K10 Explanatory notes

What is the K10 and how is it scored?

The K10 is widely recommended as a simple measure of psychological distress and as a measure of outcomes following treatment for common mental health disorders. The K10 is in the public domain and is promoted on the Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression website (www.crufad.org) as a self report measure to identify need for treatment.

The K10 uses a five value response option for each question – all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time and none of the time which can be scored from five through to one.

The maximum score is 50 indicating severe distress, the minimum score is 10 indicating no distress.

Questions 3 and 6 are not asked if the proceeding question was 'none of the time' in which case questions 3 and 6 would automatically receive a score of one.

For further information on the K10 please refer to www.crufad.org or Andrews, G Slade, T. Interpreting scores on the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10). Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health: 2001; 25:6: 494-497.