South Piedmont AHEC
Behavioral Health Integrated Care Curriculum Project

PC-PTSD Screener

What is it?
Primary Care Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PC-PTSD) for DSM-5 is a 5-item screener that was

Link(s) to Screener(s)
Primary Care PTSD Screen for DSM-5 (PC-PTSD-5) – PTSD: National Center for PTSD (va.gov)

How to use it / Who should administer
The PC-PTSD is designed to be administered by the patient via self-report. Those who screen posi-
tive require further assessment, preferably with a structured interview such as the Clinician-
Administered PTSD Scale for DSM-5 (CAPS-5). If a clinical interview is not possible, it is recom-
mended that additional assessment is conducted using a validated self-report measure such as
the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5).

How to interpret / Next steps
The measure begins with an item designed to assess whether the respondent has had any exposure
to traumatic events. If a respondent denies exposure, the PC-PTSD-5 is complete with a score of 0.
If a respondent indicates a trauma history – experiencing a traumatic event over the course of their
life – the respondent is instructed to answer five additional yes/no questions about how that trauma
has affected them over the past month. Preliminary results from validation studies suggest that a cut
-point of 3 on the PC-PTSD-5 (e.g., respondent answers "yes" to any 3 of 5 questions about how the
traumatic event(s) have affected them over the past month) is optimally sensitive to probable PTSD.

If you identify that someone has PTSD, this is a helpful clinical decision-making tool for treatment