

Appendix H: Confusion Assessment Method Instrument (CAM)

Directions for the CAM: Answer the following questions.

Acute onset

1. Is there evidence of an acute change in mental status from the client's baseline?

Inattention

(The questions listed under this topic are repeated for each topic where applicable.)

2 a) Did the client have difficulty focusing attention, for example, being easily distractible, or having difficulty keeping track of what was being said?

- Not present at any time during interview
- Present at some time during interview, but in mild form
- Present at some time during interview, in marked form
- Uncertain

b) (If present or abnormal) Did this behaviour fluctuate during the interview, that is, tend to come and go or increase and decrease in severity?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain
- Not applicable

c) (If present or abnormal) Please describe this behaviour.

Disorganized thinking

3. Was the client's thinking disorganized or incoherent, such as rambling or irrelevant conversation, unclear or illogical flow of ideas, or unpredictable switching from subject to subject?

Altered level of consciousness

4. Overall, how would you rate this client's level of consciousness?

- Alert (normal)
- Vigilant (hyperalert, overly sensitive to environmental stimuli, startled very easily)
- Lethargic (drowsy, easily aroused)
- Stupor (difficult to arouse)
- Coma (unarousable)
- Uncertain

Disorientation

5. Was the client disoriented at any time during the interview, such as thinking that he or she was somewhere other than the hospital, using the wrong bed, or misjudging the time of day?

73

Memory impairment

6. Did the client demonstrate any memory problems during the interview, such as inability to remember events in the hospital or difficulty remembering instructions?

Perceptual disturbances

7. Did the client have any evidence of perceptual disturbances, for example, hallucinations, illusions, or misinterpretations (such as thinking something was moving when it was not)?

Psychomotor agitation

8. Part 1

At any time during the interview, did the client have an unusually increased level of motor activity, such as restlessness, picking at bedclothes, tapping fingers, or making frequent sudden changes in position?

Psychomotor retardation

8. Part 2

At any time during the interview, did the client have an unusually decreased level of motor activity, such as sluggishness, staring into space, staying in one position for a long time, or moving very slowly?

Altered sleep-wake cycle

9. Did the client have evidence of disturbance of the sleep-wake cycle, such as excessive daytime sleepiness with insomnia at night?

SCORING

To have a positive CAM result, the client must have:

1. Presence of acute onset and fluctuating course

AND

2. Inattention

AND EITHER

3. Disorganized thinking

OR

4. Altered level of consciousness

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