NOTES ON SCORING OF THE FAMILY AND STAFF RELATIONSHIP IMPLEMENTATION TOOL (FASRIT)

The 25-item FASRIT was constructed to assess the quality of staff-family relationships in residential aged care settings and appraise current practice against what is known to be best practice.[1]

The FASRIT is a uni-dimensional scale with items representing eight domains identified by a systematic review as being relevant to the formation of constructive staff-family relationships: recognition of the uniqueness of the resident; information sharing; familiarity, trust, respect and empathy; family characteristics and dynamics; collaboration in care; staff-family communication; organisational barriers to positive relationships; and promoting positive relationships.[2] Based on data collection to date, the FASRIT has high internal consistency (a measure of reliability: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.94).[1]

Completion of the FASRIT involves asking residential aged care facility staff members to indicate how frequently they observe a range of practices and behaviors within their facility (expressed as "the extent to which the following statements are true of this aged care facility"), where '1 = never', '2 = sometimes', 3 = often' and '4 = always'.

A final option of "don't know" is offered.

No items are reverse-scored (that is, none require a reversal of the meaning allocated to the numbers).

The 25 items can be summed to generate a total score between 25 and 100, where a higher score indicates more frequent expression of behaviours and practices that support positive relationships between staff and residents' families. It is assumed this would be highly correlated with positive relationships between staff and residents' families.

Any selection of the "don't know" option should be ignored (not included) when creating the total score. (Note, however, that the frequency of selection can give an indication of areas for further attention in working with staff.)

At this stage of development, there are no standards for interpreting the FASRIT total score within the residential aged care sector as an indicator of the quality of staff-family relationships. Further data collection and analysis will enable some guidelines for interpretation of mean responses, including possible benchmarks. At a simple level, one is looking for more frequent reports by staff of behaviours and practices that would support positive staff-family relationships.

Interpretation of total scores should be done as an internal process for a service:

- Consider which items appear to have the lowest scores, as these tell you where staff and the facility as a whole may not be establishing and maintaining staff-family relationships in accordance with evidence and expert opinion.
- Consider whether the total scores of staff change after you have provided specific training around supporting positive staff-family attitudes.
- Monitor the total scores over time (e.g. annually) to consider whether the service is maintaining the desired organisational practices in relation to staff-family relationships.

References:

1. Bauer, M., Fetherstonhaugh, D., Lewis, V. (2012) Assessing the quality of staff-family relationships in the Australian residential aged care setting: development and evaluation of the Family and Staff Relationship Implementation Tool (FASRIT). *International Journal of Person-Centered Medicine.* 2(3),564-567.

2. Haesler, E., Bauer, M., Nay, R. (2010) Factors associated with constructive nursing staff-family relationships in the care of older adults in the institutional setting: An update to a systematic review. *International Journal of Evidence-Based Healthcare.* 8 (2), 1744-1609.

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