

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?




PATHWAYS TO WELLNESS
Integrating Refugee Health and Well-Being

Refugee Health Screener-15 (RHS-15)
English Version

Bilingual versions of the RHS-15 have been translated by an iterative process involving experts in the field, professional translators, and members of the refugee community in their own quarters to a final version according to language and culture. The English test is provided for reference only; using the English alone negates the validity of the instrument.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
 Gender: _____ Date of Arrival: _____ Health ID#: _____
 Administered by: _____ Date of Screen: _____



INSTRUCTIONS: Using the scale beside each symptom, please indicate the degree to which this symptom has bothered you in your daily life. Place a mark in the appropriate column. If the symptom has not been bothersome to you during the past month, circle "NOT AT ALL".

SYMPTOMS	NOT AT ALL				
	0	1	2	3	4
1. Muscle, bone, joint pains	0	1	2	3	4
2. Feeling down, sad, or blue most of the time	0	1	2	3	4
3. Too much thinking or too many thoughts	0	1	2	3	4
4. Feeling helpless	0	1	2	3	4
5. Suddenly scared for no reason	0	1	2	3	4
6. Faintness, dizziness, or weakness	0	1	2	3	4
7. Nervousness or shakiness inside	0	1	2	3	4
8. Feeling restless, can't sit still	0	1	2	3	4
9. Crying easily	0	1	2	3	4

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14. Circle the one best response below. Do you feel that you are:

Able to handle (cope with) anything	0
Able to handle (cope with) most things	1
Able to handle (cope with) some things, but not able to cope with other things	2
Unable to cope with most things	3
Unable to cope with anything	4

Add total score of items 1-14

15. Distress Thermometer

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

EXTREME DISTRESS
"I feel as bad as I ever have."

NO DISTRESS
"Things are good!"

Please circle the number (0-10) that best describes how much distress you have been experiencing in the past week, including today.

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Scoring the RHS-15

SCORING SCREENING IS POSITIVE IF: ITEMS 1-14 IS ≥ 12 OR DISTRESS THERMOMETER IS ≥ 5

CHECK ONE: POSITIVE NEGATIVE SELF-ADMINISTERED NOT SELF-ADMINISTERED

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

PATHWAYS WELLNESS

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
<http://www.refugeehealthta.org/webinars/mental-health-screening-and-care/tools-and-strategies-for-refugee-mental-health-screening-introducing-the-rhs-15-2/>
- Operationalizing the RHS-15 in your Community
<http://www.refugeehealthta.org/webinars/mental-health-screening-and-care/refugee-mental-health-screening-operationalizing-the-rhs-15/>
