**Pp18**

**The validation of the Sinhala version of the Kessler psychological distress scale (K10) to screen for psychiatric morbidity**

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Background: The Kessler psychological distress scale (K10), used in epidemiological surveys, measures

psychological distress. High scores in community surveys are associated with anxiety and affective

disorders, and to a lesser extent, with other psychiatric disorders.

Objective: To validate the Sinhala translations of the long (K10) and short (K.6) versions of the Kessler

psychological distress scale.

Design, setting and methods: The English version of K10 was translated into Sinhala. Content and face

validity was assessed by experts. The scales were pre-tested and modified accordingly. The Sinhala

versions of K6 and K10, and the Structured Clinical Interview Schedule were administered to 20 adults

with major psychiatric illnesses diagnosed by two clinicians independently, and to a random sample of 25

apparently normal people from the community. SPSS (Version 11) was used for the analysis.

Results: The ROC curve for the K10 contained 96.1% of the area under the curve of 0.961 (95% CI

90.4%-100%). A cut off score of 22 for the K10 yielded a sensitivity of 93.8% and a specificity of 82.6%.

The ROC curve for the K6 contained 90.1% (95% CI 80.5% - 99.7%) of the area under the curve. For the

K6, a cut off score of 13 gave a sensitivity of 88.2% and a specificity *of 72%,* The total number of days that

the patient could not attend to regular work and responsibilities was significantly correlated with both the

K10 (p=0.041) andK6 (p=0.023).

Conclusion: The Sinhala version of the K10 and K6 questionnaires can be used to screen for psychological

distress.