

ESAS-r

What is the ESAS-r?

The ESAS-r helps to assess nine common symptoms in all patients facing a life-limiting illness. The ESAS-r is one valuable part of a holistic clinical assessment.

Why?

The goal of this tool is to retrieve the patient's perspective of symptoms. It helps to direct treatment and to assess for treatment effects.

How?

The patient should be instructed to rate the severity of each symptom on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 represents absence of the symptom and 10 represents the worst possible severity. The number should be circled on the scale. The circled numbers can be transcribed onto the ESAS-r paper graph and/or entered into the site specific electronic system. The patient should be instructed to rate each symptom according to how she/he feels **now**. The health care professional may choose to ask additional questions about the severity of symptoms at other time points (e.g. symptom severity at best and at worst over the past 24 hours).

When?

The ESAS-r captures the pattern of symptom severity at a point in time. Repeating the assessment will track the changes over time. It is best practice to do the ESAS-r at an initial encounter with the patient and during each follow-up telephone or personal contact.

Please refer to Appendix A – Site Specific Procedure

Who?

It is preferable that the patient provides self-ratings of symptom severity. If the patient cannot complete the tool independently but can still provide input, then the ESAS-r is completed with the assistance of a caregiver (a family member, friend, health care professional).

Where?

The ESAS-r is used in any Health PEI setting where patients facing a life-limiting illness are assessed and cared for.