

## Occasionally asked questions (to be continued)

[Can the questionnaire be used with people with learning disabilities?](#)

[How many patients and staff should fill in the questionnaire to obtain an assessment of the ward's climate?](#)

[How to refer to the EssenCES<sup>®</sup> in a publication?](#)

[How to score the questionnaire?](#)

[How to handle missing values \(unrated questionnaire-items\)?](#)

[Is there an EssenCES<sup>®</sup> - Handbook?](#)

### **Can the questionnaire be used with people with learning disabilities?**

When developing the questionnaire, we had in mind patients in forensic institutions who frequently have little education and average or less than average intelligence. Therefore questionnaire items were developed with ease of reading and understanding in mind. However, to perceive and discriminate the dimensions assessed, a minimum of general intelligence and understanding of language appears necessary.

One can try to explain questionnaire items to patients with learning disabilities and assist them in rating the items. There has been some question whether or not the verbal statements of the questionnaire may be replaced by pictorial items. I can hardly imagine that an equivalent version of the questionnaire may be established that way.

### **How many patients and staff should fill in the questionnaire to obtain an assessment of the ward's climate?**

Any researcher or practitioner will try to include many patients, clients, inmates or staff to participate in an evaluation or survey. This makes sense, as non-participation may bias the appraisal of a ward or institution, in particular if discontented persons do not share their view. Nonetheless, 8 – 10 persons in a group generally provide a rather good basis for characterising the ward climate. Patients or staff should not be urged to participate. Assessments might be more realistic and valid when subjects participate spontaneously. We recommend inviting staff members and patients to fill in the questionnaire and not pushing them.

### **How to refer to the EssenCES<sup>®</sup> in a publication?**

The major non-German references for the questionnaire are currently:

Schalast N, Redies M, Collins M, Stacey J, Howells K (2008) EssenCES, a short questionnaire for assessing the social climate of forensic psychiatric wards. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 18(1), 49-58.

Howells K. Tonkin M. Milburn C. Lewis J. Draycot S. Cordwell J. Price M. Davies S. Schalast N (2009) The EssenCES measure of social climate: a preliminary validation and normative data in UK high secure hospital settings. *Criminal Behaviour & Mental Health*, 19(5), 308-20.

Tonkin M. Howells K. Ferguson E. Clark A. Newberry M. Schalast N. (2012) Lost in translation? Psychometric properties and construct validity of the English Essen Climate Evaluation Schema (EssenCES) social climate questionnaire. *Psychological Assessment*, 24(3), 573-80.

Schalast N, Tonkin M. (2016) The Essen Climate Evaluation Schema EssenCES. Göttingen, Boston, Toronto: Hogrefe Publishing.

### **How to score the questionnaire?**

Please find a complete guideline in the EssenCES Manual.

Use the scoring key belonging to the version of the questionnaire and calculate sums per subscale. Forms in the manual and on this website help to display findings, tables in the manual help to appraise them.

We do not encourage using EssenCES total scores in evaluations.

### **How to handle missing values (unrated questionnaire-items)?**

Thanks to the fact that the EssenCES<sup>®</sup> is very short, the problem of missing values is not frequent. But what to do when it occurs? The proper way to handle one missing item per subscale would be: calculate the average of the other four answers and add that value to the sum of the other 4. The table below may be helpful to do this.

Sum score of 4 items	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Substitute value for the 5 <sup>th</sup> item	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.25	3.50	3.75	4.00
Total score for the subscale	0.00	1.25	2.50	3.75	5.00	6.25	7.50	8.75	10.00	11.25	12.50	13.75	15.00	16.25	17.50	18.75	20.00

When two items are missing to a subscale, it means that 40 % of the items haven't been assessed. In that case the subscale shouldn't be scored at all.

### **Is there an EssenCES<sup>®</sup> - Handbook?**

Please find information about the EssenCES-Manual on the website of [Hogrefe Publishing](#).

A detailed German project [report](#) may be downloaded from this website.