

Neurology researchers evaluate evidence base for tests for clinical cognitive assessment

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Recommendations for improving clinical cognitive testing were reported by the American Academy of Neurology's (AAN) Behavioral Neurology Section (BNS) Group, led by Kirk R. Daffner, MD, of Boston, Mass. The Group focused on the Neurobehavioral Status Exam (NBSE), conducting evidence-based reviews of testing used for five domains - attention, language, memory, spatial cognition, and executive function). "Improving clinical cognitive testing" was published online ahead of print on July 10, 2015, in *Neurology*, the official journal of the AAN.

While the NBSE is used to determine the differential diagnoses and guide intervention, there are no guidelines for selecting tests to include in an NBSE, and little information on how it is used in clinical practice. The NBSE Workgroup was formed to review use of the NBSE in office-based clinical practice, toward the goal of quality improvement in cognitive assessment. Data were collected from 200 AAN-BNS members who conduct NBSE. Responses were reviewed by experts in each of the five domains.

"This survey is an important step in our knowledge of how behavioral neurologists apply single-domain cognitive testing in their practices," said A.M. Barrett, MD, of Kessler Foundation, director of the subgroup on spatial cognition tests. "This evidence-based evaluation of commonly used tests provides insights that will inform the [decision making process](#) for selecting tests for the NBSE."

More information: *Neurology*, [DOI](#):

[10.1212/WNL.0000000000001763](https://doi.org/10.1212/WNL.0000000000001763)

Relevant publications:

- Chen P, Barrett AB, Hreha K, Goedert KM, Chen C. Kessler Foundation Neglect Assessment Process Uniquely Measures Spatial Neglect during Activities of Daily Living)" (doi: 10.1016/j.apmr.2014.10.023) *Arch Phys Med Rehabil*.
- Barrett AM, Muzaffar T. Spatial cognitive rehabilitation and motor recovery after stroke. *Curr Opin Neurol* 2014;27:653-8. DOI: [10.1097/WCO.000000000000148](https://doi.org/10.1097/WCO.000000000000148)
- Goedert KM, Chen P, Boston RC, Foundas AL, Barrett AM. Presence of motor-intentional aiming deficit predicts functional improvement of spatial neglect with prism adaptation. *Neurorehabilitation and Neural Repair* epub Dec 27 2013. DOI: [10.1177/1545968313516872](https://doi.org/10.1177/1545968313516872)

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