED COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT - REVISED (KSCAr)

The Kingston Standardized Cognitive Assessment-Revised (KSCAr) is an instrument designed to assess elderly individuals suspected of having progressive dementias. The KSCAr is a broad range test that can assess a number of cognitive capabilities but concentrates on those commonly impaired in dementia. It produces a comprehensive assessment of memory, language and visual-motor functions – yielding a percentile score for each, as well as an overall total score.

Individuals can be compared to two groups of outpatients with progressive dementias (Alzheimer and Other Dementia groups) as well as a community dwelling normal elderly sample. Norms are also provided for a group of out-patients who were diagnosed with *depression*, but not dementia. While it is not diagnostic, the KSCAr alerts the user to the possibility of a dementing illness and raises the question of whether further evaluation is needed.

The KSCAr is a valuable tool as it provides an exceptionally comprehensive screening in about 30 minutes without requiring specially trained personnel. The psychometric properties of the KSCAr have recently been published (Hopkins R, Kilik L, Day D, Rows C, Hamilton P. 2004. The Revised Kingston Standardized Cognitive Assessment. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry* 19(4):320-326.)

Both the KSCAr and *Brief*KSCAr have been translated into French (L'Évaluation Cognitive Standardisée de Kingston - Révisée). However, separate normative data are as yet unavailable. Clinicians are urged to use caution when applying the English norms, and those interested are invited to share any data with the authors.

BRIEF KINGSTON STANDARDIZED COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT - REVISED (BKSCAr)

The *Brief* Kingston Standardized Cognitive Assessment - Revised is an instrument that has been designed to quickly screen elderly individuals suspected of having progressive dementias. It can assess a number of cognitive capabilities concentrating on those commonly impaired in dementia, especially in the early stages. Individuals can be compared to groups of outpatients with Alzheimer's or other dementias, as well as to a community dwelling normal elderly sample. A group of outpatients with depression, but without dementia, is also included. The *Brief*KSCAr can be used for follow-up assessments after an initial (full) KSCAr has been administered.

One of the main values of the *Brief*KSCAr is that it provides a comprehensive screening in a short period of time without special training or specially trained personnel. An assessment can typically be completed in about 15 minutes. (Hopkins R, Kilik L, Day D, Rows C, Hamilton P. The *Brief* Kingston Standardized Cognitive Assessment -Revised. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry* 20, 227-231.)

KINGSTON STANDARDIZED BEHAVIOURAL ASSESSMENT - KSBA(comm/ltc)

Since progressive dementias such as Alzheimer's disease are characterized by behavioural as well as cognitive disturbances, the Kingston Standardized Behavioural Assessment was designed to complement cognitive assessment tools such as the KSCAr, by providing an indication of the number of behavioural symptoms associated with dementia which are currently affecting an individual. Since both the placement and introduction of home support services, not to mention caregiver stress, are almost always triggered by behavioural and not cognitive issues, a behavioural analysis of the individual is of great importance and not something that can be gained as easily or systematically from other sources. The KSBA comes in 2 forms: one for the community living

individual - **KSBA(comm)**, and a version more suitable for use in long term care settings - **KSBA(ltc)**. The **KSBA(ltc)** is similar to the KSBA(comm) but 19 of the items, more related to community living, were replaced with 25 new items, making it more suitable for assessing institutionalized patients. The KSBA(comm) also provides caregivers with comparative data to assist them in making difficult decisions about the required level of care. The information can be used to facilitate the introduction of home support services which can help to alleviate the distress and sense of guilt caregivers often experience. Likewise, for patients already in long term care settings, the KSBA(ltc) allows staff to monitor and assess the behavioural status of an individual and institute further professional assessments or consultations.

(Hopkins R, Kilik L, Day D, Bradford L, Rows C. 2006 Kingston Standardized Behavioural Assessment. *The American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*, **21**: 339-346. Kilik L, Hopkins R, Day D, Prince C, Prince P, Rows C. (2008) "The progression of behaviour in dementia: An in-office guide for clinicians." *The American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*, **23**:242-249.)

KINGSTON CAREGIVER STRESS SCALE (KCSS)

The Kingston Caregiver Stress Scale is primarily a scale used to monitor change in a family caregiver's stress level over time. The scale is designed for community living lay caregivers, not institutional care staff.

Some caregiver stress scales try to determine how much stress caregivers "should" be experiencing by assigning stress values to caregiving activities. There is evidence that these group scores do not correlate well with how much stress an individual caregiver experiences. Also, the score for one person probably does not mean the same thing as the same score for another. The KCSS takes a more direct approach by asking how much stress the caregiver feels. The scale should be used to monitor change in an individual caregiver's stress over time. We have observed that caregivers can easily attribute their stress to different sources. Accordingly the KCSS consists of a set of ten questions that are grouped into 3 categories: care giving, family, and financial issues.

KINGSTON DEMENTIA RATING SCALE (KDRS)

The Kingston Dementia Rating Scale is a scale for use primarily with dementia patients in a long term care setting; usually with advanced dementia. It is a 21 item scale that can be repeatedly administered by staff to establish baselines and measure change. The scale assesses both behaviour and orientation. It typically can be administered in 5 to 10 minutes.

All of the Kingston Scales, KSCAr, BKSCAr, KSBA(com/ltc), and KCSS, are available in French. The KSCAr and the KSBA(com) are also available in Hebrew.

While the Kingston Scales are copyrighted, they may be copied for use free of charge. The authors would appreciate appropriate referencing when scale data is used in publications or reports. Resale is not permitted. For our own statistical purposes we would appreciate knowing where the scale is being used.

The Kingston Scales can also be obtained free of charge in PDF format along with an interactive training program on CD-ROM, from the authors, or can be freely downloaded from:

www.providencecare.ca → Clinical Services → Geriatric Psychiatry → Kingston Scales

If you require any further information about the Kingston Scales or if you have any questions about their use or scoring, please contact the authors at (613) 546-1101

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We welcome any comments or suggestions regarding these scales. We also invite interested clinicians to contact the authors to arrange a format for sending demographic data and summaries of test scores, for further development of normative standards, as well as suggestions for collaborative research.

We are also available for training workshops on any of the scales, either in person or by teleconferencing. Contact us for details. **Also, an interactive training CD has been developed for the KSCAr and is available by contacting us.**

Thank you again for your interest in the Kingston Scales.