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A Review of the Clinical Utility and Psychometric Properties of the ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) – Clinician Version: Percentile Rankings and Qualitative Descriptors

The ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) – Clinician Version was developed by Adamis and colleagues (2024). It is a 15-item routine clinical outcome measure of ADHD and related mental health problems and functional difficulties. This technical review provides clinicians with percentile rankings and qualitative descriptors to enhance the interpretation and clinical utility of ACOS scores.

[View the ACOS on NovoPsych.com.au](https://www.novopsych.com.au)

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December 2024

Developer

The ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) – Clinician Version was developed by Adamis and colleagues (2024):

Adamis, D., Singh, J., Coad, I., Wrigley, M., Gavin, B., & McNicholas, F. (2024). Measuring clinical outcomes in adult ADHD clinics: Psychometrics of a new scale, the adult ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale. *BJPsych Open*, 10(6), e180. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjo.2024.739>

This document was developed by NovoPsych to review contemporary literature and to describe original scoring methodologies and to provide interpretation material, enhance normative data and provide qualitative descriptors.

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Citation

Baker, S., Smyth, C., Bartholomew, E., Buchanan, B., & Hegarty, D. (2024). A Review of the Clinical Utility and Psychometric Characteristics of the ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) – Clinician Version: Percentile Rankings and Qualitative Descriptors. Retrieved from: <https://novopsych.com.au/assessments/outcome-monitoring/adhd-clinical-outcome-scale-acos-clinician-version>

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Description

The ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) is a 15-item routine clinical outcome measure of ADHD and related mental health problems and functional difficulties (Adamis et al., 2024). It is designed to assess the main symptoms of ADHD as well as co-occurring mental health difficulties (e.g., anxiety and depression) and challenges in daily functioning (e.g., difficulties with work and with everyday life).

The ACOS provides a total score representing the overall severity of symptoms and problems/difficulties associated with ADHD as well as a score for each of its four subscales.

- **Attention and Functional Difficulties**, which includes difficulties with attention, organisation, procrastination, work, and everyday life.
- **Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation**, which includes hyperactivity/restlessness, impulsivity, emotional fluctuation (ups and downs in mood), and temper/anger outbursts.
- **Co-occurring Mental Health Problems**, which includes anxiety, depression, and sleep problems.
- **Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems**, which includes alcohol and drug use problems, self-harm, and tension in relationships.

The ACOS is suitable for adults as a clinician-rated scale or self-report questionnaire (see ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) – Self-Report Version). Both versions provide a time-efficient means to assess and track changes in ADHD symptoms and related mental health problems and functional difficulties.

Psychometric Properties

The ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) was validated on a sample of 148 adults (mean age = 30.1 years, SD = 9.71 years; 45.3% male, 54.7% female) diagnosed with ADHD (Adamis et al., 2024). They had been referred to, and were recruited from, a tertiary specialist outpatient clinic for adult ADHD, and they all fulfilled diagnostic criteria for ADHD.

The sample's mean total ACOS score for the Clinician Version was 39.42 (SD = 10.33). These data are used to convert the client's total ACOS score to a percentile, providing useful information about the severity of their symptoms and problems/difficulties associated with ADHD relative to adults with ADHD.

The Clinician Version demonstrates strong psychometric properties, including evidence of concurrent validity with the WEISS Functional Impairment Rating Scale (WFIRS) and the Adult ADHD Quality of Life (AAQoL) scale as well as high internal consistency and good reliability. Exploratory factor analysis indicates that it has four factors:

- Attention and Functional Difficulties
- Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation
- Co-occurring Mental Health Problems
- Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems

Both the Clinician Version and Self-Report Version demonstrate sensitivity to changes in the overall severity of symptoms and problems/difficulties associated with ADHD, making them suitable for routine measurement of clinical outcomes in adults with ADHD.

Scoring & Interpretation

The ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) yields a total score between 0 and 75, with higher scores indicating a greater severity of symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD. Each item is rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale from 0 to 5 reflecting the degree to which the individual has experienced a specific problem in the past 2 weeks.

The client’s total ACOS score is expressed as a percentile based on normative data for adults with ADHD (Adamis et al., 2020), contextualising their score relative to the typical scores of adults with ADHD. For example, the 50th percentile represents the typical level of severity among adults with ADHD (i.e., “Moderately Severe”), while scores on the 90th percentile fall within the top 10% when compared to adults with ADHD and are considered “Severe”.

Total ACOS Score			
	Score	Percentile	Descriptor
Total ACOS (0-75)	43	64	Moderately Severe

Scores are also provided for the scale’s four subscales:

- **Attention and Functional Difficulties** (Items 2, 6, 10, 14, and 15), which includes difficulties with attention, organisation, procrastination, work, and everyday life.
- **Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation** (Items 1, 3, 5, and 7), which includes hyperactivity/restlessness, impulsivity, emotional fluctuation (ups and downs in mood), and temper/anger outbursts.
- **Co-occurring Mental Health Problems** (Items 11, 12, and 13), which includes anxiety, depression, and sleep problems.
- **Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems** (Items 4, 8, and 9), which includes alcohol and drug use problems, self-harm, and tension in relationships.

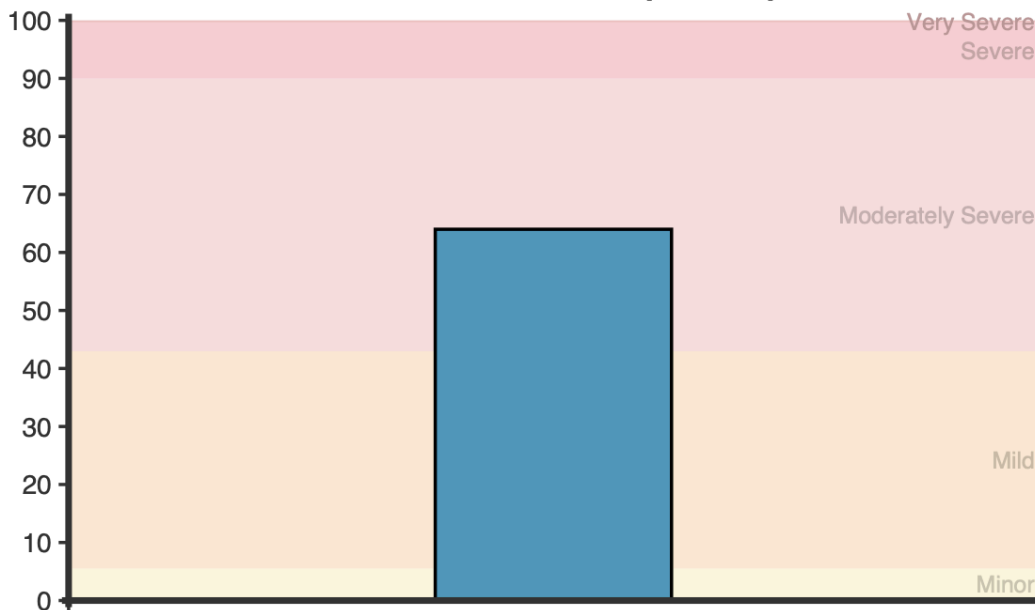
Subscale Scores			
	Score	Average (0-5)	Descriptor
Attention and Functional Difficulties (0-25)	14	2.8	Moderately Severe
Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation (0-20)	15	3.75	Severe
Co-occurring Mental Health Problems (0-15)	8	2.67	Moderately Severe
Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems (0-15)	6	2	Mild

The scoring approach uses qualitative descriptors to categorise ACOS scores. Each descriptor corresponds to a specific range of average scores reflecting the 6-point rating scale. The overall average score is calculated by dividing the total ACOS score by the number of items in the scale (i.e., 15). The average score for each subscale is calculated by dividing the subscale’s score by the number of items in the subscale. The descriptors and corresponding score ranges are as follows.

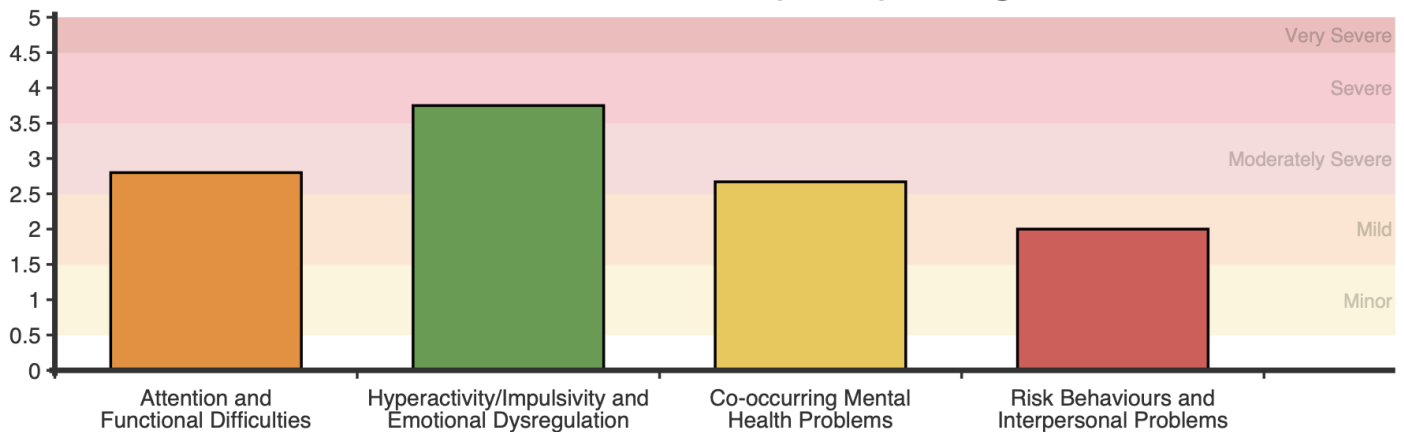
- “No Problem” (average score of 0-0.49) (total score of 0-7)
- “Minor” (average score of 0.5-1.49) (total score of 8-22)
- “Mild” (average score of 1.5-2.49) (total score of 23-37)

- “Moderately Severe” (average score of 2.5-3.49) (total score of 38-52)
- “Severe” (average score of 3.5-4.49) (total score of 53-67)
- “Very Severe” (average score of 4.5-5) (total score of 68-75)

ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Percentile



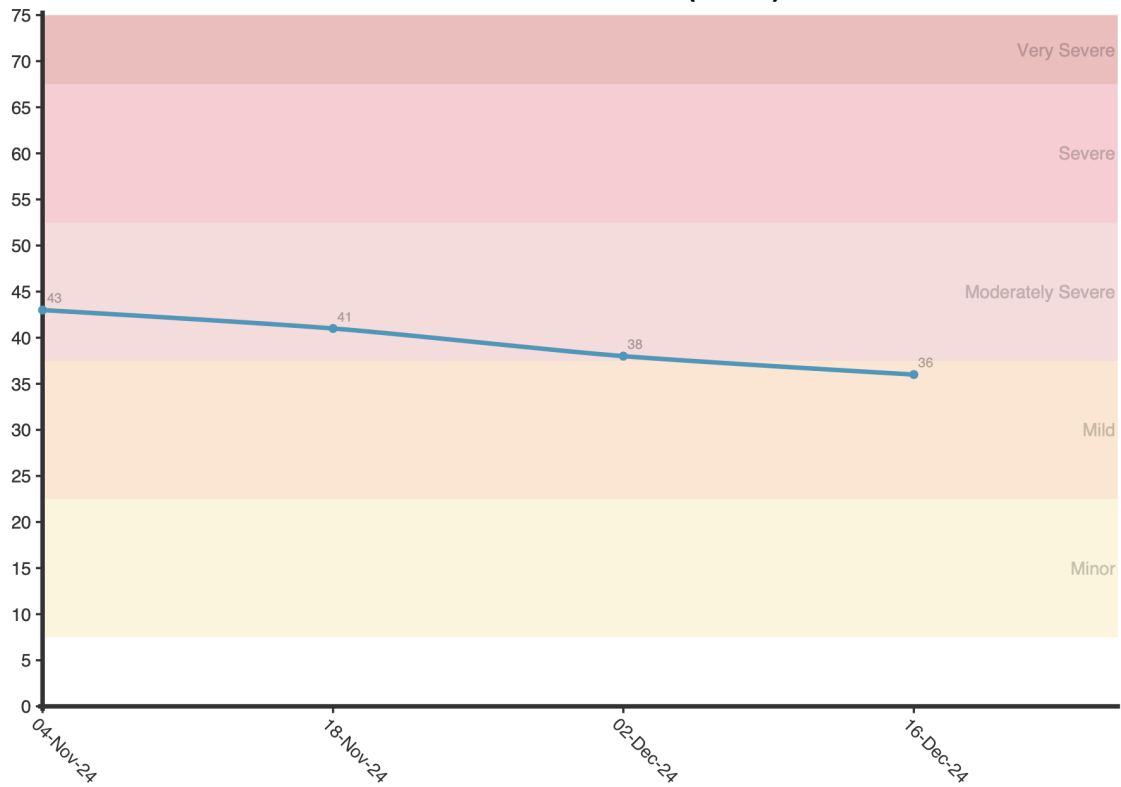
ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Average Scores



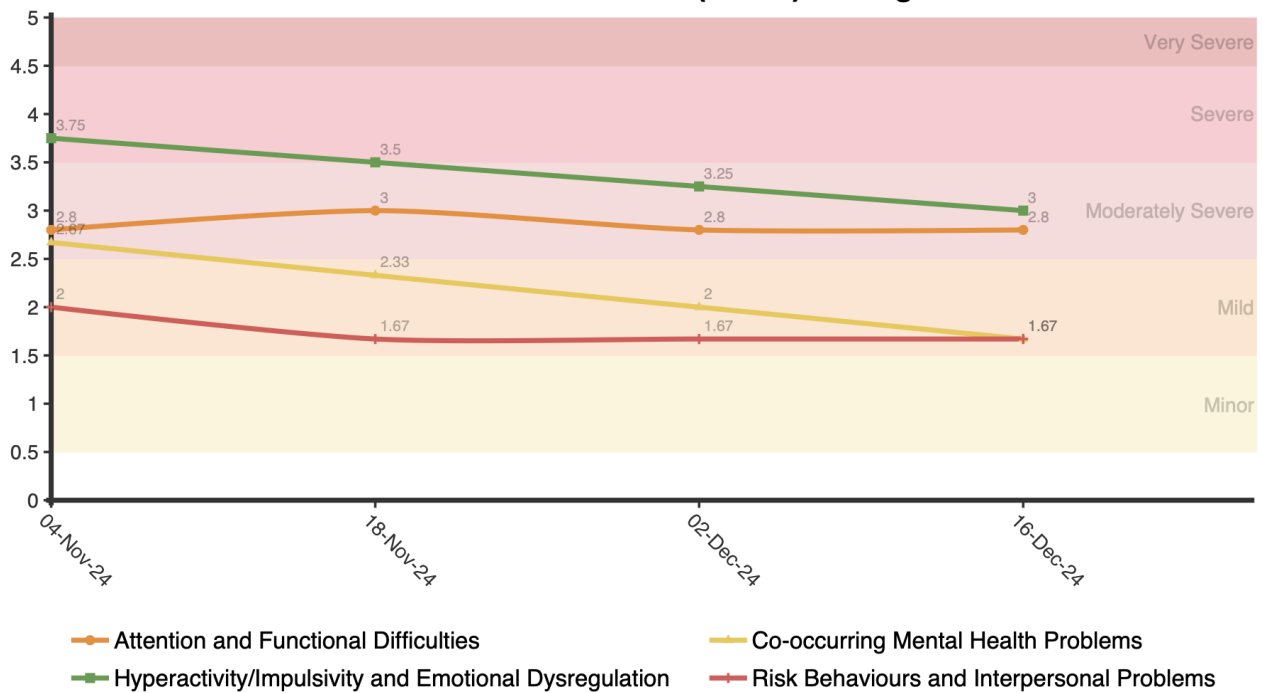
On first administration, graphs are presented showing the client’s total ACOS as a percentile and the client’s average score for each subscale. If administered more than once, longitudinal graphs are presented for the total ACOS score and the average scores for each subscale, indicating if there have been any changes in these scores over time. A meaningful change in overall severity is defined as a change of 5 or more points in the total ACOS score based on a Minimally Important Difference (MID) calculation (i.e., a 5 or more point increase indicates a significant increase; a 5 or more point decrease indicates significant reduction; and less than a 5 point change indicates no significant change).



ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Score



ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Average Scores



Supporting Information

This section outlines NovoPsych’s development of percentile rankings for the ACOS based on data obtained from a study by Adamis and colleagues (2024). These norms enhance the interpretability of ACOS scores.

This section also outlines NovoPsych’s development of classification thresholds and qualitative descriptors for ACOS scores. These descriptors provide clinicians with clear and consistent classifications of severity levels, supporting better understanding and communication of ACOS scores.

Lastly, this section describes the structure and logic of the automated interpretive text that NovoPsych provides in ACOS reports. This interpretive text adapts to the client's scores and assessment history, providing clinicians with comprehensive, tailored interpretations of ACOS results.

Percentile Calculations

The mean total ACOS score for the Clinician Version was 39.42 (SD = 10.33) (Adamis et al., 2024). NovoPsych has used this mean and standard deviation to convert ACOS scores to percentiles, as shown in Table 1, according to the following equation.

$$\text{Percentile} = 100 \times \Phi((x - M)/SD)$$

Where:

- x is the score
- M is the mean
- SD is the standard deviation
- Φ is the [standard normal cumulative distribution function](#)

This equation first standardises the score to a z-score by subtracting the mean and dividing by the standard deviation, then converts the z-score to a percentile by applying the standard normal cumulative distribution function and multiplying by 100.

The percentiles contextualise each score relative to typical scores among adults with ADHD, offering a clearer perspective on how the client’s severity level compares to that of adults with ADHD.



Percentile Table

Table 1. Percentiles for total ACOS scores relative to adults with ADHD.

Total	Total	Total
Descriptor	Score	Percentile
	0	0.01
	1	0.01
	2	0.01
	3	0.02
	4	0.03
	5	0.04
	6	0.06
	7	0.08
Minor	8	0.12
	9	0.16
	10	0.22
	11	0.3
	12	0.4
	13	0.5
	14	0.7
	15	0.9
	16	1.2
	17	1.5
	18	1.9
	19	2.4
	20	3
	21	3.7
	22	5
Mild	23	6
	24	7
	25	8
	26	10
	27	11
	28	13
	29	16
	30	18
	31	21
	32	24
	33	27
	34	30
	35	33
	36	37



	37	41
Moderately Severe	38	45
	39	48
	40	52
	41	56
	42	60
	43	64
	44	67
	45	71
	46	74
	47	77
	48	80
	49	82
	50	85
	51	87
	52	89
	Severe	53
54		92
55		93
56		95
57		96
58		96.4
59		97.1
60		97.7
61		98.2
62		98.6
63		98.9
64		99.1
65		99.3
66		99.5
67		99.62
Very Severe	68	99.72
	69	99.79
	70	99.85
	71	99.89
	72	99.92
	73	99.94
	74	99.96
	75	99.97

Descriptors

In addition to percentile rankings, NovoPsych has established qualitative descriptors for specific ranges of the total ACOS score and ACOS subscale scores.

Each descriptor corresponds to a specific range of average scores reflecting the 6-point rating scale. The overall average score is calculated by dividing the total ACOS score by the number of items in the scale (i.e., 15). The average score for each subscale is calculated by dividing the subscale's score by the number of items in the subscale. The descriptors and corresponding score ranges are as follows.

- “No Problem” (average score of 0-0.49) (total score of 0-7)
- “Minor” (average score of 0.5-1.49) (total score of 8-22)
- “Mild” (average score of 1.5-2.49) (total score of 23-37)
- “Moderately Severe” (average score of 2.5-3.49) (total score of 38-52)
- “Severe” (average score of 3.5-4.49) (total score of 53-67)
- “Very Severe” (average score of 4.5-5) (total score of 68-75)

The score ranges, and corresponding percentiles, are highlighted in different colours in Table 1.

Interpretive Text

The interpretive text for the ACOS follows a structured format that adapts based on the client's scores. The text begins with an overall statement about the client's ADHD symptoms and challenges, categorising their total score into one of six severity ranges: No (or "-"), Minor, Mild, Moderately Severe, Severe, or Very Severe. This statement includes a specific percentile comparison to a reference group of adults with ADHD.

"The responses on the ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) indicate that the client has been experiencing <"No" | "Minor" | "Mild" | "Moderately Severe" | "Severe" | "Very Severe"> symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD in the past 2 weeks. The total ACOS score is on the XXst/nd/rd/th percentile when compared to adults with ADHD."

Additional context is then provided based on the classification of the total score.

For No/"-" scores:

"A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing no or few problems associated with ADHD."

For Minor scores:

"A score in the "Minor" range indicates that, overall, the level of severity is below what is typically experienced by adults with ADHD."

For Mild scores, the interpretation varies based on the percentile:

Below 25th percentile:

"A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing mild problems, but the level of severity is below what is typically experienced by adults with ADHD."

25th percentile or higher:

"A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing mild problems at a level that is consistent with adults with ADHD."

For Moderately Severe scores, the interpretation varies based on the percentile:

75th percentile or lower:

"A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing moderately severe problems at a level that is consistent with adults with ADHD."

Above 75th percentile:

"A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing moderately severe problems at a level that is above what is typically experienced by adults with ADHD."

For Severe or Very Severe scores:

“A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing < “severe” | “very severe” > problems associated with ADHD, and that their score falls within the top XX percent when compared to adults with ADHD.”

For repeated/follow-up assessments, the text includes information about changes since the initial assessment. This includes the direction and magnitude of change in the total score, interpreted against a calculated Minimally Important Difference (MID) threshold that defines clinically meaningful change.

“Since the client was first assessed on [Date], the overall severity of symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD has < “significantly decreased” | “not changed significantly” | “significantly increased” >, with a X point < “change” | “decrease” | “increase” > in the score. A meaningful change in overall severity is defined as a change in the total ACOS score of X or more points based on a Minimally Important Difference (MID) calculation.”

The text then describes any subscales that score in the Moderately Severe, Severe, or Very Severe ranges (hereafter referred to as “notable” subscales). These subscales are presented in order of severity, first by classification (Very Severe followed by Severe then Moderately Severe) and then by average score.

The names of the four subscales are:

- Attention and Functional Difficulties
- Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation
- Co-occurring Mental Health Problems
- Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems

For each notable subscale, the text includes:

- The subscale’s classification
- The subscale’s items and their ratings, presented in order of severity

*“The responses on the < **Subscale Name** > subscale indicate that the client has been experiencing < “Moderately Severe” | “Severe” | “Very Severe” > problems in the past 2 weeks. The items were rated as follows:”*

Special consideration is given to the self-harm item/question (Item 9) if it receives a rating/score greater than zero. If so, the score is classified as Minor, Mild, Moderately Severe, Severe, or Very Severe and is described in the interpretive text.

*“The response to Item 9 indicates < “Minor” | “Mild” | “Moderately Severe” | “Severe” | “Very Severe” > problems relating to **self-harm**. It is recommended to follow suicide risk assessment protocols to determine the immediacy of the risk.”*

Developer

Adamis, D., Singh, J., Coadá, I., Wrigley, M., Gavin, B., & McNicholas, F. (2024). Measuring clinical outcomes in adult ADHD clinics: Psychometrics of a new scale, the adult ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale. *BJPsych Open*, 10(6), e180. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjo.2024.739>

References

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Assessment Questions



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ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale - Clinician Version (ACOS-Clinician)

Instructions:

Rating of items for the last 2 weeks

0 = no problem

1 = minor problem but no need to be addressed clinically

2 = mild problem present but maybe not need clinical action

3 = moderately severe problem clinical action is needed

4 = severe problem

5 = very severe problem

		No problem	Minor	Mild	Moderately severe	Severe	Very severe
1	Hyperactivity /restlessness	0	1	2	3	4	5
2	Attention difficulties	0	1	2	3	4	5
3	Temper /anger outburst	0	1	2	3	4	5
4	Problems with alcohol and drugs	0	1	2	3	4	5
5	Emotional fluctuation (dysregulation)	0	1	2	3	4	5
6	Disorganisation	0	1	2	3	4	5
7	Impulsivity	0	1	2	3	4	5
8	Tension in relationships	0	1	2	3	4	5
9	Self-harm	0	1	2	3	4	5
10	Problems with procrastination	0	1	2	3	4	5
11	Anxiety problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
12	Depression problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
13	Sleep problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
14	Study / work difficulties	0	1	2	3	4	5



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	No problem	Minor	Mild	Moderately severe	Severe	Very severe
15 Difficulties in the everyday personal life	0	1	2	3	4	5

Developer Reference:

Adamis, D., Singh, J., Coady, I., Wrigley, M., Gavin, B., & McNicholas, F. (2024). Measuring clinical outcomes in adult ADHD clinics: Psychometrics of a new scale, the adult ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale. *BJPsych Open*, 10(6), e180. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjo.2024.739>

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Sample Results



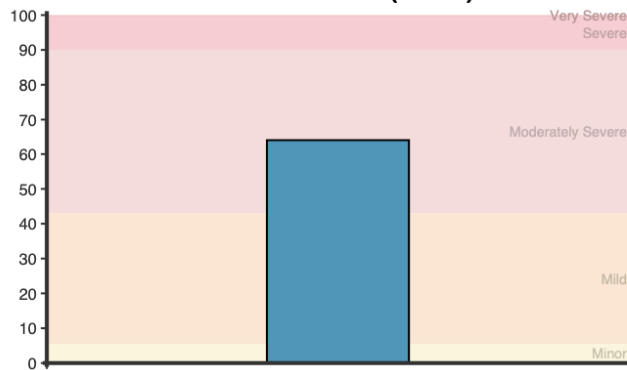
ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale - Clinician Version (ACOS-Clinician)

<i>Client Name</i>	Generic Client	<i>Date administered</i>	4 Nov 2024
<i>Date of birth (age)</i>	1 Jan 1990 (34)	<i>Time taken</i>	3 min 5s
<i>Assessor</i>	Dr Simon Baker		

Total ACOS Score

	Score	Percentile	Descriptor
Total ACOS (0-75)	43	64	Moderately Severe

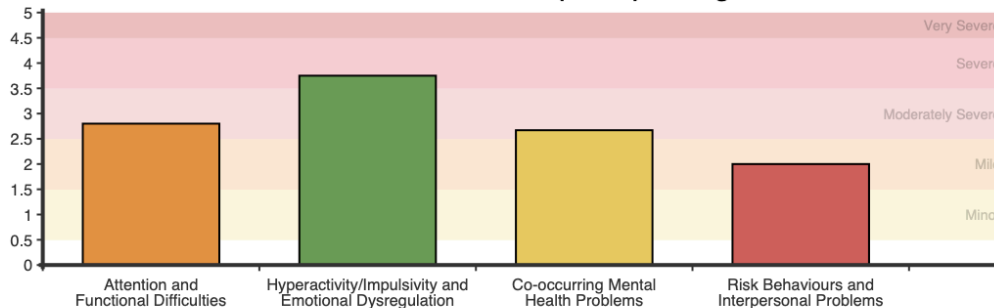
ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Percentile



Subscale Scores

	Score	Average (0-5)	Descriptor
Attention and Functional Difficulties (0-25)	14	2.8	Moderately Severe
Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation (0-20)	15	3.75	Severe
Co-occurring Mental Health Problems (0-15)	8	2.67	Moderately Severe
Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems (0-15)	6	2	Mild

ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Average Scores





Client Name	Generic Client
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Interpretation

The responses on the ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) indicate that the client has been experiencing Moderately Severe symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD in the past 2 weeks. The total ACOS score is on the 64th percentile when compared to adults with ADHD. A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing moderately severe problems at a level that is consistent with adults with ADHD.

The responses on the **Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation** subscale indicate that the client has been experiencing Severe problems in the past 2 weeks. The items were rated as follows:

- 1. *Hyperactivity /restlessness (Severe)*
- 5. *Emotional fluctuation (dysregulation) (Severe)*
- 7. *Impulsivity (Severe)*
- 3. *Temper /anger outburst (Moderately severe)*

The responses on the **Attention and Functional Difficulties** subscale indicate that the client has been experiencing Moderately Severe problems in the past 2 weeks. The items were rated as follows:

- 2. *Attention difficulties (Moderately severe)*
- 6. *Disorganisation (Moderately severe)*
- 10. *Problems with procrastination (Moderately severe)*
- 15. *Difficulties in the everyday personal life (Moderately severe)*
- 14. *Study / work difficulties (Mild)*

The responses on the **Co-occurring Mental Health Problems** subscale indicate that the client has been experiencing Moderately Severe problems in the past 2 weeks. The items were rated as follows:

- 11. *Anxiety problems (Moderately severe)*
- 12. *Depression problems (Moderately severe)*
- 13. *Sleep problems (Mild)*

Scoring and Interpretation Information

For comprehensive information on the ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) - Clinician Version, [see here](#).

The ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) yields a total score between 0 and 75, with higher scores indicating a greater severity of symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD. Each item is rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale from 0 to 5 reflecting the degree to which the individual has experienced a specific problem in the past 2 weeks.

The client's total ACOS score is expressed as a percentile based on normative data for adults with ADHD (Adamis et al., 2020; Baker et al., 2024), contextualising their score relative to the typical scores of adults with ADHD. For example, the 50th percentile represents the typical level of severity among adults with ADHD (i.e., "Moderately Severe"), while scores on the 90th percentile fall within the top 10% when compared to adults with ADHD and are considered "Severe".

Scores are also provided for the scale's four subscales:

- Attention and Functional Difficulties (Items 2, 6, 10, 14, and 15), which includes difficulties with



Client Name	Generic Client
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Scoring and Interpretation Information (cont.)

attention, organisation, procrastination, work, and everyday life.

- Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation (Items 1, 3, 5, and 7), which includes hyperactivity/restlessness, impulsivity, emotional fluctuation (ups and downs in mood), and temper/anger outbursts.

- Co-occurring Mental Health Problems (Items 11, 12, and 13), which includes anxiety, depression, and sleep problems.

- Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems (Items 4, 8, and 9), which includes alcohol and drug use problems, self-harm, and tension in relationships.

The scoring approach uses qualitative descriptors to categorise ACOS scores (Baker et al., 2024). Each descriptor corresponds to a specific range of average scores reflecting the 6-point rating scale. The overall average score is calculated by dividing the total ACOS score by the number of items in the scale (i.e., 15). The average score for each subscale is calculated by dividing the subscale's score by the number of items in the subscale. The descriptors and corresponding score ranges are as follows.

- "No Problem" (average score of 0-0.49) (total score of 0-7)

- "Minor" (average score of 0.5-1.49) (total score of 8-22)

- "Mild" (average score of 1.5-2.49) (total score of 23-37)

- "Moderately Severe" (average score of 2.5-3.49) (total score of 38-52)

- "Severe" (average score of 3.5-4.49) (total score of 53-67)

- "Very Severe" (average score of 4.5-5) (total score of 68-75)

On first administration, graphs are presented showing the client's total ACOS as a percentile and the client's average score for each subscale. If administered more than once, longitudinal graphs are presented for the total ACOS score and the average scores for each subscale, indicating if there have been any changes in these scores over time. A meaningful change in overall severity is defined as a change of 5 or more points in the total ACOS score based on a Minimally Important Difference (MID) calculation (i.e., a 5 or more point increase indicates a significant increase; a 5 or more point decrease indicates significant reduction; and less than a 5 point change indicates no significant change).

Client Responses

		No problem	Minor	Mild	Moderately severe	Severe	Very severe
1	Hyperactivity /restlessness	0	1	2	3	4	5



Client Name	Generic Client
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Client Responses (cont.)

		No problem	Minor	Mild	Moderately severe	Severe	Very severe
2	Attention difficulties	0	1	2	3	4	5
3	Temper /anger outburst	0	1	2	3	4	5
4	Problems with alcohol and drugs	0	1	2	3	4	5
5	Emotional fluctuation (dysregulation)	0	1	2	3	4	5
6	Disorganisation	0	1	2	3	4	5
7	Impulsivity	0	1	2	3	4	5
8	Tension in relationships	0	1	2	3	4	5
9	Self-harm	0	1	2	3	4	5
10	Problems with procrastination	0	1	2	3	4	5
11	Anxiety problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
12	Depression problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
13	Sleep problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
14	Study / work difficulties	0	1	2	3	4	5
15	Difficulties in the everyday personal life	0	1	2	3	4	5



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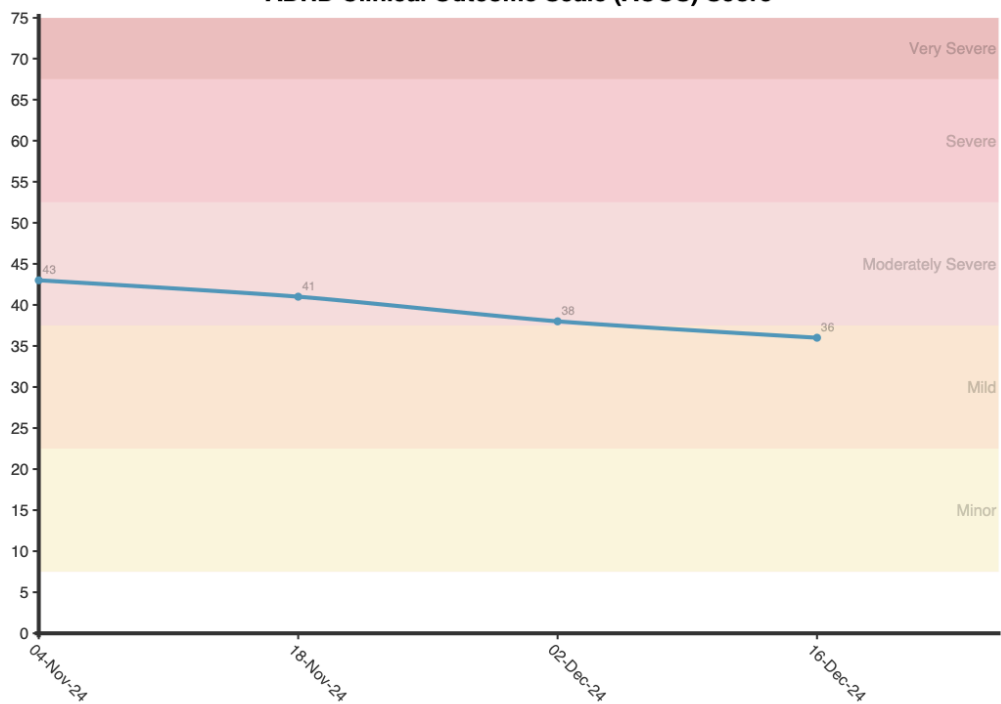
ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale - Clinician Version (ACOS-Clinician)

<i>Client Name</i>	Generic Client	<i>Date administered</i>	16 Dec 2024
<i>Date of birth (age)</i>	1 Jan 1990 (34)	<i>Time taken</i>	1 min 41s
<i>Assessor</i>	Dr Simon Baker		

Total ACOS Score

	Score	Percentile	Descriptor
Total ACOS (0-75)	36	37	Mild

ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Score



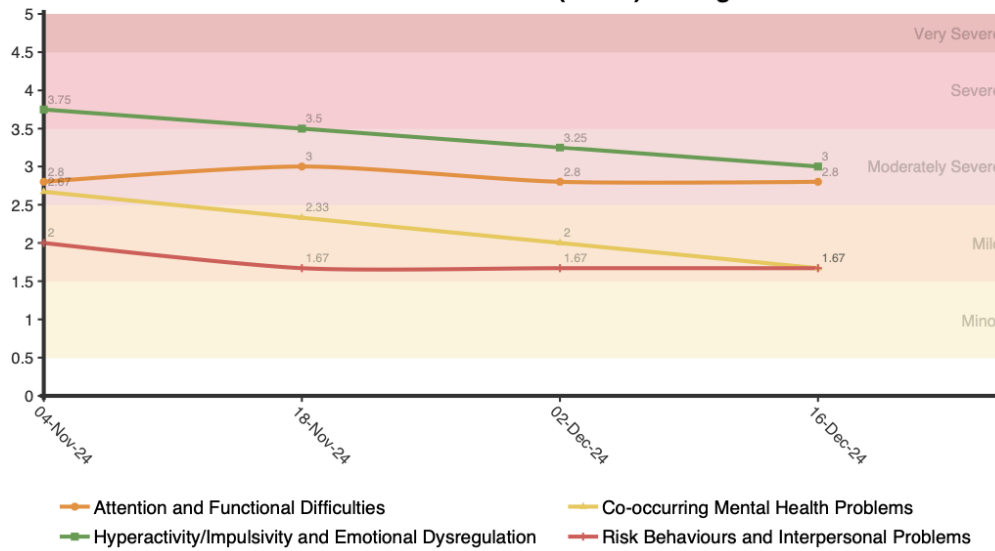


Client Name	Generic Client
--------------------	----------------

Subscale Scores

	Score	Average (0-5)	Descriptor
Attention and Functional Difficulties (0-25)	14	2.8	Moderately Severe
Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation (0-20)	12	3	Moderately Severe
Co-occurring Mental Health Problems (0-15)	5	1.67	Mild
Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems (0-15)	5	1.67	Mild

ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) Average Scores



Interpretation

The latest responses on the ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) indicate that the client has been experiencing Mild symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD in the past 2 weeks. The total ACOS score is on the 37th percentile when compared to adults with ADHD. A score in this range indicates that, overall, the client has been experiencing mild problems at a level that is consistent with adults with ADHD.

Since the client was first assessed on 04 November 2024, the overall severity of symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD has significantly decreased, with a 7 point decrease in the score. A meaningful change in overall severity is defined as a change in the total ACOS score of 5 or more points based on a Minimally Important Difference (MID) calculation.

The responses on the **Attention and Functional Difficulties** subscale indicate that the client has been experiencing Moderately Severe problems in the past 2 weeks. The items were rated as follows:



Client Name	Generic Client
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Interpretation (cont.)

- 2. Attention difficulties (Moderately severe)
- 6. Disorganisation (Moderately severe)
- 10. Problems with procrastination (Moderately severe)
- 15. Difficulties in the everyday personal life (Moderately severe)
- 14. Study / work difficulties (Mild)

The responses on the **Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation** subscale indicate that the client has been experiencing Moderately Severe problems in the past 2 weeks.

The items were rated as follows:

- 1. Hyperactivity /restlessness (Moderately severe)
- 3. Temper /anger outburst (Moderately severe)
- 5. Emotional fluctuation (dysregulation) (Moderately severe)
- 7. Impulsivity (Moderately severe)

Scoring and Interpretation Information

For comprehensive information on the ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) - Clinician Version, [see here](#).

The ADHD Clinical Outcome Scale (ACOS) yields a total score between 0 and 75, with higher scores indicating a greater severity of symptoms and challenges associated with ADHD. Each item is rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale from 0 to 5 reflecting the degree to which the individual has experienced a specific problem in the past 2 weeks.

The client's total ACOS score is expressed as a percentile based on normative data for adults with ADHD (Adamis et al., 2020; Baker et al., 2024), contextualising their score relative to the typical scores of adults with ADHD. For example, the 50th percentile represents the typical level of severity among adults with ADHD (i.e., "Moderately Severe"), while scores on the 90th percentile fall within the top 10% when compared to adults with ADHD and are considered "Severe".

Scores are also provided for the scale's four subscales:

- Attention and Functional Difficulties (Items 2, 6, 10, 14, and 15), which includes difficulties with attention, organisation, procrastination, work, and everyday life.
- Hyperactivity/Impulsivity and Emotional Dysregulation (Items 1, 3, 5, and 7), which includes hyperactivity/restlessness, impulsivity, emotional fluctuation (ups and downs in mood), and temper/anger outbursts.
- Co-occurring Mental Health Problems (Items 11, 12, and 13), which includes anxiety, depression, and sleep problems.
- Risk Behaviours and Interpersonal Problems (Items 4, 8, and 9), which includes alcohol and drug use problems, self-harm, and tension in relationships.

The scoring approach uses qualitative descriptors to categorise ACOS scores (Baker et al., 2024). Each descriptor corresponds to a specific range of average scores reflecting the 6-point rating scale. The overall average score is calculated by dividing the total ACOS score by the number of items in the scale (i.e., 15). The average score for each subscale is calculated by



Client Name	Generic Client
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Scoring and Interpretation Information (cont.)

dividing the subscale’s score by the number of items in the subscale. The descriptors and corresponding score ranges are as follows.

- “No Problem” (average score of 0-0.49) (total score of 0-7)
- “Minor” (average score of 0.5-1.49) (total score of 8-22)
- “Mild” (average score of 1.5-2.49) (total score of 23-37)
- “Moderately Severe” (average score of 2.5-3.49) (total score of 38-52)
- “Severe” (average score of 3.5-4.49) (total score of 53-67)
- “Very Severe” (average score of 4.5-5) (total score of 68-75)

On first administration, graphs are presented showing the client’s total ACOS as a percentile and the client’s average score for each subscale. If administered more than once, longitudinal graphs are presented for the total ACOS score and the average scores for each subscale, indicating if there have been any changes in these scores over time. A meaningful change in overall severity is defined as a change of 5 or more points in the total ACOS score based on a Minimally Important Difference (MID) calculation (i.e., a 5 or more point increase indicates a significant increase; a 5 or more point decrease indicates significant reduction; and less than a 5 point change indicates no significant change).

Client Responses

		No problem	Minor	Mild	Moderately severe	Severe	Very severe
1	Hyperactivity /restlessness	0	1	2	3	4	5
2	Attention difficulties	0	1	2	3	4	5
3	Temper /anger outburst	0	1	2	3	4	5
4	Problems with alcohol and drugs	0	1	2	3	4	5
5	Emotional fluctuation (dysregulation)	0	1	2	3	4	5
6	Disorganisation	0	1	2	3	4	5
7	Impulsivity	0	1	2	3	4	5
8	Tension in relationships	0	1	2	3	4	5



Client Name	Generic Client
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Client Responses (cont.)

		No problem	Minor	Mild	Moderately severe	Severe	Very severe
9	Self-harm	0	1	2	3	4	5
10	Problems with procrastination	0	1	2	3	4	5
11	Anxiety problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
12	Depression problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
13	Sleep problems	0	1	2	3	4	5
14	Study / work difficulties	0	1	2	3	4	5
15	Difficulties in the everyday personal life	0	1	2	3	4	5