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HOW TO CHOOSE THE BEST SCREENING INSTRUMENT FOR PERSONALITY DISORDER FOR YOUR SPECIFIC PRACTICE

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Introduction: Personality disorders (PD) are common in psychiatric services and can adversely affect the management and outcome of mental illnesses. Therefore assessment of the personality is an essential part of initial psychiatric examination. To diagnose a PD takes time and competence. A screening instrument in the diagnostic phase can be a solution.

Aim: The goal of the study was to provide clinicians a powerful screening tool for personality disorders that is 'quick and dirty'.

Method: Nine screening instruments were studied in a prospective, observational, test development study with a random sample of Dutch psychiatric outpatients, using the SCID-II as the gold standard. There were three short questionnaires (Standardized Assessment of Personality- Abbreviated Scale (SAPAS), Iowa Personality Disorder Screen (IPDS), Short version of the SCID-II), three longer questionnaires (the SCID-II Personality Questionnaire, the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI), Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-PD/C); one short semi structured interview (Quick Personality Assessment Schedule (PAS-Q.) and two informant interviews (Standardised Assessment of personality (SAP), the Standardized Assessment of Personality- Abbreviated Scale for informants (SAPAS-INF)) involved.

Results: The three short questionnaires and the semi structured interview were very useful for determining the presence/absence of PD. The other instruments can be used in particular situations for example to determine a specific PD or if the patient is not able to accomplish the test.

Conclusion: Before deciding which screening instrument for PD is the best for your practice, you have to consider psychometric values as well as practical circumstances.