

## CLINIC INTERVIEW FUNCTION STATUS & LIFE SPACE QUESTIONS

### 1. Introduction

This section contains information about 2 questionnaires that will be administered to all participants who take part in Visit 4 (Clinic Visits and SAQ only): the Functional Status Questions and the Life Space Questionnaire. Specific information about the questions asked in these questionnaires is provided below.

### 2. Administration of the Functional Status and Life Space Questions

For participants who return to the 4<sup>th</sup> clinic visit, the functional status and life space questions should be administered in a clinic interview setting. The questions in each set can be asked together in a single clinic interview session or each section can be asked at different times throughout the visit.

For those participants who do not return to the clinic for Visit 4 (the SAQ only), the clinic interview can be conducted via phone interview. Alternatively, sites can choose to mail these two questionnaires to the SAQ only with their Visit 4 SAQ and follow-up via phone call for any inconsistencies and/or missing data after the questionnaires are returned.

Please note that while it is acceptable that this questionnaire be completed via a phone interview or via a mailed questionnaire, this set of sections will be referred to as the ‘Clinic Interview’.

*Please read the “Interviewing Guidelines” protocol for more information about general interview conduct.*

### 3. Functional Status

**Q1-11.** These questions ask about difficulty in accomplishing selected activities. One frequent area of confusion regarding functional status measures is determining the degree of difficulty for activities that the subject accomplished with help or with special aids. Therefore, we ask about difficulty when the respondent performs the activity **by himself and without using any special aids.**

It is important that the participant answers the questions about the degree of difficulty for the 11 specific activities when he does **NOT** use any aids or receive help. Be sure the participant understands that the questions are about difficulty he has by himself and without the use of special aids. Aids include a cane, walker, artificial limb, special eating appliances, special reaching appliances, grab bars, automatic lifts, etc.

Customization: How you ask the functional status questions can be tailored somewhat to the participant. If a participant is obviously using a cane, say “without your cane, would you have difficulty....”.

If a participant says that he can do an activity but only very slowly, ask if he has difficulty doing the activity at a speed that he would consider normal for his age. If he does have difficulty at a normal speed, then mark ‘yes.’

**Pain vs. difficulty:** If a participant says he has pain but not difficulty, ask if pain makes the task more difficult or impossible to do. If so, then this is ‘difficulty.’ If he doesn’t do something because of pain, then this should be interpreted as a form of difficulty.

For each question, the participant should determine if he has difficulty doing the activity listed. If he answers YES, he will need to indicate the level of difficulty and then indicate if the difficulty is due to a health or physical problem. If he answers NO, then you can skip to the next question. If he answers I DON’T DO IT, he should indicate if this is because of a health or physical problem.

For multiple activity questions, like housework, where the level of difficulty may vary across activities use the following rules of thumb:

1. If he doesn’t do one or two activities for non-health reasons (e.g. wash windows) but has no difficulty with most others, then code as “no difficulty”.
2. If he is unable to do some activities but has no difficulty with most others, code as “some difficulty”.
3. If he is unable to do some activities and has difficulty with most others, code as “much difficulty”.
4. If he is unable to do most activities, code as “unable”.

If he has difficulty (answers “Yes”) with an activity ask about the degree of difficulty and then the reason for the difficulty (health or physical problem).

If a participant reports that they do not do an activity ask if this is because of a health or physical problem.

#### **4. Life Space Questionnaire**

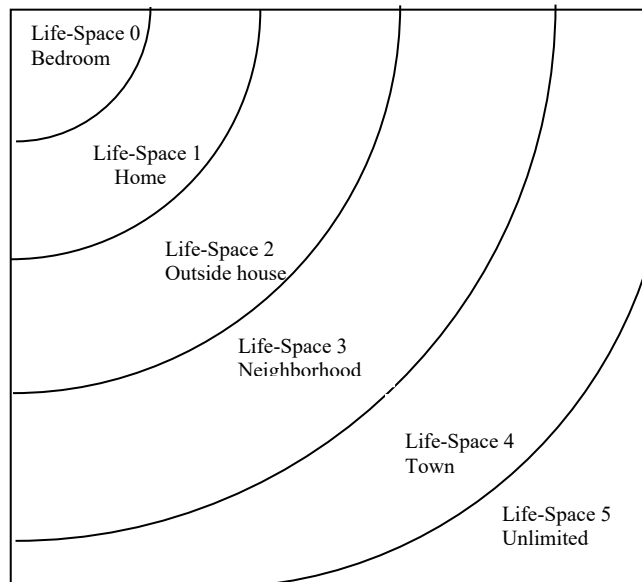
The Life Space Questionnaire measures mobility in terms of the spatial extent of a person's life. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine a person's usual pattern of mobility during the month preceding the assessment. Life-space is defined based upon the distance a person routinely travels to perform activities over this time frame. The Life Space Questionnaire also determines how far and how often the person leaves his place of residence and the degree of independence he has. Lastly, the questionnaire explores the idea that “life space” often constricts with age.

The Life Space Questionnaire is used to identify the distance through which a participant has moved during the four weeks prior to the assessment. Each level of life-space represents a distance further from the room where one sleeps.

- 0 = Mobility limited to the room where one sleeps
- 1 = Mobility limited to within one's dwelling
- 2 = Mobility limited to the space just proximal to one's personal living space (for instance, a porch, patio, or yard just outside the home or hallway outside of an apartment)
- 3 = Mobility limited to one's neighborhood
- 4 = Mobility limited to one's town
- 5 = Mobility outside one's town

These concentric levels of life-space are illustrated in the figure below. Definitions of life-space levels vary somewhat among people but are consistent individually. Research indicates that 60% of subjects (both urban and rural) describe their neighborhood as being within 1/2 mile of their home. Moreover, 92.5% agree that travel outside one's town is greater than 10 miles.

#### LIFE-SPACE LEVELS



#### Defining Life-space Levels:

The questions on the Life Space Questionnaire refer to the participant's activity within the past month prior to the day of the clinic visit.

It is critical to assess the degree of independent mobility for each level of life-space.

#### Notes:

- The questions refer to activities *just within the past month*. Sometimes a participant is temporarily limited (recovering from surgery or illness) and wants to provide information about their "usual" or "normal" activity. It is important to get the information that defines the participant's mobility just within the past month, not how they were before that, or how they expect to be in the near future. This applies to all aspects of the assessment, distance, frequency, and assistance needed.
- Do not skip any levels no matter how obvious the answers may appear. For instance, sometimes a person will say "no" to going anywhere within their neighborhood but will report going to town several times a week, so the higher level will be answered "yes". By definition, a participant who indicates they travel to their town must go through their neighborhood on the way to town. The computer analysis algorithm that we use to calculate variables related to life space will give "credit" for participants going out of their neighborhood even though the participant may report that they did not. *For all questions, you simply need to record the answer(s) provided by the participant.*
- Ask all of the questions for each level. For a given level, if the participant answers "yes" to the first question, continue to ask the questions about frequency, aids and equipment, and personal assistance. For a given level, if the participant answers "no" to the first question, you can move onto the next level.
- Measures of assistance frequently change as one progresses up the life-space scale.
- The meaning of "neighborhood" and "town" is whatever the participant perceives it to be. Try not to define it for them. Sometimes subjects will ask if you want to know if they *walk* within their neighborhood. We are not defining the method used, but whether or not they get there, how often, and how independently.

Self-determination of neighborhood and town is suggested. (If mile demarcations are needed, the following are suggested to agree with self-defined distances.)

- Within one's neighborhood: less than 1/2 mile
  - Within one's town: Outside one's neighborhood but within 10 miles of one's home
  - Outside of one's town: 10 + miles
- Don't make the assessment harder than it is. Be sure to use the probes suggested below to determine the degree of assistance needed.

### **Administering the Life-Space Questionnaire:**

#### Life-Space Level 1

Begin by asking the participant,

*“During the past four weeks, have you been to other rooms of your home besides the room where you sleep?”*

If the participant answers “Yes,” record this on the TELEform and proceed to the questions about “Frequency.” If the participant answers “No”, move on to the next level.

Ask the participant,

*“How often did you get there?”*

Read each of the answer choices and record his response on the TELEform.

Following that, ask the participant both of the following questions, waiting for a response after each question:

*“Did you use aids or equipment? Did you need help from another person?”*

At Visit 4, the Yes/No responses for each of the questions above will be recorded on the data collection form. Data will then be coded by the Coordinating Center to match the data from previous visits.

#### **Personal assistance:**

If a person attains a level only with the help of another person, this question should be marked as ‘Yes’. This includes persons who require someone to drive them places, someone to help them get onto a bus, or someone who needs accompaniment.

For personal help, if the respondent generally has another person present "in case," they will be noted as needing personal help. If they use personal help when available but not always, they will NOT be noted as needing help since it is presumed they could go on their own. For example, if the person reports that their son drives when he is available, but drives otherwise by himself, he is given credit for achieving that life-space level by himself. However, if he drives, but the son always has to be in the car with him, he is classified as needing help.

#### **Assistance from equipment:**

If a person attains a level using an assistive device such as a cane, walker, or any device, this question should be marked as ‘Yes’. Aids can also be furniture placed strategically in the room for balance, or a walker left next to a bed or chair to assist the person in rising or sitting.

If a participant has previously indicated using a cane or appears to use a case (for those participants who are seen in the clinic), the interviewer should prompt, starting at level 1, “did you use your cane to get to \_\_\_\_\_?” If the participant says no, the interviewer would prompt for use of the cane at each successive level. If the person "sometimes" uses the equipment and/or takes it along "in case," the participant should be marked as using the equipment.

Be aware that equipment and aids include all of the following: cane or walking stick, walker, wheelchair, special “rising-seat-chair”/“lift chair”, ramp, crutch or crutches, brace, artificial limb, runabout/scooter, bar or rails in bathroom, tub, or shower, bath chair, roll-in shower, bedside commode or toilet/raised toilet seat, bed pan, hospital bed, ventilator, oxygen/special breathing equipment (inhalers, atomizers, nebulizers).

**Note:** If the person uses equipment to achieve a lower level life-space, by definition that person requires equipment to achieve all subsequent life-space levels. Similarly, if a person requires personal assistance to attain a lower level of life-space, by definition, the person requires personal assistance to attain all higher life-space levels. ***For all questions, you simply need to record the answer(s) provided by the participant.*** The computer analysis algorithm that we use to calculate variables related to life space will correct inconsistencies in subject reports related to the use of equipment and personal assistance. For example, a person may report needing personal help to get out of bed in the morning, but then report that he can get around using a walker. In this example, after the computer analysis program is run, the person would be noted as needing personal help at all levels since he reported personal help to get out of bed.

#### **Transportation:**

At the point in the Life-Space Assessment that transportation is indicated as the method of travel, the interviewer (for when the Life Space Questions are administered in an interview setting) needs to probe to see if the person travels independently (by themselves.) The transition usually occurs at level 4, possibly at level 3. The interviewer should probe to see if the respondent drives or walks within the neighborhood if the respondent does not so indicate. For each of these levels, the interviewer can specifically ask, "Do you drive or does someone else drive?" "Does \_\_\_ go with you every time you go \_\_\_?" "Do you get on the bus or van by yourself or does somebody have to help you?" (Using public transportation independently gives the person full credit for independence.)

#### **Coding in the Coordinating Center Database:**

The Coordinating Center will take the Yes/No responses to the individual questions about personal assistance and assistive devices and code it to match data from previous visits. Specifically, if a participant uses personal assistance it will be coded as ‘Personal Assistance’. If a participant uses personal assistance AND an assistive devices, this will be coded as “Personal Assistance.”

If a person attains a level using only an assistive device such as a cane, walker, or any device, *and* help from another person is not needed, this will be coded as "Equipment Only”.

Independent mobility means that the person attains a level without help from any equipment or assistive devices and without the help of a person. If someone reports that they did not need personal assistance or assistance from equipment, this will be coded as “No assistance”

Life-Space Levels 2-5

Proceed with the remaining life-space level questions as indicated for Life-space Level 1 above.