SANS

Scale for the Assessment of Negative Symptoms (SANS)

The SANS is a clinician-rated scale used to measure the severity of negative symptoms in schizophrenia and, more broadly, in patients with a psychotic disorder. The tool explores five clinical domains: affective flattening, alogia, avolition or apathy, anhedonia or asociality, and attention. It is mainly useful for the initial assessment, clinical follow-up and research.

Number of questions	25 questions
Estimated duration	30 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Scale for the Assessment of Negative Symptoms
Target audience	Adults
Authors	Nancy C. Andreasen (1983)
Category	Psychotic disorders

Preview of the 25 questions

Affective Flattening or Blunting

Unchanging Facial Expression

0 - None | 1 - Questionable | 2 - Mild | 3 - Moderate | 4 - Marked | 5 - Severe

Affective Flattening or Blunting

Decreased Spontaneous Movements

0 - None | 1 - Questionable | 2 - Mild | 3 - Moderate | 4 - Marked | 5 - Severe

Affective Flattening or Blunting

Paucity of Expressive Gestures

0 - None | 1 - Questionable | 2 - Mild | 3 - Moderate | 4 - Marked | 5 - Severe

Affective Flattening or Blunting

Poor Eye Contact

0 - None | 1 - Questionable | 2 - Mild | 3 - Moderate | 4 - Marked | 5 - Severe

Affective Flattening or Blunting

Affective Nonresponsivity

0 - None | 1 - Questionable | 2 - Mild | 3 - Moderate | 4 - Marked | 5 - Severe

Scoring & interpretation

Each item is rated by the clinician from 0 to 5, from absent to severe, with the possibility of coding the item as not assessable if information is missing. The 25 ratings include detailed items and global ratings for each of the five domains. The assessment is based on the clinical interview and on observation of behavior over the past 30 days. The higher the score, the greater the negative symptomatology. In practice, interpretation relies mainly on the profile by domain and on the global ratings, as there are no universal severity cutoffs applicable to all contexts.