

Reference for Documenting Appearance, Behavior, and Demeanor

Quantify: Try to describe number of times observed or length of time (i.e. cried or ten minutes)

Qualify: Name the event that coincided or preceded the behavior (i.e. sobbed as she undressed)

Eye Contact: Do not use good or poor.

Examples of what to write:

Maintained eye contact Avoided or Averted Stare Watch Fixed Glare Glance
Looked at... (Floor, ceiling) Closed eyes (when, how long) only when addressed

Speech: Always use quotes, do not paraphrase

Responded in one or two word answers Responded only when asked a question Whispered Hoarse Slow
Talked and cried at same time Mumble Shout Scream Stammer Stutter Hesitated (for # of seconds or minutes)

Responsiveness to Clinician or Other personnel: Do not use cooperative

Followed direction Answered questions when asked Paused before answering Unresponsive Volunteered
information wanted to speak to a person alone Alert Oriented

Nonverbal Oral Expressions:

Cry Wail Sob Weep Sniffle Moan Whimper Sigh

Facial Expressions:

Frown Glower Scowl Grimace Flinch Wince Biting lips Clenched jaw Pursed lips Pucker Grinding teeth

Body Posture and Muscle Tension:

Slouched Slumped Arms crossed in front of body Fetal position Stooped Clenched fists Wringing hands
Restless Shudder Quiver Shake Tremor Tremble Cower Stunned Startled

Behaviors and Actions

Blew Nose Wiped at eyes with tissue Clutching (clothes, stuffed animal, self) Holding front of shirt Pacing
Rocking pulling at sheets pulling away Agitated

Other Description of Behavior:

Serious Sluggish Silent Somber Solemn Listless Quiet

Do not Use Cool, Composed, Cooperative, Controlled, or Flat Affect

Describe Anxiety:

Can write patient is anxious, then support with observable behaviors:

Wringing hands tapping foot sweating profusely dilated pupils or statements

Appearance:

Height and weight Bruised Red-eyed Dirty Wet Clothes on inside out Covered with debris Wrapped in
blanket scratched Bloody Obese Smells of alcohol Disheveled Hair disheveled