

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH**

Quality, Outcomes, & Training
Division
PEIOutcomes@dmh.lacounty.gov

Purpose

- The PHQ-9 is a valid and reliable depression questionnaire.
- It's based directly on the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria for Major Depressive Disorder.
- The PHQ-9 is useful for assessing symptom count and severity for depression at the start of treatment, and monitoring the client's symptoms over the course of treatment.

Administration

- This is a self-report measure.
- Validity is not compromised if the therapist reads the questions to the client.
- Clients should **complete every item**, based on their feelings during the **past 2 weeks**.

PHQ-9 is available in various languages at:
www.phqscreeners.com



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH
hope. recovery. wellbeing.



WELLNESS • RECOVERY • RESILIENCE

Revised: March 31, 2020

PHQ-9 Quick Guide

Patient Health Questionnaire-9®

Administered for all clients ages 12 and above. Administered during the first and last EBP treatment sessions for the following EBPs:

- Interpersonal Psychotherapy for Depression (IPT)
- Depression Treatment Quality Improvement (DTQI)
- Group CBT for Major Depression (Group CBT-MD)
- Mental Health Integrated Program (MHIP)
- Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP)- Depression & Withdrawal
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) – Depression
- Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives for Seniors (PEARLS)
- Problem Solving Therapy (PST)

Advantages of the PHQ-9

- The PHQ-9 is shorter than other depression rating scales.
- Facilitates differential diagnosis of depressive disorders
- Is short enough to administer throughout treatment, should clinicians wish to monitor treatment progress more regularly
- Research has shown its effectiveness for clients as young as age 12 and through TAY (16-25), Adult (26-59) and Older Adult (60+) populations.
- Critical items, such as item #9 (e.g., suicidality), may yield important clinical information for more immediate follow up.

Item Response

Score

Scoring Information

An elevated score on the PHQ-9 is not synonymous with a diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder, rather the information gathered from the PHQ-9 is meant to be used in conjunction with a thorough clinical intake assessment by a trained clinician.

Not at all	0
Several Days	1
More than half the days	2
Nearly everyday	3

The PHQ-9 total score is the sum of all nine items, and ranges from 0-27

GUIDE FOR INTERPRETING PHQ-9 TOTAL SCORES

Total Score	Depression Severity
0 – 4	NONE - MINIMAL
5 – 9	MILD
10 – 14	MODERATE
15 – 19	MODERATELY SEVERE
20 -27	SEVERE

Note: Measures with more than one unanswered item should not be scored and entered into PEI OMA. If only one item is unanswered, calculate the arithmetic mean of the 8 scored items. Sum the 8 scored items and the mean to generate the