

**THE ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOUR DEMENTIA  
QUESTIONNAIRE (ABDQ)**

Screening instrument to detect dementia in Alzheimer's disease in adults  
with Down syndrome and other intellectual disabilities

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by

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## BACKGROUND

An association between dementia in Alzheimer's disease and Down syndrome is well established. However, the clinical diagnosis and ongoing monitoring of the dementing process can at times be difficult. Direct cognitive testing is often not possible due to the underlying severity of intellectual disability, poor cooperation, impaired sensory function, presence of co-morbid illnesses and inability to detect accurately all areas of intellectual functioning.

The authors have been assessing changes in adaptive behaviour in adults with Down syndrome for more than 10 consecutive years. Adaptive behaviour can be assessed in all adults with intellectual disability (and especially in those with dementia) and overcomes many of the problems mentioned above regarding the use of cognitive based measures.

The authors with the analysis of consecutive adaptive data developed an informant-based clinical screening tool for dementia in Alzheimer's disease in adults with Down syndrome. The Adaptive Behaviour Dementia Questionnaire (ABDQ) is a 15-item questionnaire, derived from the AAMD Adaptive Behavior Scale (Nihira et al, 1974\*) which is used to detect change in adaptive behaviour. The ABDQ has good reliability and validity, with an overall accuracy of 92%. Unlike other tests which can only determine the presence of dementia, the ABDQ has been developed to specifically to screen for dementia in Alzheimer's disease.

(\*Nihira, K., Foster, R, Shellhaas, M., Leyland, H. (1974). AAMD Adaptive Behaviour Scale, 1974 Revision, American Association on Mental Deficiency, Washington, D.C.)

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE ABDQ

To be completed by:-

- i) interview with caregiver who is familiar over many years with the observed person
- ii) an interviewer who has experience working with adults with intellectual disability

The questionnaire sets out to collect information on how the observed person **compares** *now* to their previous *normal* (usual) level of social functioning. By "normal" we mean when the person was in good health and BEFORE the onset of any recent problems suggestive of dementia. The term "normal" is used in each question.

Interviewers can use the client's name to make the questions more personal.

If never been able to perform question mark as "same as normal".

**The ABDQ is designed to detect CHANGE in clinical status over time.**

## THE ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOUR DEMENTIA QUESTIONNAIRE (ABDQ)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Carer interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer ALL questions by simply underlining the answer which you think most closely applies to the question. Please read instructions on how to complete ABDQ before filling in questionnaire

	Question	Answer			
1.	Are they able to dress themselves?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
2.	Can they use their hands to do things?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
3.	Is their ability to buy things?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
4.	Are they able to have a conversation?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
5.	Is their awareness of time?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
6.	Do they help to prepare food?	More than normal	Same as normal	Less than normal	Much less than normal
7.	Do they help to clear the table?	More than normal	Same as normal	Less than normal	Much less than normal
8.	Are they able to perform simple jobs?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
9.	Can they initiate things/activities?	More than normal	Same as normal	Less than normal	Much less than normal
10.	Is their ability to persist in doing things?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
11.	Can they take care of their belongings?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
12.	Do they cooperate with requests?	More than normal	Same as normal	Less than normal	Much less than normal
13.	Do they carry out simple commands?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal
14.	Do they participate in group activities?	More than normal	Same as normal	Less than normal	Much less than normal
15.	Is their ability to do things independently?	Better than normal	Same as normal	Worse than normal	Much worse than normal

See ABDQ SCORING SHEET to score answers

## ABDQ SCORING SHEET

<i>Scoring:-</i>	
Better than normal	= 0 mark
Same as normal	= 1 mark
Worse/less than normal	= 2 marks
Much worse/less than normal	= 3 marks

A

(A= Sum of scores for questions 1,3,4,6,10,11,14,15)

B

(B= 3 multiplied by [Sum of scores for questions 12 & 13])

C

(C= 4 multiplied by [Sum of scores for questions 2,5,8])

D

(D=5 multiplied by score for question 9)

E

(E= 6 multiplied by score for question 7)

**TOTAL SCORE**

(TOTAL SCORE= A+B+C+D+E)

**DEMENTIA IN ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE PRESENT**      YES      NO  
(yes if Total Score is 78 or more)

**SEVERITY OF DEMENTIA**      MILD      MODERATE      SEVERE  
(Total Score is 78-89 = mild; 90-99 = moderate; 100 or more=severe)