PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5)

Client Name	Generic Client			*Date administered*	9 Aug 2024
Date of birth (age)	1 Jan 2000 (24)			*Time taken*	26s
Assessor	Dr David Hegarty				

Results

|	Raw Score	Mean Score	Descriptor	DSM-5 Criteria		Normative Percentile	PTSD Percentile
Total (0-80)	32	1.60	Mild	Criteria met		83	40.7
Re-Experiencing (0-20)	12	2.40	Moderate		●	-	-
Avoidance (0-8)	5	2.50	Severe		●	-	-
Negative Alterations (0-28)	8	1.14	Normal	●		-	-
Hyper-Arousal (0-24)	7	1.17	Normal	●		-	-

Interpretation

Compared to when first administered on 22 February 2024, symptoms have improved slightly.

According to the DSM-5 scoring criteria for the PCL-5, responses are consistent with significant PTSD symptoms. The client's DSM-5 symptom clusters for PTSD:
  - Cluster B: Re-experiencing: 5 symptoms present (1 required).
  - Cluster C: Avoidance: 2 symptoms present (1 required).
  - Cluster D: Negative alterations in cognition and mood: 3 symptoms present (2 required).
  - Cluster E: Hyper-arousal: 2 symptoms present (2 required).

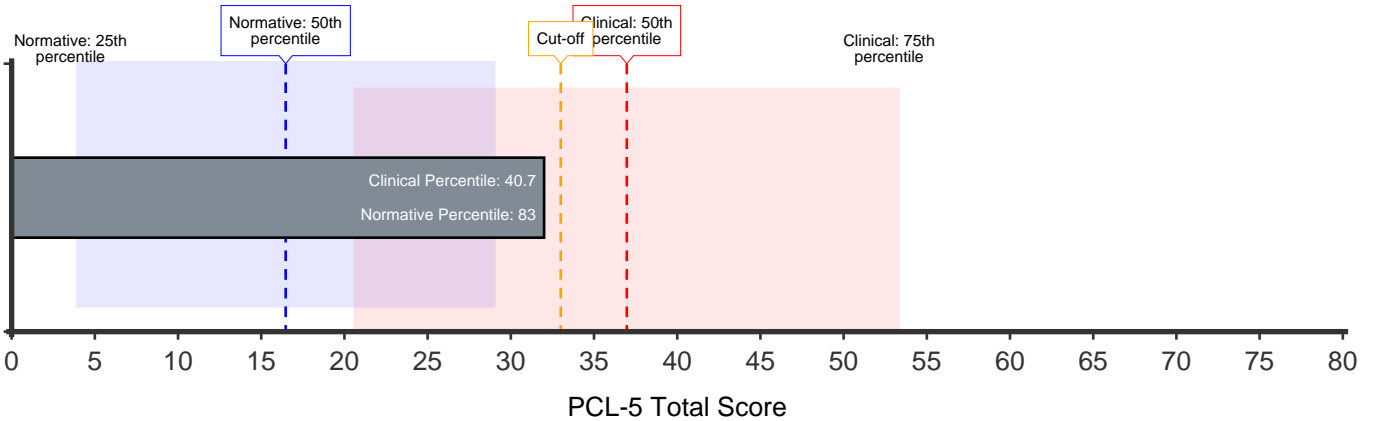The client's responses are consistent with a wide range of PTSD symptoms.

Average Scores
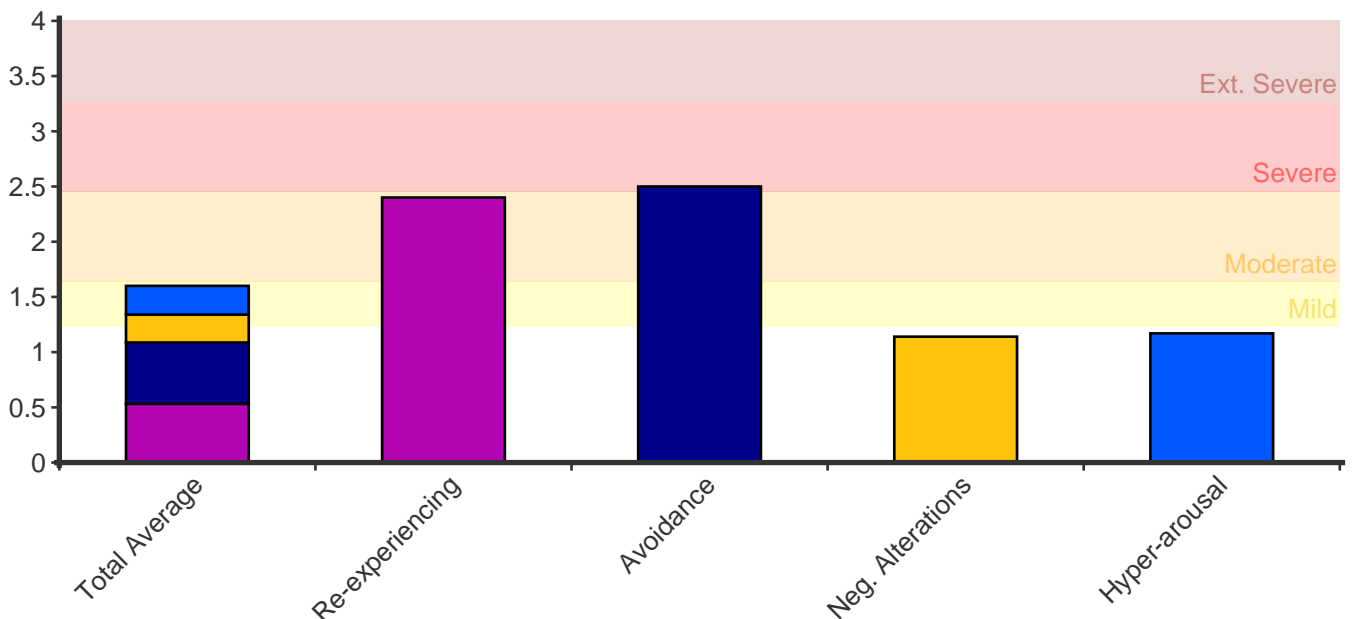
PCL-5 Total Score in Comparison to Normative and Clinical Distributions

Scoring and Interpretation Information

For comprehensive information on the PCL-5, see here.

Total scores can range from 0 to 80, with higher scores indicating greater PTSD symptom severity. Percentiles are also presented for the total score in comparison to both a normative and clinical (PTSD) sample. A normative percentile of 50 is indicative of an average score for someone who does not have PTSD, whereas a PTSD percentile of 50 is indicative of an average score for someone who is currently in care for PTSD.

There are four subscales which match the four symptom clusters for PTSD within DSM-5:
- Re-experiencing (criterion B, items 1-5, max score = 20)
- Avoidance (criterion C, items 6-7, max score = 8)
- Negative alterations in cognition and mood (Criterion D, items 8-14, max score = 28)
- Hyper-arousal (Criterion E, items 15-20, max score = 24)

In addition to a raw score being presented, a mean score is also computed, which is the subscale score divided by the number of items within that subscale. The average score can help determine elevated symptom clusters when comparing each of the four subscales. These scores range between 0 to 4, where higher scores represent higher severity. Consistent with the likert scale:
0 = Not at all
1 = A little bit
2 = Moderately
3 = Quite a bit
4 = Extremely

Symptom descriptors are also presented for the total score and each of the subscale scores. These descriptors are determined by the distance from the normative mean:
- Normal Range - Average score less than or equal to 1.23
- Mild - Average score above 1.23 and less than or equal to 1.64
- Moderate - Average score above 1.64 and less than or equal to 2.455
- Severe - Average score above 2.455 and less than or equal to 3.265

Scoring and Interpretation Information (cont.)

- Extremely Severe - Average score above 3.265

Given the PCL-5 questions closely reassembled the diagnostic criteria in the DSM-5-TR, a provisional PTSD diagnosis can be made based on the following rule. The DSM-5 diagnostic criteria requires at least: 1 Criterion B item (questions 1-5), 1 Criterion C item (questions 6-7), 2 Criterion D items (questions 8-14), and 2 Criterion E items (questions 15-20). A score of 2 (Moderately on the likert scale) or higher is an endorsed symptom.

Notwithstanding the DSM related diagnostic criteria, scores of 33 or above are considered to be of clinical significance, and can serve as an alternative threshold for identifying significant PTSD symptoms that interfere with daily functioning (Bovin et al., 2016; Krüger-Gottschalk et al., 2017; Rosendahl et al., 2019).

A comparison graph is presented showing where the respondent's score sits in comparison to the normative and PTSD samples, with shaded areas around the means indicating the two middle quartiles (between 25th and 75th percentile). This graph can help contextualise PCL-5 total scores in comparison to the distribution of responses among clinical and non-clinical groups. A cutoff score of 33 indicates the point at which symptoms are defined as clinically significant.

When administered more than once, longitudinal graphs are presented showing change in symptoms over time. A 12 point change during the course of treatment represents clinically significant change (Renyer, 2016).

Client Responses

		Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
1	Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?	0	1	**2**	3	4
2	Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience?	0	1	**2**	3	4
3	Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)?	0	1	2	**3**	4
4	Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	**3**	4
5	Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)?	0	1	**2**	3	4
6	Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?	0	1	2	**3**	4
7	Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people, places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)?	0	1	**2**	3	4
8	Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?	0	**1**	2	3	4

Client Name	Generic Client

Client Responses (cont.)

		Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
9	Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people, or the world (for example, having thoughts such as: I am bad, there is something seriously wrong with me, no one can be trusted, the world is completely dangerous)?	**0**	1	2	3	4
10	Blaming yourself or someone else for the stressful experience or what happened after it?	**0**	1	2	3	4
11	Having strong negative feelings such as fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame?	0	**1**	2	3	4
12	Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy?	0	1	**2**	3	4
13	Feeling distant or cut off from other people?	0	1	**2**	3	4
14	Trouble experiencing positive feelings (for example, being unable to feel happiness or have loving feelings for people close to you)?	0	1	**2**	3	4
15	Irritable behaviour, angry outbursts, or acting aggressively?	0	1	**2**	3	4
16	Taking too many risks or doing things that could cause you harm?	0	**1**	2	3	4
17	Being "superalert" or watchful or on guard?	**0**	1	2	3	4
18	Feeling jumpy or easily startled?	0	**1**	2	3	4
19	Having difficulty concentrating?	0	1	**2**	3	4
20	Trouble falling or staying asleep?	0	**1**	2	3	4