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A CASE REPORT USING THE
MENTAL STATE
EXAMINATION SCALE (MSES):
A TOOL FOR MEASURING
CHANGE IN MENTAL STATE

There is a need for a simple and brief tool that can be used in routine clinical practice for the quantitative measurement of mental state across all diagnostic groups. The main utilities of such a tool would be to provide a global metric for the mental state examination, and to monitor the progression over time using this metric.

We developed the mental state examination scale (MSES), and used it in an acute inpatient setting in routine clinical work to test its initial feasibility.

Using a clinical case, the utility of MSES is demonstrated in this paper. When managing the patient described, the MSES assisted the clinician to assess the initial mental state, track the progress of the recovery, and make timely treatment decisions by quantifying the components of the mental state.

MSES may enhance the quality of clinical practice for clinicians, and potentially serve as an index of universal mental healthcare outcome that can be used in clinical practice, service evaluation, and healthcare economics.


Available via CIAP

OCTOBER IS .... MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

This year’s theme is ‘Value Your Mind’. The campaign aims to encourage people to think about how mental health exists in their daily life and make it a priority. Read more...
CARE AFTER A SUICIDE ATTEMPT (CAASA) REPORT

A study conducted over a six-year period in NSW by The Black Dog Institute and the NHMR Centre for Research Excellence in Suicide Prevention (CRESP) reports one third of people presenting to hospital following a suicide attempt were discharged without any mental health follow up. Of the people that did receive treatment, 59% received a single session of 30 minutes. Respondents reported disinterested or negative staff attitudes, with many feeling their emotional distress was either not addressed or dismissed as attention-seeking.

Read the report...

The study was instigated by the National Mental Health Commission review—see below.

RECENT ARTICLES


Le Manach, Y. et al. (2015) Outcomes after hip fracture surgery compared with elective total hip replacement. JAMA, 314(11), 1159-1166


NB. Articles in dark blue or bold text have Australian content
DELAYS IN ACCESSING ECT: A COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO URBAN & TWO RURAL POPULATIONS IN AUSTRALIA

The medical records of patients who received an acute course of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) at two rural and two urban psychiatric hospitals in NSW, in 2010 were reviewed retrospectively. Main outcome measures were the time from symptom onset, diagnosis and admission to commencing ECT. Rates of use of ECT were also compared between rural and urban hospitals using NSW state-wide data.

There was a significant delay in the time it took for rural patients to receive ECT compared with urban patients when measured both from the time of symptom onset and from when they received a diagnosis. There were corresponding delays in the time taken for rural patients to be admitted to hospital compared with urban patients. There was no difference in the time it took to commence ECT once a patient was admitted to hospital. NSW state-wide urban-rural comparisons showed rates of ECT treatment were significantly higher in urban hospitals.

RESEARCH TRACKS MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING ACTIVITY

Recent research commissioned by Mental Health Australia has asked Australians what they’re doing to improve their mental health and wellbeing against ten key activities.

65% claimed they regularly keep consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs as low as possible, 58% regularly make an effort to eat healthily and 58% regularly make time to socialise with family and/or friends.

Only 30% of Australians say they regularly make a conscious choice to have time periods away from electronic devices, and 18% say they hardly ever or never get a good night’s sleep. Surprisingly young adults between 18-29, were the least likely to socialise with friends and family and, perhaps not surprisingly, the least likely to take time out from their electronic devices.

THE PORTRAYAL OF MENTAL HEALTH IN 3 MAJOR AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPERS

This study provides an updated examination of the media’s portrayal of mental health within the Australian context. The analysis suggests that positive mental health messages are commonly presented, particularly in tabloid coverage, which appears to place greater emphasis on wellbeing. While the issue was typically reported responsibly, psychiatric disorders were overrepresented in discussions of illness and were often discussed in relation to deviance. As this is the first study to examine the portrayal of wellbeing and illness, it may provide insight into how media representations of mental health affect society beyond those affected by illness.

SMOKING & RISK OF SCHIZOPHRENIA

An association between cigarettes and psychotic symptoms has been reported before, but it has generally been assumed that this arises because people with the symptoms take up smoking as a way to relieve distress, counteract the symptoms, or manage the side effects of drugs used to treat them. An interesting post on the Mental Elf blog discusses recent research which suggests that smoking may be a causal risk factor for schizophrenia.

INFLAMMATION: DEPRESSION FANS THE FLAMES & FEASTS ON THE HEAT

When combined with predisposing factors (such as childhood adversity and obesity), stressors and pathogens can lead to exaggerated or prolonged inflammatory responses. The resulting sickness behaviours (eg. pain, disturbed sleep), depressive symptoms, and negative health behaviours (eg. poor diet, a sedentary lifestyle) may act as mediating pathways that lead to further, unrestrained inflammation and depression.

Treatment decisions may be informed by attention to questions of how (pathways) and for whom (predispositions) these links exist, which are the focus of this article.

NEW AUDIO DIGEST CDS (PSYCHIATRY)

Neuroinflammation / Bulimia nervosa
44(17) 2015
Psychiatric manifestations of neuroinflammation / Update on the management of bulimia nervosa

LOCAL RESEARCH


BEWARE OF BLOTTING PAPER HALLUCINOGENS

Clinicians need to be aware that newer synthetic hallucinogens, such as NBOMes (dimethylphophenyl-N-(4-methoxyphenyl)methylphenamine derivatives) are available in Australia, and that patients may believe them to be LSD or “acid” on blotting paper. NBOMes cause prolonged agitation and hallucinations and, in more severe cases, seizures, rhabdomyolysis and acute kidney injury.

**2015 IG NOBEL AWARDS**

A study showing that pain while travelling over speed bumps is a sign of acute appendicitis won the 2015 Ig Nobel award for Diagnostic Medicine.

"I'm interested in evidence based medicine," the study author said, adding that, among patients with suspected appendicitis, 97% of those who later had it confirmed had reported worse pain when passing over speed bumps. While the test was not very specific, she said that it was better at ruling out appendicitis than several commonly used clinical features.

The discovery that all mammals over 3.3 kg take about 21 seconds to wee won the Physics prize. The Ig Nobel awards honour achievements that first make people laugh and then make them think.

Read more...

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**FIRST PETS, NOW COMEDY: CREATING HAPPIER MENTAL HEALTH WARDS**

Laughter, as they say, is the best medicine, which is why UK charity, Star Wars focuses on spreading comedy and humour. This includes installing “comedy rooms” full of games and hosting up-and-coming stand-up comics to perform in the ward.

Star Wars founder Marion Janner built the charity out of a list she wrote after she was discharged from her first stay on a hospital mental health ward. Regular comedy evenings was number 14 of the 75 ideas, which were intended to be practical and relatively simple improvements from more attractive presentation of food to a culture of saying ‘thank you.’ Janner says she was inspired by Monty Python's John Cleese, who once took a trip to India to meet a doctor specializing in laughter therapy.

Read more...

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**EMIL KRAEPELIN: ICON & REALITY**

This review article examines the work of German psychiatrist, Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926), who is credited as an inspiration for the current psychiatric nosology with its emphasis on observations and empirical data. The authors argue that the contemporary view of this individual does not sufficiently recognize his interest in scientific psychology and his skepticism regarding nosological categories, which he viewed pragmatically.


Available via CIAP

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**UPCOMING CIAP SITE VISITS**

The CIAP team will soon visit HNELHD. There are several information sessions each day, but times are slightly different at each venue, so check the CIAP website for your location.

The sessions will include information about accessing and navigating CIAP, an overview of the resources available, and information about education opportunities for CPD. All staff are welcome to attend.

26th Oct - Armidale Rural Referral Hospital Seminar Room
30th Oct - Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital Tutorial Room LG04, UnDNRH Building
12th Nov - John Hunter Hospital JHH Small Lecture Theatre 6067

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**ENJOY A COMIC? YOU MIGHT LIKE THIS NEW LIBRARY TITLE**

Nonfiction graphic novel explaining the physiology of the brain and describing theoretical and experimental developments that led to our present understanding.

*Neurocomic* / Matteo Farinella & Hana Ros

701.7 FARI 2013 / Mater