



Positive Aging Resource Center

**CAM**

**CONFUSION ASSESSMENT METHOD INSTRUMENT**

**Acute Onset**

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

\_\_\_\_ YES      \_\_\_\_ NO      \_\_\_\_ UNCERTAIN      \_\_\_\_ NOT APPLICABLE

**Inattention**

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

2)

a. Did the patient 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 behavior 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 behavior.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Disorganized Thinking**

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

\_\_\_\_ YES      \_\_\_\_ NO      \_\_\_\_ UNCERTAIN      \_\_\_\_ NOT APPLICABLE

**Altered Level of Consciousness**

4) Overall, how would you rate this patient'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 patient 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?

YES       NO       UNCERTAIN       NOT APPLICABLE

**Memory Impairment**

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

YES       NO       UNCERTAIN       NOT APPLICABLE

**Perceptual Disturbances**

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

YES       NO       UNCERTAIN       NOT APPLICABLE

**Psychomotor Agitation**

8)

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

YES       NO       UNCERTAIN       NOT APPLICABLE

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

YES       NO       UNCERTAIN       NOT APPLICABLE

**Altered Sleep-Wake Cycle**

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

YES       NO       UNCERTAIN       NOT APPLICABLE

**SCORING**

To have a positive CAM result, the patient must display:

1) Presence of acute onset and fluctuating discourse

**AND**

2) Inattention

**AND EITHER**

3) Disorganized thinking

**OR**

4) Altered level of consciousness

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Inouye SK, van Dyck CH, Slessi CA, Balkin S, Siegel AP, Horwitz RI: Clarifying confusion: The confusion assessment method – A new method for detection of delirium. *Ann Intern Med.* 1991. 113:941-948.