

New test to help brain injury victims recover

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SPANS equipment

A dynamic new assessment for helping victims of trauma to the brain, including those suffering from progressive conditions such as dementia, has been developed by a clinical neuropsychologist at the University of Leicester.

The Short Parallel Assessments of Neuropsychological Status (SPANS) is the brainchild of Dr Gerald Burgess from the University of Leicester's

School of Psychology and has been designed to engage with patients suffering from a variety of brain injuries in order to aid in their recovery.

SPANS is unique in that it measures the [cognitive skills](#) of individuals with acquired [brain injury](#) and progressive neurological conditions in a user-friendly and concise way, taking patients an estimated 35 minutes to complete.

The assessment is capable of measuring seven key cognitive skills: orientation, attention and concentration, language, memory and learning, visuo-motor performance, efficiency and conceptual flexibility.

An alternate version is available, SPANS B, which complements SPANS A for reliable retesting of patients.

Both versions were developed based upon real neurological syndromes, such as aphasia, and common referral questions informed by Dr Burgess's experience as a clinical psychologist in brain injury wards.

Dr Burgess said: "With SPANS clinicians now have a broader and more reliable assessment that is even more useful than most tests for tracking changes in cognitive skills over time. Patients are now more thoroughly assessed by a test that is less taxing on them than some other tests, so that their difficulties may be better understood."

The test is suitable to be administered by a range of healthcare professionals, including clinical or research psychologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, psychiatrists and neurologists.

During the development of SPANS Dr Burgess worked with Hogrefe, the publisher, who helped in collecting data and developing SPANS to a professional standard through production and marketing efforts.

Mr Roley Davis, Sales & Marketing Manager at Hogrefe said: "We are proud to have worked with Dr Burgess to bring this innovative new assessment to the market. SPANS is a comprehensive and flexible test that will address the various needs of clinicians and researchers alike. Hogrefe's mission is to develop robust, valid and reliable assessments that address market need, and the SPANS is an excellent addition to our clinical portfolio. We look forward to hearing from people interested to know more about the assessment."

More information: For more information about SPANS visit Hogrefe's website here: www.hogrefe.co.uk/spans.html

A paper about the development and use of SPANS is available here: [www.hogrefe.co.uk/news/wp-cont ... 9/SPANS_overview.pdf](http://www.hogrefe.co.uk/news/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/SPANS_overview.pdf)

Provided by University of Leicester

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