

HRST Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) for Raters and Clinical Reviewers

This document answers some of the most commonly asked technical and clinical questions about the HRST and is intended for those users who will be Raters or Clinical Reviewers.

What is the Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST)?

The Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST) is a web-based screening instrument designed to detect health destabilization EARLY and PREVENT preventable deaths. It is a reliable, field-tested screening tool that consists of 22 rating items, divided into 5 health categories. Each of the 22 items consist of questions answered by a trained rater. When fully answered the HRST assigns a numeric degree of health risk to the person called a Health Care Level (HCL). The scale ranges from 1 (low risk) to 6 (high risk).

Why is early detection of health risk and destabilization in the I/DD population so important?

Whether you have an intellectual or developmental disability or not early detection of any health risk is important. Studies show that the sooner health risks are identified and acted upon, the higher the chances of avoiding more acute, chronic conditions of these risks or even death. Those with I/DD can be the most vulnerable when it comes to health risk and destabilization. Many people may not use words to communicate and cannot verbalize symptoms. Thus, behaviors will often mask the signs of hidden, life threatening conditions. Sadly, often times these symptoms go unappreciated until after it is too late.

The HRST flags these symptoms thus allowing the team to address them proactively rather and reactively.

Why is your agency or state using the HRST?

As a result of your commitment to offering quality services that focus on the best overall health of the person, your agency or state has decided to team up with Health Risk Screening, Inc to use the HRST. The HRST has a proven record of screening successfully for health risk and destabilization, allowing you as the caregiver to respond in a timely, appropriate manner.

How do we get started?

IntellectAbility will work with your agency or state to identify everyone that will be loaded into the HRST database, whether it be users or those to be screened. HRST raters and clinical reviewers will be required to complete the HRST Online Training. This is required prior to screening.

What is the HRST Online Rater Training?

The HRST online rater training is designed to give the user all the information and training needed to accurately score the HRST rating items. It is a work-at-your-own-pace model and can take about 3-4 hours to complete. Information on how to access the online training is sent to the user as we create the account for that user. This training also gives basic information about important medical conditions that directly affect vulnerable populations as well as how to use the HRST online application. If you are required to complete this training, you will be sent information to get started.

How will I access the online version of the HRST?

Once the user has completed the online training, they will receive information on how to access the HRST web-based system. It will include the web link, username/password, and information on how to ask for technical or clinical support should you ever need it. Always remember to keep your username and password safe and do not share this information with others. Only access the database using your personalized login information.

How long does it take to input information into the HRST?

Once training has been completed and access to the web-based system is given, the user will begin to enter information such as medications and diagnoses for the person. They will also answer questions about 22 health related items, also known as rating items. Initial data entry into a new record on average takes about 30-60 mins (depending on the number of meds and diagnoses the person has or degree of medical complexity), updates to this information once entered usually takes only about 5 min - 10 mins.

What is the significance of entering this information into the HRST?

Once the screening is complete, the HRST will be able to note where health destabilization/risk is occurring. It will also assign a Health Care Level (1-6) that corresponds with the overall level and severity of destabilization/risk. The system takes all this information and produces action steps that tell you or the support team how to respond to these areas of risk and destabilization. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. Why? If you know where destabilization and health risks are occurring and know how to go into action, it is highly unlikely that the person will experience more chronic or acute levels of those risks. The HRST also has a robust reporting module that help users on various levels know important health related information about the person who has been screened. The HRST can be used to determine staffing or clinical hours, rate setting, and help ensure continuity of care. The HRST will also help you to better track fluctuations in the person's health. You can even use this information in the annual support plan.

How does the HRST help me or other supporters?

If you are a family member or direct support professional, you often know the person better than most anyone. As a result of your intimate knowledge of the person, you are likely to know when things are just "not right" but you may not know or appreciate why. The HRST is designed to help you figure out what is "not right" and when to take action. If you are case manager, the HRST helps you understand and appreciate more clinical aspects of the person. It equips you with the information you need to be a better overseer of health and safety during your routine visits with the person. If you are a nurse, the HRST helps increase your chance of clinically appreciating risks that are both obvious and, at times, not so obvious. It also helps you to train non-clinical supporters on the more clinical aspects of the person. For administrators, the HRST helps aggregate data that relate directly to staffing and support costs.

Does the HRST really work?

Most certainly. We often receive success stories of how the HRST improves the quality of life for the person and even saves lives! Take a look at this success story from a Georgia HRST user:

*The HRST has helped immensely in monitoring for unhealthy patterns that might have resulted in detrimental medical outcomes. **People are alive today because of the HRST.** We observe...to make certain that they are in the best health possible. The HRST provides us with a snapshot of each individual's ongoing health status as part of a continual assessment enabling us to observe any adverse health patterns. This allows our team of caregivers to provide better continuity of care with the individual's health care professionals.*

Having ready access to this information allows for quick review of the individual's health history, we have found this to be a valuable tool for our organization. Thanks for sharing the HRST with us.

Melissa R. Whitley,
R.N., Director Magnolia House PCH, Inc.
Georgia

Will I get help if I need it?

We have various methods of getting help. We offer support at any stage of usage. We offer Technical support and Clinical support. The easiest way to get help is to simply click "Help" on the log in page.