Getting it right: The Validation Study

VALIDATION OF A CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC DEPRESSION SCREENING TOOL FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

IMPACT

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have poorer mental health outcomes compared to non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous people experience higher levels of psychological distress, higher rates of self-harm and suicide are more likely to be hospitalised for or die from the consequences of mental health disorders than non-Indigenous people.

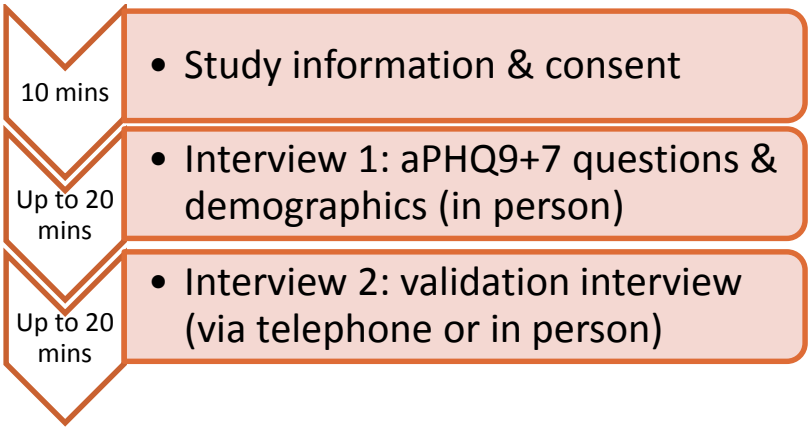
In order for primary health care providers to effectively identify and manage mental health disorders in the Indigenous community a culturally meaningful, free-to-use, widely validated depression screening tool is needed. A tool of this nature is not currently available.

Getting it right: the validation study is a national study aiming to address this gap, by validating an adapted version of the PHQ-9 (aPHQ-9) depression screening tool. We will identify whether to recommend the aPHQ-9 for use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinical care delivery, health services research and policy evaluation.

STUDY METHOD

This is a cross sectional study. We will work with approximately 10 primary health care services to recruit 500 Indigenous attendees in Australia's States and Territories. We will validate the aPHQ-9 tool against a gold standard structured interview for depression.

RECRUITMENT, CONSENT AND INTERVIEW PROCESS AT SITE



Each recruitment site has the option to access financial reimbursement for the cost of co-ordinating participant recruitment and consent (either an externally funded person or the funding can be used to backfill an existing staff member). Additional funding will be provided per completed aPHQ-9 assessment and interview.

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Patient Experience

On recruitment days a trained person will approach consecutive patients to discuss the study. Participation is voluntary and patients can withdraw at any time.

Consenting participants will complete the aPHQ-9+7 questions interview and demographic questions. This will take up to 20 minutes and can be completed while waiting for their appointment, after their appointment, or at a later time. Participants will then complete a second validation interview, over the telephone with a trained researcher, or with a staff member. This will take up to 20 minutes to complete.

The safety and welfare of patients is of primary importance during the study. Participant results will be provided to and checked by a nominated staff member each day.

Research and site staff will be trained in the study's Research Safety Protocol. The protocol ensures follow-up is provided in the event of an emergency, for example if a participant becomes distressed or indicates suicidal ideation or intent. We will work with sites to ensure depression, deliberate self-harm and suicidal ideation and intent protocols are in place.

Ethics & Funding

Getting it right: the validation study has received full ethical approval from The University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) [2014/361], Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council in NSW [1044/14], ACT Health HREC [ETH.8.14.207], Queensland Health Metro South HREC [HREC/14/QPAH/503], Central Australian HREC [HREC-15-287], Menzies School of Health Research [2014-2289], Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia [04-15-622] and Western Australian Aboriginal Human Research Ethics Committee [607]. As sites are identified in each state appropriate site and regional ethics approval will be obtained.

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Study Contacts

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