

## Table 5 – Mental Health Function

### Introduction to Table 5

Table 5 is to be used to assess the functional impact of a diagnosed mental health condition (including recurring episodes of mental health impairment).

The diagnosis of the condition causing the impairment must be made by an appropriately qualified medical practitioner (such as a general practitioner or a psychiatrist) with evidence from a registered psychologist (if the diagnosis has not been made by a psychiatrist).

Diagnosis and evidence should make appropriate reference to the diagnostic tool used.

There must be corroborating evidence of the person's impairment.

Self-report of symptoms must be supported by corroborating medical evidence.

Examples of corroborating evidence for the purposes of this Table include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a report from the person's treating doctor;
- Supporting letters, reports or assessments relating to the person's mental health or psychiatric condition; interviews with the person and those providing care or support to the person.

In using Table 5 evidence from a range of sources should be considered in determining which rating applies to the person being assessed.

The person may not have sufficient self-awareness of their mental health impairment or may not be able to accurately describe its effects. This is to be kept in mind when discussing issues with the person and reading supporting evidence.

The signs and symptoms of mental health impairment may vary over time. The person's presentation on the day of the assessment should not solely be relied upon.

When determining whether a descriptor applies that involves a person performing an activity, the descriptor applies if that person can do the activity when they would be expected to do so and not once or rarely.

When assessing episodic or fluctuating impairments and conditions, a rating must be assigned which reflects the overall functional impact of those impairments, taking into account the severity, duration and frequency of the episodes or fluctuations as appropriate.

The examples used in descriptors are not an exhaustive list and are to be used only as a guide.

Points	Descriptors
0	<p><i>There is <b>no or minimal</b> functional impact on activities involving mental health function.</i></p> <p>(1) The person has no or minimal difficulties with at least 4 of the following:</p> <p>(a) self-care and independent living;</p> <p><i>Example: the person lives independently and attends to all self-care needs without support.</i></p> <p>(b) social/recreational activities and interpersonal relationships;</p> <p><i>Example 1: the person goes out regularly to social and recreational events without support.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2: the person has no or minimal difficulty forming and sustaining relationships.</i></p> <p>(c) travel and accessing the community;</p> <p><i>Example 1: the person is able to travel to and from unfamiliar environments independently.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2: the person is able to utilise community facilities, such as local shops or other familiar venues.</i></p> <p>(d) concentration and task completion;</p> <p><i>Example 1: the person has no or minimal difficulties concentrating on most tasks.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2: the person is able to complete a training or educational course or qualification in the normal timeframe.</i></p> <p>(e) behaviour, planning and decision-making;</p> <p><i>Example: the person has no or minimal difficulties in behaviour, planning or decision-making.</i></p> <p>(f) work/training capacity.</p> <p><i>Example 1: the person is able to cope with the normal demands of a job that is consistent with their education and training.</i></p> <p><i>Example 2: the person is able to perform workplace tasks without posing a risk to the safety of themselves or co-workers due to ongoing mental illness.</i></p>

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There is a **mild** functional impact on activities involving mental health function.

1. The person has mild difficulties with at least 4 of the following:

(a) self-care and independent living;

*Example: the person lives independently but sometimes neglects self-care, grooming or meals.*

(b) social/recreational activities and interpersonal relationships;

*Example 1: the person is not actively involved when attending social or recreational activities.*

*Example 2: the person has interpersonal relationships that are strained, with occasional tension or arguments.*

(c) travel and accessing the community;

*Example 1: the person is sometimes reluctant to travel alone to unfamiliar environments.*

*Example 2: the person is sometimes reluctant to utilise community facilities such as local shops or other familiar venues.*

(d) concentration and task completion;

*Example 1: the person has mild difficulty focusing on complex tasks for more than 1 hour.*

*Example 2: the person has mild difficulties completing education or training.*

(e) behaviour, planning and decision-making;

*Example 1: the person has unusual behaviours that may disturb other people or attract negative attention and is sometimes more effusive, demanding or obsessive than is appropriate to the situation.*

*Example 2: the person has mild difficulties in planning and organising more complex activities.*

(f) work/training capacity.

*Example: the person has occasional interpersonal conflicts or poses some risk to the safety of themselves or co-workers due to ongoing mental illness at work, education or training that requires intervention by a supervisor, manager or teacher or changes in placement or groupings.*

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There is a **moderate** functional impact on activities involving mental health function.

1. The person has moderate difficulties with at least 4 of the following:

(a) self-care and independent living;

*Example: the person requires some support (that is, an occasional visit by or assistance from a family member or support worker) to live independently and maintain adequate hygiene and nutrition.*

(b) social/recreational activities and interpersonal relationships;

*Example 1: the person goes out alone infrequently and is not actively involved in social events.*

*Example 2: the person has moderate difficulty making and keeping friends or sustaining relationships.*

(c) travel and accessing the community;

*Example 1: the person will often avoid travelling alone to unfamiliar environments.*

*Example 2: the person will often avoid utilising community facilities such as local shops or other familiar venues.*

(d) concentration and task completion;

*Example 1: the person has moderate difficulty concentrating on longer tasks, and following along with the task, for more than 30 minutes (such as reading an article, watching a television program or playing a video game).*

*Example 2: the person has moderate difficulty following complex instructions (such as from an operating manual, recipe or assembly instructions).*

(e) behaviour, planning and decision-making;

*Example 1: the person has moderate difficulty coping with situations involving stress, pressure or performance demands.*

*Example 2: the person has occasional behavioural or mood difficulties (such as temper outbursts, depression, withdrawal or poor judgement).*

*Example 3: the person's activity levels are noticeably increased or reduced*

(f) work/training capacity.

*Example: the person often has interpersonal conflicts or poses a risk to themselves or co-workers due to ongoing mental illness at work, education or training that requires intervention by supervisors, managers or teachers or changes in placement or groupings.*

There is a **severe** functional impact on activities involving mental health function.

1. The person has severe difficulties with at least 4 of the following:

(a) self-care and independent living;

*Example: the person requires regular support to live independently, that is, needs visits or assistance at least twice a week from a family member, friend, health worker or support worker*

(b) social/recreational activities and interpersonal relationships;

*Example 1: the person has very limited social contacts and involvement unless these are organised for the person.*

*Example 2: the person often has severe difficulty interacting with other people and usually needs assistance or support from a companion to engage in social interactions.*

(c) travel and accessing the community;

*Example 1: the person travels alone only in familiar areas (such as the local shops or other familiar venues).*

*Example 2: the person usually avoids utilising community facilities such as public transport.*

(d) concentration and task completion;

*Example 1: the person has severe difficulty concentrating on or following along with any task or conversation for more than 10 minutes.*

*Example 2: the person has slowed movements or reaction time due to psychiatric illness or treatment effects.*

(e) behaviour, planning and decision-making;

*Example: the person's behaviour, thoughts and conversation are significantly and frequently disturbed.*

(f) work/training capacity.

*Example: the person has severe difficulty attending work, education or training on a regular basis over a lengthy period due to ongoing mental illness.*

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There is an **extreme** functional impact on activities involving mental health function.

1. The person has extreme difficulties with at least 4 of the following:

a) self-care and independent living;

*Example 1: the person requires continual support with daily activities and self-care.*

*Example 2: the person is unable to live on their own and lives with family or in a supported residential facility or similar, or in a secure facility.*

b) social/recreational activities and interpersonal relationships;

*Example: the person has extreme difficulty interacting with other people and is socially isolated.*

c) travel and accessing the community;

*Example: the person is unable to travel away from their own residence without a support person.*

d) concentration and task completion;

*Example 1: the person has extreme difficulty in concentrating on or following along with any productive task for more than a few minutes.*

*Example 2: the person has extreme difficulty in completing tasks or following instructions.*

e) behaviour, planning and decision-making;

*Example 1: the person has extremely disturbed behaviour which may include self-harm, suicide attempts, unprovoked aggression towards others or manic excitement.*

*Example 2: the person's judgement, decision-making, planning and organisation functions are severely disturbed.*

(g) work/training capacity.

*Example: the person is unable to attend work, education or training sessions other than for short periods of time due to ongoing mental illness.*