

Welcome to the FORUM:

A new outcome measure for forensic mental health services

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Background

A recent systematic review identified that existing outcomes measures in forensic mental health services focus on risk and clinical symptoms, neglecting quality of life and functioning. Clinicians do not find these measures comprehensive, easy to use or relevant². Patients' perspectives have been consistently overlooked¹. Recent policy initiatives in several countries have emphasised the need for better outcome measures in mental health services.

Aim

To develop and evaluate a new outcome measure for forensic mental health services that is comprehensive, relevant and easy to use, which is dually rated by patients and clinicians.

Development of the FORensic oUtcome Measure (FORUM)³

Qualitative interviews and focus groups

15 patients participated in the in-depth interviews and 48 participants took part in seven focus groups. Thematic analysis yielded six domains, encompassing 42 individual outcome areas.



Themes emerging from the analysis

Delphi process

In the second round of the Delphi one more outcome area was added to the 'My safety and risk' domain, so that participants rated 43 outcome areas. 60 participants rated these outcome areas in the first round and 47 completed the second round. Average ratings in the second round ranged from 5.4-8.3 out of 9. There was agreement of 8 out of the top 15 rated outcomes between patients and carers and professionals.

Cognitive debriefing interviews

Draft outcome measures were developed based on the results of the qualitative analysis and Delphi process. These were tested and then refined in two rounds of cognitive debriefing interviews with patients in forensic mental health services. Alterations were made to the instructions, item wording and response options.

Patient and Public Involvement

A dedicated PPI group was actively involved in developing all stages of the project

Presenting the FORUM

The FORUM consists of a 20 question patient version and 23 question clinician version. Raters are asked to consider the period of the last month and rate items on a five-point frequency scale. The FORUM is designed to be used with minimal training and to be quick and easy to complete.

FORensic oUtcome Measure (FORUM) – Patient Reported (P)

This questionnaire is designed to help us support you in your care and to aid your recovery. You can use it to help plan your care with your clinical team. It may also help you to keep track of how you feel about your progress over time. There are no right or wrong answers. Please try to complete every question if you can. If in doubt, choose the answer that feels right for you.

Thinking about yourself over the LAST MONTH:

	Never/not applicable	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I have felt good about myself					
I have felt hopeful					
My life has felt meaningful					
I have taken part in activities I have found enjoyable					
I have had the relationships with others I have wanted (friends, family, significant others, staff)					
I have been actively involved in planning my care					
My mental and emotional health has been good					
I have been helped by taking therapies					
I have found taking my medication helpful					
I have slept well					
I have felt safe					
I have been aware of how my behaviour could affect others					
I have been actively working on reducing my risk of harm to others					
I have been able to trust others					
I have been able to ask for help when I have needed it					
I have been able to take decisions when I have needed to					
I have been able to make the plans that I have wanted to					
I have had the opportunity to develop the skills I want					
I have made progress towards greater independence					
I have made use of the support offered by mental health services					

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

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Patient rated FORUM-P

FORensic oUtcome Measure (FORUM) – Clinician Reported (C)

This questionnaire is designed to help you to support the recovery of your patient and allow you to track their progress over time with them. Please answer the questions using your own understanding of your patient, informed by recent multidisciplinary team discussions. Please try to answer all of the questions. If you are unsure about which answer to choose, please choose the response that first comes to mind.

Thinking about your patient over the LAST MONTH:

Patient's name:

	Never/not applicable	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
...has had good mental health					
...has had a good understanding of their mental health					
...has had good physical health					
...has taken their prescribed medication					
...has managed any side effects from their medication					
...has benefited from talking therapies					
...appears to have slept a good amount (not too little or too much)					
...has avoided misuse of substances (alcohol and drugs)					
...has avoided behaviours that reduce their safety					
...has managed difficult situations well					
...has accepted rules that enable everyone to remain safe					
Others feel safe around them					
...has had positive relationships with staff					
...has had positive relationships with other people					
...has taken part in activities					
...has actively participated in planning their care					
...has appeared confident, with good self-esteem					
...has appeared able to trust others					
...has asked for help when needed					
...has taken the decisions they have needed to					
...has made progress towards greater independence					
...has made use of the support offered by mental health services					

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

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Clinician rated FORUM-C

Validation study

A validation study was conducted in a regional forensic mental health service in the UK to establish the reliability and validity of the FORUM. All available inpatients and a purposive sample of outpatients were invited to participate. Clinicians who knew the patients well were asked to score the FORUM C. A broad range of validity and reliability analyses were performed.

Results

Sixty-two patients participated with a mean age of 41.0 years (standard deviation 11.3). Thirty-five clinicians provided information about these patients. The internal consistency for both FORUM-P and for FORUM-C was high. Test-retest reliability for FORUM-P was moderate and for FORUM-C was high. Inter-rater reliability, FORUM-C was high. For comprehensiveness, comprehensibility, and relevance FORUM-P and FORUM-C were both rated as good.

Characteristic	FORUM-P	FORUM-C
Factors identified by exploratory factor analysis	3	4
Internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha)	0.87 (0.80 to 0.93)	0.93 (0.91 to 0.96)
Test retest reliability (Cohen's weighted kappa)	0.44 (0.24 to 0.63)	0.78 (0.73 to 0.85)
Inter-rater reliability (Spearman's rho)	N/A	0.47 (0.18 to 0.69)
Comprehensiveness (average score out of 5)	4.0	4.1
Comprehensibility (average score out of 5)	4.6	4.5
Relevance (average score out of 5)	3.9	4.3

Summary of the reliability and validity of the FORUM with 95% confidence intervals in parentheses where appropriate

Conclusions and next steps

The FORUM is a promising new outcome measure for forensic mental health services, which performs well on several measures of reliability and validity.

Work is now needed to understand how the FORUM can be best used in clinical practice to support individual patients, their clinical teams, and the provision of forensic mental health services.

References

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