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## DELIRIUM IN OLDER ADULTS: ASSESSMENT SCALES REVIEW

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Introduction: Delirium is characterized by the rapid onset of symptoms which fluctuate, with an altered level of consciousness, global disturbance of cognition, perceptual abnormalities and evidence of a physical cause (DSM-IV-R, 2002).

Aim: To review the characteristics and psychometric properties of thirteen Delirium scales available in research and clinical practice.

Methods: MEDLINE database was used to identify the delirium scales in use (1990-2010), using the keywords: delirium, confusion, questionnaires, scales, severity and screening.

Only validation studies were included. Exclusion criteria were children and alcohol/drug delirium assessment scales. This study included seven screening scales: Confusion Assessment Method, Intensive Care Delirium Screening Checklist, Delirium Symptom Interview, NEECHAM Confusion Scale, Cognitive Test for Delirium, Delirium Observation Screening, Nursing Delirium Screening Scale and seven severity scales: Delirium Rating Scale, Memorial Delirium Assessment Scale, Confusional State Evaluation, Delirium Severity Scale, Delirium Index and Delirium-O-Meter.

Results: The majority of scales were based on the Diagnosis Statistical Manual Criteria as well as on a review of selected symptoms of Delirium informed by systematic clinical observation and formal brief assessment of mental status. In most of the studies, for psychometric analysis, the inter-rater reliability and validity with severity of Delirium assessment and cognitive screening tests were used.

Conclusion: Bearing in mind the recent review studies included, we can conclude that CAM is the most widely used instrument for delirium assessment.