What is the RHS-15?

Pathways collaborated with refugee communities and a renowned psychiatrist to validate a culturally competent, short screening questionnaire.

The RHS-15 (Refugee Health Screener-15) screens refugees for distressing mental health symptoms.

The RHS-15 is a mechanism to route people who need care into the right treatment. It is not a diagnostic evaluation. A positive screen means the person scored at or above the cut off rate for significant distressing symptoms that would indicate they are likely to have:

- Anxiety
- PTSD
- Depression

Features of the RHS-15

- Designed to be short (5 to 15 minutes although it often takes longer for pre-literate or in big groups)
- Non-triggering, non-invasive, and non-traumatizing
- Culturally responsive with appropriate translation with community members
- Designed to be used with a introductory and referral script to help establish context, provide psychoeducation, and reduce stigma.
- Designed to be flexible and can be used in different settings by professionals or trained para-professionals.
Considerations

Do you have a place to refer that is culturally responsive and has linguistic access?

Does Medicaid cover the most common diagnosis?

How will you refer?

Who will administer the screener?

Where will they administer the screener?
Scoring the RHS-15

You may also choose to not utilize question 14 and 15 and then the cut-off score is a total of 11 or above.

Languages: Arabic, Swahili, Farsi, Kurdish, Karen, Burmese, Nepali, Spanish (Cuban dialect), Spanish, (Mexican dialect), Tigrinya, Amharic, Somali, Russian, Farsi, French

The RHS-15 bilingual versions are in English and the target language so they can be read by non-bilingual staff and placed in medical files.

How Sites Are Using It

- As part of refugee health screening (most common)
- As additional determination for who may need extended or intensive case management
- With advanced practicum students in a University setting
- As part of the initial primary care health visits
Available on-line trainings

• Development and Use of the RHS-15

• Operationalizing the RHS-15 in your Community