

Readiness to change

Conversations about healthcare behaviours

How important
is it for you to
change...?

How confident
are you...?

Importance and confidence ruler



The simplest way to assess the patient's readiness to change is to use a Readiness Ruler or a 0 to 10 scale, on which the lower numbers represent no thoughts about change and the higher numbers represent specific plans or attempts to change.

Making conversations easier

Scaling questions

Focus on the 2 things that are crucial to change, which together produce readiness:

1. Importance

I know I ought to change

2. Confidence

I know I can change

There are **THREE PARTS** to using the readiness ruler:

First part

'On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being 'not at all' and 10 being 'extremely'

How confident are you that...?

Ten is always the direction you want the change to go.

Second part

Whatever number the person gives you, select one or two numbers **BELOW** and ask...

By choosing a number below, you are eliciting change talk from the person.

Why a 3 instead of a 5?

Third part

Take a number one or two **ABOVE** what the person gave you and ask...

Not actually changing the behaviour, but a little more comfortable with the idea.

What would it take to move you to a 7?

In this way, you can help the person to voice their concerns and thoughts about possible obstacles and supports to changing their own healthcare behaviours.

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This Skills Card is the work of the National Healthcare Communication Programme.