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Guidelines for Caregiver Strain Index

Purpose:
The Caregiver Strain Index is a screening instrument which can be used to identify strain of carers, assess their ability to go on caring and to identify areas where support may be needed. Strain was defined as 'those enduring problems that have the potential for arousing threat'

Directions for use:
- 13 questions are provided, with answers being Yes or No
- The instrument can be either answered by the carer or with staff asking questions in an interview situation.
- Time frame for administration is approximately 5 minutes

Scoring details:
The score is determined by adding up the "Yes" answers. A score of 7 or greater indicates a high level of stress.

If score is 7 or greater – discuss, develop and prioritise support strategies with Carer.
1. Identify the issues that are causing the carer stress.
2. Prioritise the causes of stress with the carer
3. In consultation with the carer develop strategies to assist in reducing the causes of the carers stress.
4. Place these interventions on client care plan under the title of 'Carer Support'
5. Discuss services available to provide counseling support and send a referral to the appropriate nominated service as required.

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Below is a list of things which other people have found to have difficulty with when helping care for a relative /friend. Please answer yes or no by placing a ✓ in the appropriate column	**Yes**	**No**
1. Sleep is disturbed because ………………..*is in and out of bed or wanders around at night*		
2. It is inconvenient because *(e.g. helping takes so much time or its long drive over to help.)*		
3. It is a physical strain*(e.g. because helping in and out of a chair, effort or concentration required)*		
4. It is confining *(e.g. helping restricts free time or cannot go visiting)*		
5. There have been family adjustments *(e.g. because helping has disrupted routine, there has been no privacy)*		
6. There have been changes in personal plans *(e.g. had to turn down a job; could not go on vacation)*		
7. There have been other demands on my time *(e.g. from other family members)*		
8. There have been other emotional adjustments *(e.g. because of severe arguments)*		
9. Some behaviour is upsetting (*e.g. because of incontinence;…………..has trouble remembering things; or …………accuses people of taking things)*		
10. It is upsetting to find……….. *has changed so much from his/her formal self (e.g. he/she is a different person than he/she used to be)*		
11. There have been work adjustments *(e.g. having to take time off)*		
12. It is a financial strain		
13. Feeing completely overwhelmed *(e.g. because of worry about ………………: concerns about how you will manage.)*		
TOTAL SCORE COUNT "Yes Responses" A score of 7 or more would indicate a greater level of stress. Refer to the 'Directions for use' section for follow up strategies.		
Comments:		

COMPLETED BY:_____

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIENT:_____   DATE:___/____/____