

**Svapp: a scale for the assessment of psychological characteristics in people with mental retardation before undergoing surgery.**

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This paper describes the SVAPP assessment scale (Psychological Characteristics Assessment Scale) to be used with people with mental retardation (MR) before undergoing surgery. This scale allows the medical staff to acquire clear and immediate information on the psychological characteristics of people with cognitive impairments as well as to understand their attitudes in order to better deal with the peculiarities of their disease and improve the quality of medical services delivered. Focusing on behavioural as well as affective characteristics facilitates a better management of patients, thus reducing the possibility that the surgery might be experienced as negative and devastating.

This scale was developed at Troina-based Oasi Maria SS. Research Institute, and namely by the Unit of Psychology, in collaboration with the Anaesthesiology Service. It was used with 25 people with different degrees of mental retardation who underwent dental surgery.

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