Clinimetrics: Single Assessment Numeric Evaluation

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Summary

Description: The Single Assessment Numeric Evaluation (SANE) is a single-item, global, patient-reported outcome measure.1–3 Patients provide a whole number response to the question ‘On a scale from 0 to 100, how would you rate your (eg, injured limb) today, with 100 being normal?’4,5 It is typically used as a global rating of function, although this is not specifically stated in the question, and the definition of normality is determined by the individual patient. As the question is rated at baseline and follow-up, it can be used as a measure that captures the change in function (ie, recovery) over this period. Patients tend to define their recovery based on their basic function, pain, performance, and expectations for ‘normal’ function.1,4 The construct of the SANE is similar to the Patient-Specific Functional Scale, which also reports patients’ functional change on an 11-point scale for a variety of musculoskeletal disorders.4,5 (However, the Patient-Specific Functional Scale is often administered only at follow-up, yielding a retrospective score of the change/recovery over the period from baseline to follow-up). Overall, the shortness of the SANE reduces the burden of gathering outcome data and is simpler for clinical practice use.3

Validity, responsiveness and reliability: The SANE is expressed on a scale of 0 to 100 and has been compared with other 100-point scales such as the Lysholm or Rowe.4,6 Regarding validity, the SANE is reported to have a correlation of 0.83 at 3 and 6 months postoperatively when compared with the International Knee Documentation Committee.1 The International Knee Documentation Committee is an 18-question evaluation of patients’ overall perceptions, and when used in combination with other tools can help to identify variance between these global perceptions and specific measured impairments.4,6,8

Overall, the SANE has proven to be a reliable measure for collecting outcome data in patient populations of the ankle, knee and shoulder.1–4,6–8 Therefore, studies have demonstrated the SANE to be a reliable reflection of patients’ perceptions regarding their recovery.4,9,10 However, further validation is required on the psychometric properties of the SANE across other body areas, diagnoses and therapeutic interventions. Further validation is also required to evaluate the concurrent validity between the SANE, Patient-Specific Functional Scale, and Global Perceived Effect scale, as they measure similar constructs.

Commentary

While the SANE is used to supplement current patient-reported outcome measures, it is not recommended to be a replacement. Similar to the Patient-Specific Functional Scale and Global Perceived Effect scale, these short patient-reported outcome measures are intended to be easy for the patient to understand, rate the aspects of recovery that are most important to them, and be used as an external criterion to test the measurement properties of other outcome measures.4,8 Due to its simple nature, the SANE lacks specificity as to which areas of function are limited, which lessens the clinician’s understanding of a patient’s limitations and its application within rehabilitation treatment plans.1,6 However, the SANE can alert clinicians about a patient’s overall perceptions, and when used in combination with other tools can help to identify variance between these global perceptions and specific measured impairments.4,6,8


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