

Health of the Nation Outcomes Scale (HoNOSCA)

1. Rate each scale in order from 1-15
2. Do not include information rated in an earlier scale
3. For each item, rate the most severe problem that occurred during the period rated
4. As far as possible, the use of rating point 7 should be avoided, because missing data make scores less comparable over time or between settings.
5. All scales follow the following format
 - 0 no problem
 - 1 minor problem requiring no action
 - 2 mild problem but definitely present
 - 3 moderately severe problem
 - 4 severe to very severe problem
 - 7 Not known / Unable to rate

SCALE	PROBLEM	SCORE
1	Disruptive, antisocial, or aggressive behaviour.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
2	Problems with overactivity, attention or concentration.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
3	Non-accidental self-injury.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
4	Alcohol, substance or solvent misuse.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
5	Problems with scholastic or language skills.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
6	Physical illness or disability problems.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
7	Problems associated with hallucinations, delusions, or abnormal perceptions.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
8	Problems with non-organic somatic symptoms.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
9	Problems with emotional and related symptoms.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
10	Problems with peer relationships.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
11	Problems with self-care and independence.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
12	Problems with family life and relationships.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
13	Poor school attendance.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
14	Problems with lack of knowledge or understanding about the nature of the child or adolescent's difficulties.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7
15	Problems with lack of information about services or management of the child or adolescent's difficulties.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7

Principle Reference

Gowers SG, Harrington RC, Whitton A, et al. (1999) Health of the Nation Outcome Scales for Children and Adolescents (HoNOSCA): Glossary for HoNOSCA score sheet. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 174, 428-433.

Description

The Health of the Nation Outcome Scales for Children and Adolescents (HoNOSCA) is a 15 item clinician-rated measure modelled on the HoNOS and designed specifically for use in the assessment of child and adolescent consumer outcomes in mental health services. Ratings should be based on a thorough clinical assessment of the patient or client. In making their ratings, the clinician makes use of a glossary which details the meaning of each point on the scale being rated.

Glossary

1. Problems with disruptive, antisocial or aggressive behaviour

Include behaviour associated with any disorder, such as hyperkinetic disorder, depression, autism, drugs or alcohol.

Include physical or verbal aggression (e.g., pushing, hitting, vandalism, teasing), or physical or sexual abuse of other children.

Include antisocial behaviour (e.g., thieving, lying, cheating) or oppositional behaviour (e.g., defiance, opposition to authority or tantrums).

Do not include: Overactivity rated at scale 2; Truancy, rated at scale 13; Self-harm rated at Scale 3.

- 0** No problems of this kind during the period rated.
- 1** Minor quarrelling, demanding behaviour, undue irritability, lying, etc.
- 2** Mild but definitely disruptive or antisocial behaviour, lesser damage to property, or aggression, or defiant behaviour.
- 3** Moderately severe aggressive behaviour such as fighting, persistently threatening, very oppositional, more serious destruction of property, or moderately delinquent acts.
- 4** Disruptive in almost all activities, or at least one serious physical attack on others or animals, or serious destruction of property.

2. Problems with overactivity, attention or concentration

Include overactive behaviour associated with any disorder such as hyperkinetic disorder, mania, or arising from drugs.

Include problems with restlessness, fidgeting, inattention or concentration due to any cause, including depression.

- 0** No problems of this kind during the period rated.
- 1** Slight overactivity or minor restlessness, etc.
- 2** Mild but definite overactivity or attention problems, but can usually be controlled.
- 3** Moderately severe overactivity or attention problems that are sometimes uncontrollable.
- 4** Severe overactivity or attention problems that are present in most activities and almost never controllable.

3. Non-accidental self-injury

Include self-harm such as hitting self and self cutting, suicide attempts, overdoses, hanging, drowning, etc.

Do not include scratching, picking as a direct result of physical illness rated at Scale 6.

Do not include accidental self-injury due, e.g., to severe learning or physical disability, rated at scale 6.

Do not include illness or injury as a direct consequence of drug or alcohol use, rated at scale 6.

- 0 No problems of this kind during the period rated.
- 1 Occasional thoughts about death, or of self-harm not leading to injury. No self-harm or suicidal thoughts.
- 2 Non-hazardous self-harm, such as wrist scratching, whether or not associated with suicidal thoughts.
- 3 Moderately severe suicidal intent (including preparatory acts, e.g. collecting tablets) or moderate non-hazardous self-harm (e.g. small overdose).
- 4 Serious suicidal attempt (e.g. serious overdose), or serious deliberate self-injury.

4. Problems with alcohol, substance or solvent misuse

Include problems with alcohol, substance or solvent misuse taking into account current age and societal norms.

Do not include aggressive or disruptive behaviour due to alcohol or drug use, rated at Scale 1.

Do not include physical illness or disability due to alcohol or drug use, rated at Scale 6.

- 0 No problems of this kind during the period rated.
- 1 Minor alcohol or drug use, within age norms.
- 2 Mildly excessive alcohol or drug use.
- 3 Moderately severe drug or alcohol problems significantly out of keeping with age norms.
- 4 Severe drug or alcohol problems leading to dependency or incapacity.

5. Problems with scholastic or language skills

Include problems in reading, spelling, arithmetic, speech or language associated with any disorder or problem, such as specific developmental learning problems, or physical disability such as hearing problems.

Include reduced scholastic performance associated with emotional or behavioural problems.

Children with generalised learning disability should not be included unless their functioning is below the expected level.

Do not include temporary problems resulting purely from inadequate education.

- 0 No problems of this kind during the period rated.
- 1 Minor impairment within the normal range of variation.
- 2 Minor but definite impairment of clinical significance.
- 3 Moderately severe problems, below the level expected on the basis of mental age, past performance, or physical disability.
- 4 Severe impairment, much below the level expected on the basis of mental age, past performance, or physical disability.

6. Physical illness or disability problems

Include physical illness or disability problems that limit or prevent movement, impair sight or hearing, or otherwise interfere with personal functioning.

Include movement disorder, side effects from medication, physical effects from drug or alcohol use, or physical complications of psychological disorders such as severe weight loss.

Include self-injury due to severe learning disability or as of consequence of self-injury such as head banging.

Do not include somatic complaints with no organic basis, rated at scale 8.

- 0** No incapacity as a result of physical health problems during the period rated.
- 1** Slight incapacity as a result of a health problem during the period (e.g. cold, non-serious fall, etc.).
- 2** Physical health problem that imposes mild but definite functional restriction.
- 3** Moderate degree of restriction on activity due to physical health problems.
- 4** Complete or severe incapacity due to physical health problems.

7. Problems associated with hallucinations, delusions or abnormal perceptions.

Include hallucinations, delusions or abnormal perceptions irrespective of diagnosis.

Include odd and bizarre behaviour associated with hallucinations and delusions.

Include problems with other abnormal perceptions such as illusions or pseudo-hallucinations, or overvalued ideas such as distorted body image, suspicious or paranoid thoughts.

Do not include disruptive or aggressive behaviour associated with hallucinations or delusions, rated at Scale 1.

Do not include overactive behaviour associated with hallucinations or delusions, rated at Scale 2.

- 0** No evidence of abnormal thoughts or perceptions during the period rated.
- 1** Somewhat odd or eccentric beliefs not in keeping with cultural norms.
- 2** Abnormal thoughts or perceptions are present (e.g. paranoid ideas, illusions or body image disturbance), but there is little distress or manifestation in bizarre behaviour, i.e. clinically present but mild.
- 3** Moderate preoccupation with abnormal thoughts or perceptions or delusions; hallucinations, causing much distress, or manifested in obviously bizarre behaviour.
- 4** Mental state and behaviour is seriously and adversely affected by delusions or hallucinations or abnormal perceptions, with severe impact on the person or others.

8. Problems with non-organic somatic symptoms

Include problems with gastrointestinal symptoms such as non-organic vomiting or cardiovascular symptoms or neurological symptoms or non-organic enuresis and encopresis or sleep problems or chronic fatigue.

Do not include movement disorders such as tics, rated at Scale 6.

Do not include physical illnesses that complicate non-organic somatic symptoms, rated at Scale 6.

- 0** No problems of this kind during the period rated.

- 1 Slight problems only, such as occasional enuresis, minor sleep problems, headaches or stomach aches without organic basis.
- 2 Mild but definite problem with non-organic somatic symptoms.
- 3 Moderately severe, symptoms produce a moderate degree of restriction in some activities.
- 4 Very severe problems or symptoms persist into most activities. The child or adolescent is seriously or adversely affected.

9. Problems with emotional and related symptoms

Rate only the most severe clinical problem not considered previously.

Include depression, anxiety, worries, fears, phobias, obsessions or compulsions, arising from any clinical condition including eating disorders.

Do not include aggressive, destructive or overactivity behaviours attributed to fears or phobias, rated at Scale 1.

Do not include physical complications of psychological disorders, such as severe weight loss, rated at Scale 6.

- 0 No evidence of depression, anxiety, fears or phobias during the period rated.
- 1 Mildly anxious, gloomy, or transient mood changes.
- 2 A mild but definite emotional symptom is clinically present, but is not preoccupying.
- 3 Moderately severe emotional symptoms, which are preoccupying, intrude into some activities, and are uncontrollable at least sometimes.
- 4 Severe emotional symptoms which intrude into all activities and are nearly always uncontrollable.

10. Problems with peer relationships

Include problems with school mates and social network. Problems associated with active or passive withdrawal from social relationships or problems with over intrusiveness or problems with the ability to form satisfying peer relationships.

Include social rejection as a result of aggressive behaviour or bullying.

Do not include aggressive behaviour, bullying, rated at Scale 1.

Do not include problems with family or siblings rated at Scale 12.

- 0 No significant problems during the period rated.
- 1 Either transient or slight problems, occasional social withdrawal.
- 2 Mild but definite problems in making or sustaining peer relationships. Problems causing distress due to social withdrawal, over-intrusiveness, rejection or being bullied.
- 3 Moderate problems due to active or passive withdrawal from social relationships, over-intrusiveness, or to relationships that provide little or no comfort or support, e.g. as a result of being severely bullied.
- 4 Severe social isolation with hardly any friends due to inability to communicate socially or withdrawal from social relationships.

11. Problems with self-care and independence

Rate the overall level of functioning, e.g. problems with basic activities of self-care such as feeding, washing, dressing, toilet, and also complex skills such as managing money, travelling independently, shopping etc.; taking into account the norm for the child's chronological age.

Include poor levels of functioning arising from lack of motivation, mood or any other disorder.

Do not include lack of opportunities for exercising intact abilities and skills, as might occur in an overrestrictive family, rated at Scale 12.

Do not include enuresis and encopresis, rated at Scale 8.

- 0** No problems of this kind during the period rated; good ability to function in all areas.
- 1** Minor problems, e.g. untidy, disorganised.
- 2** Self-care adequate, but major inability to perform one or more complex skills (see above).
- 3** Major problems in one or more areas of self-care (eating, washing, dressing) or major inability to perform several complex skills.
- 4** Severe disability in all or nearly all areas of self-care or complex skills.

12. Problems with family life and relationships

Include parent-child and sibling relationship problems.

Include relationships with foster parents, social workers or teachers in residential placements. Relationships in the home with separated parents and siblings should both be included. Parental personality problems, mental illness, marital difficulties should only be rated here if they have an affect on the child or adolescent.

Include problems such as poor communication, arguments, verbal or physical hostility, criticism and denigration, parental neglect or rejection, overrestriction, sexual or physical abuse.

Include sibling jealousy, physical or coercive sexual abuse by sibling.

Include problems with enmeshment and overprotection.

Include problems with family bereavement leading to reorganisation.

Do not include aggressive behaviour by the child or adolescent, rated at Scale 1.

- 0** No problems during the period rated.
- 1** Slight or transient problems.
- 2** Mild but definite problem, e.g. some episodes of neglect or hostility or enmeshment or overprotection.
- 3** Moderate problems, e.g. neglect, abuse, hostility. problems associated with family or carer breakdown or reorganisation.
- 4** Serious problems with the child or adolescent feeling or being victimised, abused or seriously neglected by family or carer.

13. Poor school attendance

Include truancy, school refusal, school withdrawal or suspension for any cause.

Include attendance at type of school at time of rating, e.g. hospital school, home tuition, etc. If school holiday, rate the last two weeks of the previous term.

- 0** No problems of this kind during the period rated.
- 1** Slight problems, e.g., late for two or more lessons.

- 2 Definite but mild problems, e.g. missed several lessons because of truancy or refusal to go to school.
- 3 Marked problems, absent several days during the period rated.
- 4 Severe problems, absent most or all days. Include school suspension, exclusion or expulsion for any cause during the period rated

Scales 14 and 15 are concerned with problems for the **child, parent or carer** relating to lack of information or access to services. These are not direct measures of the child's mental health but changes here may result in long-term benefits for the child.

14. Problems with knowledge or understanding about the nature of the child or adolescent's difficulties (in the period rated).

Include lack of useful information or understanding available to the child or adolescent, parents or carers.

Include lack of explanation about the diagnosis or the cause of the problem or the prognosis.

- 0 No problems during the period rated. Parents and carers have been adequately informed about the child or adolescent's problems.
- 1 Slight problems only.
- 2 Mild but definite problems.
- 3 Moderately severe problems. Parents and carers have very little or incorrect knowledge about the problem which is causing difficulties such as confusion or self-blame.
- 4 Very severe problems. Parents have no understanding about the nature of their child or adolescent's problems.

15. Problems with lack of information about services or management of the child or adolescent's difficulties.

Include lack of useful information or understanding available to the child or adolescent, parents or carers or referrers.

Include lack of information about the most appropriate way of providing services to the child or adolescent, such as care arrangements, educational placements, or respite care.

- 0 No problems during the period rated. The need for all necessary services has been recognised.
- 1 Slight problems only.
- 2 Mild but definite problems.
- 3 Moderately severe problems. Parents and carers have been given very little information about appropriate services, or professionals are not sure where a child should be managed.
- 4 Very severe problems. Parents have no information about appropriate services or professionals do not know where a child should be managed.

HoNOSCA items and Summary scores

The 15 items (scales) which constitute the HoNOSCA, and the Summary score which may be derived from those 15 scales are identified in Table. Note that, as yet, only a Total score, based on the sum of items 1 to 13 only, has been defined for this measure.

Statistics for the Summary scores should generally be reported as Means and Standard deviations.

Statistics for the individual scales are often also reported as Means and Standard deviations. That approach is not recommended. Instead, it is recommended that the percentage of Patients with scores of 2, 3 or 4 on each scale be reported. This convention is based on the structure of the scale. A score of 0 indicates that the problem is not present, whilst a score of 1 indicates that it is present, but is so mild that it is not of clinical significance. Higher scores represent clinically significant problems. Thus, when aggregated over groups of persons, this statistic which represents the percentage of persons with a clinically significant problem on the given scale, provides a clinically meaningful and easily interpreted indicator.

Table: The individual HoNOSCA items (scales) and the Summary scores derived from them.

Data element	HoNOSCA item number and description	Item score	Summary score
HoNOSCA Behavioural problems summary score		4 items	0 – 16
HoNOSCA item 01	1. Disruptive, antisocial, or aggressive behaviour.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 02	2. Problems with overactivity, attention or concentration.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 03	3. Non-accidental self-injury.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 04	4. Alcohol, substance or solvent misuse.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA Impairment summary score		2 items	0 – 8
HoNOSCA item 05	5. Problems with scholastic or language skills.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 06	6. Physical illness or disability problems.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA Symptomatic problems summary score		3 items	0 – 12
HoNOSCA item 07	7. Problems associated with hallucinations, delusions, or abnormal perceptions.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 08	8. Problems with non-organic somatic symptoms.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 09	9. Problems with emotional and related symptoms.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA Social problems summary score		4 items	0 – 16
HoNOSCA item 10	10. Problems with peer relationships.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 11	11. Problems with self-care and independence.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 12	12. Problems with family life and relationships.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 13	13. Poor school attendance.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA Information summary score		2 items	0 – 8
HoNOSCA item 14	14. Problems with lack of knowledge or understanding about the nature of the child or adolescent's difficulties.	0 – 4	
HoNOSCA item 15	15. Problems with lack of information about services or management of the child or adolescent's difficulties.	0 – 4	

HoNOSCA Total (13-item) score	0 – 52
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Calculating the Summary and Total Scores

The Summary and Total scores are computed using the equation shown below, with the result being rounded to the nearest whole number. If any item has not been completed (that is, has not been coded 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4), it is excluded from the calculation and not counted as a valid item. If more than 50% of the items constituting any given Summary score are not valid then the affected Summary score is set as missing.

Note: The HoNOSCA Total (13-item) total score is based on the sum of HoNOSCA items 01 through 13. Items 14 and 15 are excluded. The total score represents the summed severity of individual items and is used as an outcome measure.

$$\text{Summary score} = \left(\frac{\text{Sum of (Item scores)}}{\text{N of valid (completed) Items}} \right) \times \text{Number of Items}$$

Standard values must be used for coding missing items and Summary scores. For individual scales, the missing values are 7 (unable to rate), 8 (protocol exclusion) and 9 (missing). For the Summary and Total scores, the missing value used should be 99.

References

Gowers SG, Harrington RC, Whitton A, et al. (1999) Health of the Nation Outcome Scales for Children and Adolescents (HoNOSCA): Glossary for HoNOSCA score sheet. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 174, 428-433.

Useful links:

<http://www.honos.org.uk/honosca/honosca.htm>

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/honosca>