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The de Morton Mobility Index (DEMMI) provides a valid method for measuring and monitoring the mobility of patients making the transition from hospital to the community: an observational study

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### Question

Is the de Morton Mobility Index (DEMMI) valid for measuring the mobility of patients making the transition from hospital to the community?

### Design

Observational cohort study.

## Participants

696 consecutive patients admitted to 11 Transition Care Programs for multidisciplinary care in Victoria and Tasmania during a 6-month period. The DEMMI and Modified Barthel Index were administered within 5 working days of admission and discharge from the Transition Care Program.

## Outcome measures

The DEMMI and Modified Barthel Index.

## Results

Neither the DEMMI nor the Modified Barthel Index had a floor or ceiling effect. Similar evidence of convergent, discriminant and known-groups validity were obtained for each instrument. The DEMMI was significantly more responsive to change than the Modified Barthel Index using criterion- and distribution-based methods. The minimum clinically important difference estimates represented similar proportions of the scale width for the DEMMI and Modified Barthel Index and were similar using criterion- and distribution-based estimates. Rasch analysis identified the DEMMI as essentially unidimensional in a Transition Care Program cohort and therefore can be applied to obtain interval level measurement. Rasch analysis demonstrated that the DEMMI was administered similarly by physiotherapists and allied health assistants under the direction of a physiotherapist.

## Conclusion

The DEMMI and Modified Barthel Index are both valid measures of activity limitation for Transition Care Program patients. The DEMMI has a broader scale width, provides interval level measurement, and is significantly more responsive to change than the Modified Barthel Index for measuring the mobility of Transition Care Program patients



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## Keywords

Measurement; Older adults; Mobility; Physical ability; Physiotherapy

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