

Comparing the Allen Cognitive Scale with Other Global Measures of Function

Background: In the Cognitive Disabilities Model, *functional cognition* and *functional cognitive capacity*, or a person’s Allen Cognitive Level (ACL), are assumed to reflect **global cognitive function**, or the general synthesis of cognitive functions and processes. Global cognitive function has an overall impact on performance. This global focus differs from a focus on *domain-specific cognitive functions* that have an effect on specific aspects of a person’s performance, e.g., episodic memory, spatial visualization, or use of language. In Table 1, the Allen Cognitive Scale of Levels and Modes is compared with scores on two other measures of global function, the Rancho Los Amigos Scale and the Global Deterioration Scale.

Table 1: Comparing the Allen Cognitive Scale with Other Global Measures of Function

Allen Cognitive Scale of Levels and Modes of Performance ¹		Rancho Los Amigos Scale ²	Global Deterioration Scale ³
Coma	ACL		
	0.8	Generalized reflexive actions	2
Level 1 Automatic Actions	1.0	Conscious/withdraws from noxious stimuli	3
	1.2	Responds to stimuli with one sensory system/swallows	
	1.4	Locates Stimulation	
	1.6	Rolls body in bed	
	1.8	Raises body part	
Level 2 Postural Actions	2.0	Overcomes gravity/sits	4
	2.2	Righting reactions/stands	
	2.4	Aimless walking	
	2.6	Directed walking	
	2.8	Stabilizes self by grabbing	
Level 3 Manual Actions	3.0	Grasps objects	5
	3.2	Distinguishes objects	
	3.4	Sustains actions on objects	
	3.6	Notes effects on objects	6
	3.8	Uses all objects	
Level 4 Goal-Directed Actions	4.0	Sequences familiar steps	6
	4.2	Differentiates features of objects	
	4.4	Completes familiar goal	
	4.6	Personalizes features of objects/scans	4
	4.8	Learns by rote memorization	
Level 5 Exploratory Actions	5.0	Compares/varies actions/objects	7
	5.2	Discriminates among sets of actions/objects	
	5.4	Self-directed learning	8
	5.6	Considers social standards	9
	5.8	Consults with others	
Level 6 Planned Actions	6.0	Plans new actions without objects	10
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Note: ¹Allen, C. K., Cognitive disability and reimbursement for rehabilitation and psychiatry. *Journal of Insurance Medicine*, 23 (4), 1991. ²Hagen, Chris, Malkmus, Danese, Durham, Patricia. Rancho Los Amigos Hospital, 1972. Revised by Malkmus, D. and Stenderup, K., 1974. ³Reisberg, B., Ferris, S., De Leon, M., Crook, T., The Global Deterioration Scale for assessment of primary degenerative dementia. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 139:9 (1982). Revised, 2023 by C. A. Earhart. Used with permission.