

*Physical Disabilities
Through the Lifespan*



Measurement Issues

July 22, 2003



State of the Field

- Conceptual models are becoming more inclusive.
- Items on national surveys are carried to other surveys without psychometric evaluation and cognitive testing.
- Innovative measures are not keeping pace with changing healthcare system.
- There is lack of consensus of appropriate measurement tools, particularly in community-based settings.
- Measurement system does not capture the situational influences in disability.



Problems/Concerns/Issues

- Conceptual definition of disability and relationship between paradigms/models
- Item clarification/validity – how researcher interprets question vs. how subject does
- Comparability of disability measurements across national surveys
- Respondent burden & increase precision & breadth
- Psychometric challenges of measuring health, functioning, QOL, satisfaction, environment

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Research Priorities

- Develop innovative technologies to reduce respondent burden and increase measurement precision
- Implement approaches for measuring person-specific QOL in longitudinal studies
- Measure ways in which the person and environment interact to influence function and QOL
- Refine definitions and clarity of items used for assessment of disability in population-based surveys



Research Priorities

- Understand how functional status measurement varies according to observed performance by clinicians, self-report, and proxy over time
- Develop an integrated assessment approach that can be used at the clinical, service program, and policy levels for determining disability status