**Outcome Measure** | The Caregiver Strain Index (CSI)  
---|---  
**Sensitivity to Change** | Not enough evidence  
**Population** | Adult  
**Domain** | Family Environment  
**Type of Measure** | Self-report  
**ICF-Code/s** | e3  
**Description** | The Caregiver Strain Index (CSI) is a tool that can be used to quickly identify families with potential caregiving concerns. It is a 13-question tool that measures strain related to care provision. There is at least one item for each of the following major domains: Employment, Financial, Physical, Social and Time.  

The CSI is computed by summing the 0 (no) and 1 (yes) responses for the 13 items. Therefore, CSI scores range from 0 to 13.  

Positive responses to seven or more items on the index indicate a greater level of strain. This instrument can be used to assess individuals of any age who have assumed the role of caregiver for an older adult. It was developed with a sample of 132 caregivers providing assistance to recently hospitalized older adults and is appropriate for caregivers of any age.  

**Properties** |  
**Internal reliability:** .90 in a long-term caregiving sample (Thornton & Travis, 2003).  
**Test-retest reliability:** .88 with a two week interval (Thornton & Travis, 2003).  
**Internal consistency:** The CSI has been reported to have a high level of internal consistency in two studies: $\alpha = .86$ (Robinson, 1983) and $\alpha = .90$ (Thornton & Travis, 2003).  
**Convergent/divergent validity:** Robinson (1983) - Significant positive correlations were observed between the carer’s CSI scores and factors that were thought would increase carer strain: the ex-patient’s age ($r = .18$), caregiver’s emotional status as measured by the Profile of Mental States (POMS) anxiety scale ($r = .31$), performance of activities of daily living (Katz ADL; $r = .46$), mental impairment (SPMSQ; $r = .39$) rehospitalisation within 2 months ($r = .19$), and mental status.  

**Advantages** |  
- Brief to administer (only 13 items), therefore easy to incorporate into an assessment battery  
- In the public domain, therefore free to use.  
- Covers various domains (financial, physical, emotional, social)  
- Robust relationship with emotional well-being  

**Disadvantages** |  
- Analyses related to psychometric properties were conducted in 1983 and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| the relevance of the questions may have changed since this time.  
- Too few items in each domain to calculate subscale scores  
- Only focuses on presence/absence of strain, rather than what it means to the caregiver and how they can manage it (mastery/self-efficacy) |  |
| Reviewers | Robyn Tate |

**References**
