

## Mental Health Literacy Scale

The purpose of these questions is to gain an understanding of your knowledge of various aspects to do with mental health. When responding, we are interested in your degree of knowledge. Therefore when choosing your response, consider that:

Very unlikely = I am certain that it is NOT likely

Unlikely = I think it is unlikely but am not certain

Likely = I think it is likely but am not certain

Very Likely = I am certain that it IS very likely

1

If someone became extremely nervous or anxious in one or more situations with other people (e.g., a party) or performance situations (e.g., presenting at a meeting) in which they were afraid of being evaluated by others and that they would act in a way that was humiliating or feel embarrassed, then to what extent do you think it is likely they have **Social Phobia**

Very unlikely

Unlikely

Likely

Very Likely

2

If someone experienced excessive worry about a number of events or activities where this level of concern was not warranted, had difficulty controlling this worry and had physical symptoms such as having tense muscles and feeling fatigued then to what extent do you think it is likely they have **Generalised Anxiety Disorder**

Very unlikely

Unlikely

Likely

Very Likely

3

If someone experienced a low mood for two or more weeks, had a loss of pleasure or interest in their normal activities and experienced changes in their appetite and sleep then to what extent do you think it is likely they have **Major Depressive Disorder**

Very unlikely

Unlikely

Likely

Very Likely

4

To what extent do you think it is likely that **Personality Disorders** are a category of mental illness

Very unlikely

Unlikely

Likely

Very Likely

5

To what extent do you think it is likely that **Dysthymia** is a disorder

Very unlikely

Unlikely

Likely

Very Likely

6

To what extent do you think it is likely that the diagnosis of **Agoraphobia** includes anxiety about situations where escape may be difficult or embarrassing

Very unlikely

Unlikely

Likely

Very Likely

7

To what extent do you think it is likely that the diagnosis of **Bipolar Disorder** includes experiencing periods of elevated (i.e., high) and periods of depressed (i.e., low) mood

Very unlikely                      Unlikely                      Likely                      Very Likely

8

To what extent do you think it is likely that the diagnosis of **Drug Dependence** includes physical and psychological tolerance of the drug (i.e., require more of the drug to get the same effect)

Very unlikely                      Unlikely                      Likely                      Very Likely

9

To what extent do you think it is likely that in general in Australia, **women are MORE likely to experience a mental illness of any kind compared to men**

Very unlikely                      Unlikely                      Likely                      Very Likely

10

To what extent do you think it is likely that in general, in Australia, **men are MORE likely to experience an anxiety disorder compared to women**

Very unlikely                      Unlikely                      Likely                      Very Likely

When choosing your response, consider that:

- Very Unhelpful = I am certain that it is NOT helpful
- Unhelpful = I think it is unhelpful but am not certain
- Helpful = I think it is helpful but am not certain
- Very Helpful = I am certain that it IS very helpful

11

To what extent do you think it would be helpful for someone to **improve their quality of sleep** if they were having difficulties managing their emotions (e.g., becoming very anxious or depressed)

Very unhelpful                      Unhelpful                      Helpful                      Very helpful

12

To what extent do you think it would be helpful for someone to **avoid all activities or situations that made them feel anxious** if they were having difficulties managing their emotions

Very unhelpful                      Unhelpful                      Helpful                      Very helpful

When choosing your response, consider that:

- Very unlikely = I am certain that it is NOT likely
- Unlikely = I think it is unlikely but am not certain
- Likely = I think it is likely but am not certain
- Very Likely = I am certain that it IS very likely

13

To what extent do you think it is likely that **Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)** is a therapy based on challenging negative thoughts and increasing helpful behaviours

Very unlikely                      Unlikely                      Likely                      Very Likely

14

Mental health professionals are bound by confidentiality; however there are certain conditions under which this does not apply.

To what extent do you think it is likely that the following is a condition that would allow a mental health professional to **break confidentiality**:

*If you are at immediate risk of harm to yourself or others*

Very unlikely                      Unlikely                      Likely                      Very Likely

15

Mental health professionals are bound by confidentiality; however there are certain conditions under which this does not apply.

To what extent do you think it is likely that the following is a condition that would allow a mental health professional to **break confidentiality**:

*if your problem is not life-threatening and they want to assist others to better support you*

Very unlikely                      Unlikely                      Likely                      Very Likely

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
16. I am confident that I know where to seek information about mental illness					
17. I am confident using the computer or telephone to seek information about mental illness					
18. I am confident attending face to face appointments to seek information about mental illness (e.g., seeing the GP)					
19. I am confident I have access to resources (e.g., GP, internet, friends) that I can use to seek information about mental illness					

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
20. People with a mental illness could snap out if it if they wanted					
21. A mental illness is a sign of personal weakness					
22. A mental illness is not a real medical illness					
23. People with a mental illness are dangerous					
24. It is best to avoid people with a mental illness so that you don't develop this problem					
25. If I had a mental illness I would not tell anyone					
26. Seeing a mental health professional means you are not strong enough to manage your own difficulties					
27. If I had a mental illness, I would not seek help from a mental health professional					
28. I believe treatment for a mental illness, provided by a mental health professional, would not be effective					

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

	Definitely unwilling	Probably unwilling	Neither unwilling or willing	Probably willing	Definitely willing
29. How willing would you be to move next door to someone with a mental illness?					
30. How willing would you be to spend an evening socialising with someone with a mental illness?					
31. How willing would you be to make friends with someone with a mental illness?					

	Definitely unwilling	Probably unwilling	Neither unwilling or willing	Probably willing	Definitely willing
32. How willing would you be to have someone with a mental illness start working closely with you on a job?					
33. How willing would you be to have someone with a mental illness marry into your family?					
34. How willing would you be to vote for a politician if you knew they had suffered a mental illness?					
35. How willing would you be to employ someone if you knew they had a mental illness?					

### **Scoring**

Total score is produced by summing all items (see reverse scored items below). Questions with a 4-point scale are rated 1- very unlikely/unhelpful, 4 – very likely/helpful and for 5-point scale 1 – strongly disagree/definitely unwilling, 5 – strongly agree/definitely willing

Reverse scored items: 10, 12, 15, 20-28

Maximum score – 160

Minimum score – 35

### **Reference**

O'Connor, M., & Casey, L. (2015). The mental health literacy scale (MHLS): A new scale-based measure of mental health literacy, *Psychiatry Research*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2015.05.064>

If you intend to use the MHLS, please contact Matt O'Connor at [matt.f.oconnor@gmail.com](mailto:matt.f.oconnor@gmail.com)