



Implementing the interRAI Contact Assessment (IRRS)

What is the interRAI CA?

The interRAI Contact Assessment (interRAI CA) © is part of interRAI's new [integrated suite of assessments](#). This suite uses common assessment items and standardized language to support continuity of care across health care settings, such as home care, continuing care, mental health, community health and palliative care. The interRAI CA provides information to support the home care assessment intake processes. The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), in partnership with interRAI, supports the implementation of the interRAI CA in Canada.

What are the benefits of using the interRAI CA?

- Records essential information at intake to support decisions regarding the need for more comprehensive assessment, how urgently home support services are required and the need for specialized services.
- Promotes consistent communication between the individual and the clinician team.

What has been enhanced in the new interRAI CA?

When compared with the interRAI CA Intake From Hospital/Community, the new interRAI CA has

- Simplified terms, common definitions and coding options that make the items easier to understand and use;
- Expanded response sets to improve assessment accuracy;
- New items that increase clinical relevance; and
- 1 new outcome scale: Distressed Mood Scale (self-reported).

Have the decision-support algorithms changed?

The interRAI CA offers similar tools to support decision-making at the point of care and at the organizational level. The following algorithms are embedded in the interRAI CA:

- Self-Reliance Index: Identifies the presence of impairments in activities of daily living or cognition.
- Assessment Urgency Algorithm: Prioritizes the need and urgency for a comprehensive follow-up assessment (e.g., interRAI Home Care).
- Service Urgency Algorithm: Identifies persons who may urgently need services (e.g., wound care, IV medication).
- Rehabilitation Algorithm: Identifies persons who may be candidates for rehabilitation services, specifically physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Have the outputs changed?

The interRAI CA offers similar outputs at the point of care. The following outputs are produced when the interRAI CA is completed:

- Pain Scale: Summarizes the presence and intensity of pain.
- Personal Support: Prioritizes those needing community-based services and the allocation of resources.
- Changes in Health, End-Stage Disease, Signs and Symptoms (CHESS) Scale: Detects frailty and health instability and identifies a person at risk of serious decline.
- Distressed Mood Scale (new): Measures psychological well-being (self-reported).

How is CIHI supporting the use of the interRAI CA?

CIHI provides detailed specifications for use in Canada, comprehensive education, and client support programs to sustain implementation, reporting and analysis using the interRAI CA.

CIHI has developed an improved model to capture data from the interRAI CA and other instruments from the new interRAI suite using a single system. The Integrated interRAI Reporting System (IRRS) improves data flow by introducing

- Near-real-time validation and submission of assessment data at the point of care;
- Improved data quality, timeliness and efficiency; and
- State-of-the-art messaging standards (e.g., [HL7](#)) to improve sharing of information with other data systems and across settings.

Interested in implementing the interRAI CA?

Check out CIHI's [interRAI Implementation Toolkit](#) for useful tips, resources and information for organizations and jurisdictions as they embark on implementing an interRAI assessment.

Topics include

- Assessing readiness and managing change;
- Choosing a software vendor;
- Training staff and building capacity within your organization to complete and manage the assessments; and
- Reporting data to CIHI and using your data strategically.

For assistance in implementing an assessment from the integrated suite or for general questions, please email help@cihi.ca.

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