

Psychiatric Impairment Rating Scale

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PIRS focuses on six areas of function:

1. Activities of daily living
 - A. Self Care and Personal Hygiene
 - B. Social and Recreational Activities
 - C. Travel
2. Social functioning (relationships)
3. Concentration
4. Adaptation

Impairment in each area is rated using class descriptors. Classes range from 1 to 5, in accordance with severity. The standard form must be used when scoring the PIRS.

SELF CARE AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Class 1 No deficit, or minor deficit attributable to the normal variation in the general population
- Class 2 Mild impairment: Able to live independently, looks after self adequately, although may look unkempt occasionally, sometimes misses a meal or relies on take-away food.
- Class 3 Moderate impairment: Can't live independently without regular support. Needs prompting to shower daily and wear clean clothes. Does not prepare own meals, frequently misses meals. Family member or community nurse visits (or should visit) X 2-3 per week to ensure minimum level of hygiene and nutrition.
- Class 4 Severe impairment: Needs supervised residential care. If unsupervised, may accidentally or purposefully hurt self.
- Class 5 Totally impaired: Needs assistance with basic functions, such as feeding and toileting.

SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Class 1 No deficit, or minor deficit attributable to the normal variation in the general population: Goes out regularly to cinemas, restaurants or other recreational venue. Belongs to clubs or associations and is actively involved with these.
- Class 2 Mild impairment: Occasionally goes out to social events without needing a support person, but does not become actively involved: eg. Dancing, cheering favourite team.
- Class 3 Moderate impairment: Rarely goes to social events, and mostly when prompted by family or close friend. Will not go out without a support person. Not actively involved, remains quiet and withdrawn.
- Class 4 Severe impairment: Never leaves place of residence. Tolerates the company of family member or close friend, but will go to a different room or garden when others come to visit family or flat mate.
- Class 5 Totally impaired. Cannot tolerate living with anybody, extremely uncomfortable when visited by close family member.
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TRAVEL

- Class 1 No deficit, or minor deficit attributable to the normal variation in the general population: Can travel to new environments without supervision.
- Class 2 Mild impairment: Can travel without support person, but only in a familiar area such as local shops, visiting a neighbour.
- Class 3 Moderate impairment: Cannot travel away from own residence without support person. Problems may be due to excessive anxiety or cognitive impairment.
- Class 4 Severe impairment: Finds it extremely uncomfortable to leave own residence even with trusted person.
- Class 5 Totally impaired: Cannot be left unsupervised, even at home. May require two or more persons to supervise when travelling.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

- Class 1 No deficit, or minor deficit attributable to the normal variation in the general population: No difficulty in forming and sustaining relationships, eg partner, close friendships lasting years.
- Class 2 Mild impairment: Existing relationships strained. Tension and arguments with partner or close family member, loss of some friendships.
- Class 3 Moderate impairment: Previously established relationships severely strained, evidenced by periods of separation or domestic violence. Spouse, relatives or community services looking after children.
- Class 4 Severe impairment: Unable to form or sustain long term relationships. Pre-existing relationships ended, eg lost partner, close friends. Unable to care for dependents, eg own children, elderly parent.
- Class 5 Totally impaired: Unable to function within society. Living away from populated areas, actively avoids social contact.

CONCENTRATION, PERSISTENCE AND PACE

- Class 1 No deficit, or minor deficit attributable to the normal variation in the general population: Able to pass a TAFE or university course within normal time frame.
- Class 2 Mild impairment: Can undertake a basic retraining course, or a standard course at a slower pace. Can focus on intellectually demanding tasks for periods of up to thirty minutes, eg. then feels fatigued or develops headache
- Class 3 Moderate impairment: Unable to read more than newspaper articles. Finds it difficult to follow complex instructions, eg operating manuals, building plans, make significant repairs to motor vehicle, type long documents, follow a pattern for making clothes, tapestry or knitting.
- Class 4 Severe impairment: Can only read a few lines before losing concentration. Difficulties following simple instructions. Concentration deficits obvious even during brief conversation. Unable to live alone, or needs regular assistance from relatives or community services.
- Class 5 Totally impaired: Needs constant supervision and assistance within institutional setting.

ADAPTATION

Class 1	No deficit, or minor deficit attributable to the normal variation in the general population. Able to work full time. Duties and performance are consistent with the person's education and training. The person is able to cope with the normal demands of the job.
Class 2	Mild impairment. Able to work full time in a different environment. The duties require comparable skill and intellect. Can work in the same position, but no more than 20 hours per week. eg no longer happy to work with specific persons, work in a specific location due to travel required.
Class 3	Moderate impairment: Cannot work at all in same position. Can perform less than 20 hours per week in a different position, which requires less skill or is qualitatively different, eg less stressful.
Class 4	Severe impairment: Cannot work more than one or two days at a time, less than twenty hours per fortnight. Pace is reduced, attendance is erratic.
Class 5	Totally impaired. Cannot work at all.

General Principles

- The impairment must be due to a recognized mental disorder. Eg Deficits in self-care secondary to cognitive impairment, travel restrictions secondary to poor vision etc are not assessed using the PIRS
- The PIRS is not used to measure impairment due to pain or somatoform disorders.
- The AMA Guides are used to address general issues such as the definition of permanent impairment, effects of treatment or impact of treatment refusal on rating score.
- Where there is pre-existing impairment, the pre-injury total impairment score is deducted from the post-injury total impairment score.

Rating psychiatric impairment using the PIRS is a two-step procedure:

- 1. Determining the Median Class Score**
- 2. Calculation of the Aggregate Score**

Determining The Median Class Score: Each area of function described in the PIRS is given an impairment rating which ranges from Class 1 to 5. The six scores are arranged in ascending order, using the standard form. The median is then calculated by averaging the two middle scores. Eg:

Example A:	1, 2, 3, 3 , 4, 5	Median Class = 3
Example B:	1, 2, 2, 3 , 3, 4	Median Class = 2.5 = 3*
Example C:	1, 2, 3, 5 , 5, 5	Median Class = 4

*Where a score falls between two classes, it is rounded up to the next class. A Median Class Score of 2.5 thus becomes 3.

The Median Class Score method was chosen, as it is not influenced by extremes. Each area of function is assessed separately. Whilst impairment in one area is neither equivalent nor interchangeable with impairment in other areas, the median seems the fairest way to translate different impairments onto a linear scale.

Median Class Score and Percentage Impairment: Each Median Class Score represents a range of impairment, as shown below.

Class 1	= 0 -3%
Class 2	= 4 -10%
Class 3	= 11-30%
Class 4	= 31-60%
Class 5	= 61-100%

Calculation of the Aggregate Score:

- The Aggregate Score is used to determine an exact percentage of impairment within a particular class range.
- All scores are added to give the aggregate score.
- The aggregate score is converted to a percentage score using the Conversion Table.

Examples: (Using the previous cases)

Example A
Score

1	2	3	3	4	5
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Median Class
= 3

Aggregate Score

1 +	2 +	3 +	3 +	4 +	5 =	Total	% Impairment
						18	22%

Example B
Score

1	2	2	3	3	4
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Median Class
= 3

Aggregate Score

1 +	2 +	2 +	3 +	3 +	4 =	Total	% Impairment
						15	15%

Example C

Score

1	2	3	5	5	5
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Median Class
= 4

Aggregate Score

1 +	2 +	3 +	5 +	5 +	5 =	Total	% Impairment
						21	44%

CONVERSION TABLE

		Aggregate Score																														
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30						
Class 1		0	0	1	1	2	2	2	3	3																						
Class 2	%				4	5	5	6	7	7	8	9	9	10																		
Class 3	%								11	13	15	17	19	22	24	26	28	30														
Class 4	%												31	34	37	41	44	47	50	54	57	60										
Class 5	%																		61	65	70	74	78	83	87	91	96	100				

PIRS Rating Form

Name		Claim Reference Number	
D.O.B.		Age at time of injury	
Date of Injury		Occupation before injury	
Date of Assessment		Marital Status before injury	

Psychiatric Diagnoses	1.	2.
	3.	4.
Psychiatric Treatment		
Is Impairment Permanent?	Yes No (Circle one)	

Category	Class	Reason for decision
Self Care and Personal Hygiene		
Social and Recreational Activities		
Travel		
Social Functioning		
Concentration, Persistence and Pace		
Adaptation		

Score Median Class

						=
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Aggregate Score Total % impairment

+	+	+	+	+	=		
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Conversion Table- Explanatory Notes

A. Distribution of Aggregate Scores

- The lowest aggregate score that can be obtained is: $1+1+1+1+1+1=6$
- The highest aggregate score is $5+5+5+5+5+5= 30$
- The table therefore has aggregate scores ranging from 6 to 30.
- Each Median Class score has an impairment range, and a range of possible aggregate scores.
- Eg Class 3 = 11-30%
- The lowest aggregate score for Class 3 is 13 ($1+1+2+3+3+3= 13$)
- The highest aggregate score for Class 3 is 22. ($3+3+3+3+5+5=22$)
- The conversion table distributes the impairment percentages across aggregate scores

B. Same Aggregate Score in Different Classes

- The Conversion Table shows that the same aggregate score leads to different percentages of impairment in different Median Classes.
- For example, an aggregate score of 18 is equivalent to an impairment rating of
 - 10% in Class 2,
 - 22% in Class 3,
 - 34% in Class 4.
- This is due to the fact that a person whose impairment is in Median Class 2 is likely to have a lower score across most areas of function. They may be significantly impaired in one aspect of their life, such as travel, yet have low impairment in Social Function, Self-care or Concentration.
- Someone whose impairment reaches Median Class 4 will experience significant impairment across most aspects of his or her life.