

ASI VERSIONS

What is the Addiction Severity Index?

The Addiction Severity Index (ASI) is a semi-structured instrument used in a face-to-face patient interview conducted by a clinician, researcher, or trained technician. It was developed by A. Thomas McLellan, Ph.D. and colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania in 1980. The ASI covers seven (7) important areas of a patient's life: medical, employment / support, drug and alcohol use, legal, family / social, and psychiatric. The instrument is designed to obtain lifetime information about problem behaviors as well as focusing specifically on the 30 days prior to assessment. The ASI has strong scientific reliability and validity, as confirmed in studies published in leading journals. It is a widely used addiction assessment tool throughout the United States and other countries.

"ASI - Original Version" vs. "ASI - Clinical Training Version"

There is no difference in the content between the Original and Clinical Training Version, however there is a great deal of difference between them with regards to their formatting. The ASI "Original" Version did not allow much room for comments, the print was small and there were three columns of questions per page. The ASI "Clinical Training Version" allows a great deal more room for comments, the print is larger and there is only one column of questions down the left side and one column of lines for comments down the right side. While this adds several pages to the actual instrument it has been received extremely well by all those who had previously been using the "ASI Original Version." In addition it provides helpful hints underneath many of the questions to remind the interviewer of either the intention of the question and or the coding convention. These reminders have been helpful to many ASI interviewees new and experienced. ASITRAINING.com uses the Clinical Training Version at all of its trainings and encourages the use of the clinical training version post training. Many participants and agencies prefer this version to the original version. Sample

"ASI - Follow Up Version"

There are two differently formatted instruments to do follow up ASI interviews, 1. An interviewer uses a full ASI and by paying attention to the questions that are either circled and or circled and have an asterisk next to them the interviewer only asks those questions with the circle around them and rephrases the ones with a circle and asterisk.

While this is not difficult to do interviewers new and experienced are often confused when using the standard ASI version with the circles and asterisks. Therefore a second differently formatted ASI follow up version was created. This version has removed all of the questions that are not asked during a follow up interview from the form. This helps prevent the new and or experienced interviewer from asking clients questions unnecessarily.

Evidence Based – Proven Effective – Designed for Transfer

What is the ASI Lite?

The ASI Lite is a shortened version of the standard Fifth Edition Addiction Severity Index (ASI), developed by A. Thomas McLellan, Ph.D. and colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania. The ASI Lite was developed in early 1997, in response to numerous requests from the substance abuse field.

How does the ASI Lite differ from the standard Fifth Edition ASI?

The ASI Lite differs from the standard Fifth Edition ASI in three ways:

- (1) it contains 22 fewer questions;
- (2) Interviewer Severity Ratings are not used;
- (3) the Family History "grid" has been omitted.

Why was the ASI Lite developed?

To answer this question, we need to remember that the Addiction Severity Index was created in 1980 to enable clinical researchers to evaluate treatment outcomes in a six-program, substance abuse treatment network, with patients at the Philadelphia V.A. Medical Center. Its original purpose was to serve as a standardized data collection instrument. Given its demonstrated reliability and validity, the ASI quickly became the assessment instrument of choice by substance abuse researchers all over the world. Only recently have clinicians begun to see its value as an intake assessment instrument that can be used to develop a treatment plan.

A number of factors entered into the decision to develop the ASI Lite. In keeping with the growing demand to measure treatment effectiveness, many state substance abuse agencies are now requiring their funded programs to use the Addiction Severity Index. Since treatment programs need to complete a number of data collection forms on each patient admitted to treatment, adding a full ASI to their existing paperwork requirements could be prohibitive. The ASI Lite meets the minimum requirements needed to conduct outcomes research.

How does a treatment program know which version of the ASI to use?

If a treatment program wants to use the ASI as the only (or primary) assessment instrument, it should use the standard Fifth Edition ASI, developed in 1990. The standard ASI, when used by a properly trained individual, provides the lifetime and recent history information needed to help the clinician develop an individualized treatment plan. If, on the other hand, the ASI is being added to a number of other assessment / data collection forms, the ASI Lite is recommended.

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