Twenty minute test determines attention and memory capacity in patients with schizophrenia
15 September 2017

The battery of assessments is short, and consists of tests already available to doctors and psychologists. Moreover, the tests are available in several languages, which makes it easier to use them with patients of different origins. Another advantage is that they are easy to administer, and therefore facilitates use by health professionals to assess patients with schizophrenia. The test permits health professionals to assess, study and comment on symptoms of the disorder which are normally not taken into account, and which could serve to treat each case in the best possible manner.

"In schizophrenia, it is desirable for the patient to be as independent and functional as possible, although that does not always happen," explains Silvia Zaragoza. She says, "This test allows each patient to better adapt to their life. For example, if a patient is slower mentally, but short-term memory is not affected, he or she will have more chances of leading an independent life than someone whose memory is also affected."

This battery of assessments represents a very important step toward offering specific examinations, which can be conducted through regular mental health centres or private centres. After an initial examination, the clinics can also conduct follow-ups of patients and confirm whether changes in medications worsen attention span or memory, a common complaint among patients at their routine visits.

The study was published in the journal Schizophrenia Research: Cognition.

More information: Silvia Zaragoza Domingo et al. EPICOG-SCH: A brief battery to screen cognitive impact of schizophrenia in stable outpatients, Schizophrenia Research: Cognition