

## SCRQOL TOOL: STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

The social care-related quality of life (SCRQOL) tool in the MAX toolkit uses data collected by the Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS) to calculate an **adjusted social care-related quality of life score**.<sup>1</sup> This score takes into account the characteristics of the service user and their home that are known to affect quality of life (e.g. age,)<sup>2</sup> and, by doing so, provides a more accurate indication of **service impact or organisational performance** than the social care-related quality of life score [ASCOF 1A] alone. As the characteristics of service users may vary widely over time and/or between local authorities (LAs), the adjusted social care-related quality of life score also provides a **more meaningful measure for benchmarking activities**.

From 2016/7 onwards, the adjusted scores will be used to populate a new indicator in the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) – **(1J) Adjusted Social care-related quality of life: impact of Adult Social Care services** – and will be included in the summary reports produced and circulated by NHS Digital.

The Excel-based tool included in the MAX toolkit automatically calculates adjusted SCRQOL scores for individual respondents and the entire dataset, and can be used to generate the adjustment scores for previous data collections. These scores can then be used to conduct internal benchmarking comparisons and assess how services have impacted on quality of life over time. The SCRQOL tool also generates numerical and visual summaries of the variables underlying the calculations and can be used to guide further analysis (e.g. by identifying potential areas of unmet need) and/or in survey analysis reports.

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<sup>1</sup> A separate tool has been developed to calculate an adjusted carer-reported quality of life score using data from the Carers Survey (or PSS SACE).

<sup>2</sup> These factors were identified during the Identifying the Impact of Adult Social Care (IIASC) project, which was also conducted at PSSRU, and were used to develop the adjustment calculation. Further information about these factors can be found in the IIASC report - <http://www.pssru.ac.uk/publication-details.php?id=4633> - while additional details about the calculation can be found in the IIASC plain English report - <http://www.pssru.ac.uk/archive/pdf/5158.pdf>.

These instructions show you how to input the data from your NHS Digital data return needed to calculate the adjusted SCRQOL scores and offers guidance on how to interpret the adjusted scores.



The SCRQOL tools can be downloaded from the [QOL page](#) of the MAX toolkit. Further information about ASCOF 1J can also be found in our short guide [[introducing ASCOF 1J](#)].

## USING THE SCRQOL TOOL

**Step 1:** Download the SCRQOL tool from the MAX toolkit, and open both the tool and your NHS Digital data return.

**Step 2:** Select, copy and paste the relevant data from the NHS Digital data return into the **data tab** of the SCRQOL tool, taking care to ensure columns match. [**Note:** the SCRQOL tools in the MAX toolkit are based on the 2014/15 and 2016/17 surveys and data entry forms. Additional amendments to the tool may therefore be required in future data collections].

Column Ref [SCRQoL tool]	Variable	Survey Question	Column Ref [Data Return]
D	Age [aged 65 or older]	NA	H
E	Health	Q13	BR
F	IADLS/ADLs – get around outdoors	Q15a	BU
G	IADLS/ADLs – get in + out of bed	Q15b	BV
H	IADLS/ADLS – feeding	Q15c	BX
I	IADLS/ADLs – finances + paperwork	Q15d	BW
J	IADLs/ADLs – wash body	Q16a	BY
K	IADLs/ADLs – dressing	Q16b	BZ
L	IADLs/ADLs – toileting	Q16c	CA
M	Design of home	Q17	CC
N	Getting about outside of home	Q18	CD
O	Control	Q3a	BA
P	Personal appearance	Q4a	BC

Q	Food and drink	Q5a	BE
R	Accommodation	Q6a	BG
S	Safety	Q7a	BI
T	Social contact	Q8a	BK
U	Occupation	Q9a	BM
V	Dignity	Q11	BP

Based on 2016/7 survey and data return. Accompanying presentation based on 2014/5 versions.

Questions in shaded rows are used to calculate SCRQOL composite score

The data tab contains **hidden formulas** that calculate the **individual service user SCRQOL score** [ASCOF 1A] [column X], **preference-weighted score** [column Y] and the **adjusted SCRQOL score** [column Z] for each survey respondent.

### Missing error messages

Some cells within Columns X, Y and Z may have a **MISSING** error message. This means that some of the data required for that particular calculation was not included in the data return (e.g. due to data inputting errors, which can be corrected, or because the respondent did not answer that particular question). These rows of data will not be included in the final calculations and summary tables.

X	Y	Z
SCRQoL Overall score	SCRQoL Preference-weighted	SCRQoL Preference-weighted and 'adjusted'
19.00	0.88	0.59
24.00	1.00	0.37
21.00	0.85	0.45
13.00	0.51	0.21
15.00	0.53	0.39
23.00	0.98	0.64
18.00	0.79	0.24
23.00	0.98	0.35
MISSING	MISSING	MISSING

Screen shot based on dummy data

**Step 3:** Go to **summary tables tab** of the SCRQOL tool. This tab contains **hidden formulas** that calculate the **average SCRQOL score** [ASCOF 1A], the **average (preference weighted) SCRQOL score** and the **average adjusted (preference weighted) SCRQOL score** for the entire dataset. The

descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies and percentages) for all the other variables used in the SCRQOL calculations are also included.

SUMMARY SHEET	
Average SCRQoL	19.4
Average (preference-weighted) SCRQoL	0.83
Average Adjusted (preference-weighted) SCRQoL	1.35

Screen shot of the summary tables tab

## MAKING SENSE OF THE ADJUSTED SCRQOL SCORE

Please be aware that there will be a slight difference between the unadjusted [ASCOF 1A] social care-related quality of life scores generated by the SCRQOL tool and by NHS Digital. This is because NHS Digital apply population weights to their calculations.<sup>3</sup> This discrepancy will not cause a problem, as long as you consistently use the weighted or unweighted scores, and specify which score you are using in your analysis reports.

The adjusted SCRQOL [ASCOF 1J] score provides an estimation of the **impact or effect of care and support services on social care-related quality of life**. This score will be lower than the average SCRQOL score [ASCOF 1A] – this is to be expected – and can be positive or negative.

A **positive adjusted score** (e.g. 4.21) indicates that services are having a positive impact and are helping service users to enjoy a better quality of life.

A **negative adjusted score** (e.g. – 1.2), conversely, indicates that services are having a negative impact and are, in fact, reducing service user quality of life.

Further analysis may help you to make sense of the SCRQOL scores generated for your organisation, the differences and trends (if any) noted during direct benchmarking comparisons, and the areas where more targeted support may help to improve outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> For more information, please refer to section 5.12 of the ASCS guidance provided by NHS Digital – available for download at [http://content.digital.nhs.uk/media/22992/ASCS-Guidance-2016-17-v10/pdf/ASCS\\_Guidance\\_2016-17\\_v1.0.pdf](http://content.digital.nhs.uk/media/22992/ASCS-Guidance-2016-17-v10/pdf/ASCS_Guidance_2016-17_v1.0.pdf) (accessed 14.07.17)

**Further analysis should be conducted on the unadjusted SCRQOL [ASCOF 1A] score, rather than the adjusted SCRQOL score [ASCOF 1J], and may help you to answer a range of questions including:**

*What factors (if any) beyond our control are affecting the SCRQOL scores of our service users? What are our priorities for improving SCRQOL?*

*How can improve SCRQOL?*

*What can we learn from other organisations about improving SCRQOL?*

## **SUGGESTED STEPS FOR INTERPRETING ADJUSTED SCRQOL SCORES**

### **Step 1: Make sense of the SCRQOL scores for your organisation**

**Relevant ASCOF functions:** the following analysis may help you to fulfil two of the functions of the **Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)**:

- *Identify priorities for making improvements*
- *Produce the findings that can inform the strategic planning and leadership role for local commissioning.*

Identify which factors (if any) may be affecting SCRQOL – and therefore the impact of your services – by exploring the association between the variables in the ASCS and the SCRQOL score [ASCOF 1A].

**Focus on the variables underlying the adjustment calculation (e.g. age, self-rated health) first.**

This may help you to make sense of your adjusted SCRQOL score – in other words, the impact of your services on quality of life – and establish which factors beyond the control of your organisation may be affecting SCRQOL.

**Example:** Having a large number of service users under the age of 65, for example, can reduce the impact of your services and the relative performance of your organisation in relation to comparator LAs and the national average. The potential impact of service user age can be established using ANOVA and t-tests.

**Then explore the association between SCRQOL and the other variables in the ASCS** (i.e. the variables not included in the adjustment calculation, such as primary support reason). This analysis may help you to identify the kinds of remedial action that can be feasibly be taken to improve the impact of your services – and, by doing so, SCRQOL.

**Example:** Particular groups of service users may be experiencing problems with accessing information about local services and support and, as a result, are reporting a lower SCRQOL than other service user groups (e.g. because they have unmet control or social contact needs). Establishing which service user groups are reporting low SCRQOL and the potential reasons for this may therefore help you to determine where targeted services or alternative interventions may help.

## **Step 2: Explore how the adjusted scores for your organisation have changed over time**

**Relevant ASCOF functions:** the following analysis may help you to fulfil one of the functions of the **Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)**: *monitor success of local interventions in improving outcomes.*

Explore whether the impact of your services – as measured by the adjusted SCRQOL score [ASCOF 1J] – has changed over data collections. This may help you to establish the extent to which key interventions (e.g. changes to existing services, the implementation of new initiatives) have helped to improve reported quality of life over time.

Please be aware that reported outcomes may take many years to change and that, consequently, any noted differences in adjusted SCRQOL [ASCOF 1J] between data collections are likely to be small. These differences cannot be tested for statistical significance; rather, you should use the findings from your analysis in a comparative way to monitor the success of local interventions in improving outcomes over the longer term.

### Step 3: Compare the current adjusted SCRQOL for your organisation with those from comparator LAs and the national average

**Relevant ASCOF functions:** the following analysis may help you to fulfil one of the functions of the **Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)**: *support sector-led improvement by bringing councils together to understand and benchmark their performance. This, in turn, stimulates discussions between councils on priorities for improvement, and promotes the sharing of learning and best practice.*

Compare how the impact of your services, as measured by the adjusted SCRQOL score [ASCOF 1J], differs between those calculated by comparator (or family) LA groups. Please note that you will need to use the scores calculated by NHS Digital for these comparisons.

Such comparisons can be shared at regional performance meetings and serve as a starting point for information sharing and knowledge exchange activities. These activities, in turn, may help you to identify good practices and/or innovative services that can be implemented within your own.

## REPORTING THE ADJUSTED SCRQOL [ASCOF 1J] SCORE

Adjusted social care-related quality of life (SCRQOL) scores [ASCOF 1J] should be reported alongside the unadjusted SCRQOL scores [ASCOF 1A] and can, where conducted, be accompanied by the relevant findings from associated analysis.

### Box 4: Reporting adjusted SCRQOL scores

#### *The impact of our care & support services on social care-related quality of life (SCRQOL)*

Social care-related quality of life (SCRQOL)	2014/15	2016/17
Unadjusted SCRQOL [ASCOF 1A]	18.72	19.40
Adjusted SCRQOL [ASCOF 1J] – service impact	1.15	1.35

The adjusted SCRQOL score provides an estimation of the impact of our care and support services on service user quality of life by controlling for the factors that are known to affect quality of life but are beyond our control (e.g. service user age, health status). Further analysis has shown that.....



More detailed guidance about exploring the SCRQOL scores is provided in the [EXPLORING ASCS DATA GUIDE](#) and the [FURTHER ANALYSIS OF ASCS DATA GUIDE](#).<sup>4</sup>

## DISCLAIMER

The MAX toolkit and website are based on independent research commissioned and funded by the NIHR Policy Research Programme (Maximising the value of survey data in adult social care (MAX) project and the MAX toolkit implementation and impact project). The views expressed on the website and in publications are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR, the Department of Health and Social Care or its arm's length bodies or other government departments.

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that you will need to be registered and logged in to the MAX toolkit to access these guides.