

Capacity Worksheet for Psychologists

Source: Assessment of Older Adults with Diminished Capacity: A Handbook for Psychologists by the ABA Commission on Law and Aging and the American Psychological Association (2008). Please read and review the handbook prior to using the worksheet.

Name: _____

Date(s) of Evaluation: _____

Psychologist: _____

Place of Evaluation: _____

A. Pre-Assessment Screening

Issue	Questions to consider
What functional and decisional capacities are in question:	What types of decisional or functional processes are in question? What data are needed? Am I appropriately qualified to assess these?
Who is involved in this case:	Who is the client? Who are the interested parties? Who is requesting the evaluation? Who sees the report? Is the court or litigants involved?
Who is the older adult:	What is the person's history, age, cultural background, primary language, sensory functioning?
When does this evaluation need to be completed:	How urgent is the request? Is there a court date? What is the time frame of interest?
Where and how will the evaluation take place:	In what setting does the evaluation take place? What accommodations are needed to maximize performance?
Why is this question being raised:	Why now? What is the history of the case? Will a capacity evaluation resolve the problem? Have all less restrictive alternatives and interventions been exhausted?
Is the patient medically stable:	Have all temporary and reversible causes of cognitive confusion been assessed and treated?

B. Informed Consent

Understanding:	Issues to disclose
	Why is the evaluation requested? Procedures involved in evaluation? Potential risks? Potential benefits? Uses of the report? Limits on privacy and confidentiality?

- Understands and consents Questionable understanding but assents
 Understands and refuses Questionable understanding but refuses

C. Setting up the Assessment: Legal Standard and Functional Elements

What is the legal standard for the capacity in question?
What are the functional elements to consider?

D. Record Review

Medical records	Diagnoses Laboratory Tests Imaging Other Treatments Medications
Legal records	Documents filed in the court Financial statements HCP/POAHC documents
Other Records	

E. Collateral Interviews

Family
Staff/ Professional Caregivers
Other

F. Accommodating and Enhancing Capacity During the Assessment

Assess recent events and losses, such as bereavement Explore medical factors such as nutrition, medications, hydration Select tests in consideration of cultural and language issues; Administer tests in primary language Select tests that are validated for the age of the person Assess ability to read and accommodate reading difficulties Adjust seating, lighting; Use visual and hearing aids Consider fatigue; Take breaks; Use multiple testing sessions

G. Assessment Data

Functional elements (list from 4B above):	<input type="checkbox"/> Objective Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Interview
1. _____ Level of impairment: Describe:		
2. _____ Level of impairment: Describe:		
3. _____ Level of impairment: Describe:		
4. _____ Level of impairment: Describe:		
Cognitive Underpinnings (possible domains):	<input type="checkbox"/> Objective Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Interview
1. Sensory Acuity		
2. Motor Activity and Speed of processing		
3. Attention and Concentration		
4. Working memory		
5. Short term/recent memory and Learning		
6. Long term memory		
7. Understanding or Receptive Language		
8. Communication or Expressive Language		
9. Arithmetic		
10. Verbal Reasoning		
11. Visual-Spatial and Visuo-Constructional Reasoning		
12. Executive Functioning		
13. Other		
Psychiatric/Emotional Factors (possible domains):	<input type="checkbox"/> Objective Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Interview
1. Disorganized Thinking		
2. Hallucinations		
3. Delusions		
4. Anxiety		
5. Mania		
6. Depressed Mood		
7. Insight		
8. Impulsivity		
9. Noncompliance		
10. Other		

Values	Possible Considerations
	What is the older adult's view of the situation? Preferences for how decisions made? And by whom? Preferences for living setting? Goals including self assessment of quality of life? Concerns, fears, preferences, religious views? Preferences for spending and saving? Impact of culture, age, sexual orientation, diversity? Views about guardianship (if applicable)?
Risks	Possible Considerations
	Is the risk new or old? How serious is the risk? How imminent is the risk? What is the risk of harm to self? To others? Are there concrete instances of failure? How objective is the assessment of risk?

H. Findings

Diagnoses and Prognoses	Possible Considerations
	What diagnoses account for the deficits? Can conditions be treated? Are deficits likely to get better, worse or stay the same? When should the older adult be re-evaluated?

Capacity Framework	Capacity Conclusions
1) The functional abilities constituent to the capacity; 2) Cognitive abilities, psychiatric/emotional functioning, and medical diagnoses and prognosis, <i>as they relate to the functional abilities</i> ; 3) The individual's values, social network, and the specific risks of the capacity situation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Has capacity for decision / task in question <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks capacity for decision / task in question <input type="checkbox"/> Has marginal capacity for decision / task in question (if the case is not being adjudicated, recommended course of action)

Steps to Enhance Capacity	Would the Older Adult benefit from:
	Education, training, or rehabilitation? Mental health treatment? Occupational, physical, or other therapy? Home and/or social services? Assistive devices or accommodations? Medical treatment, operation or procedure? Other?