



The PozQoL Scale
NEXT STEPS

A resource for healthcare providers

The PozQoL Scale is a patient-reported outcome measure designed specifically to measure quality of life for people with HIV. Using the Scale can help to better understand the experiences of people with HIV, improve the quality of care provided, and give insight to the types of referrals and services that may benefit people with HIV.^{1,2}

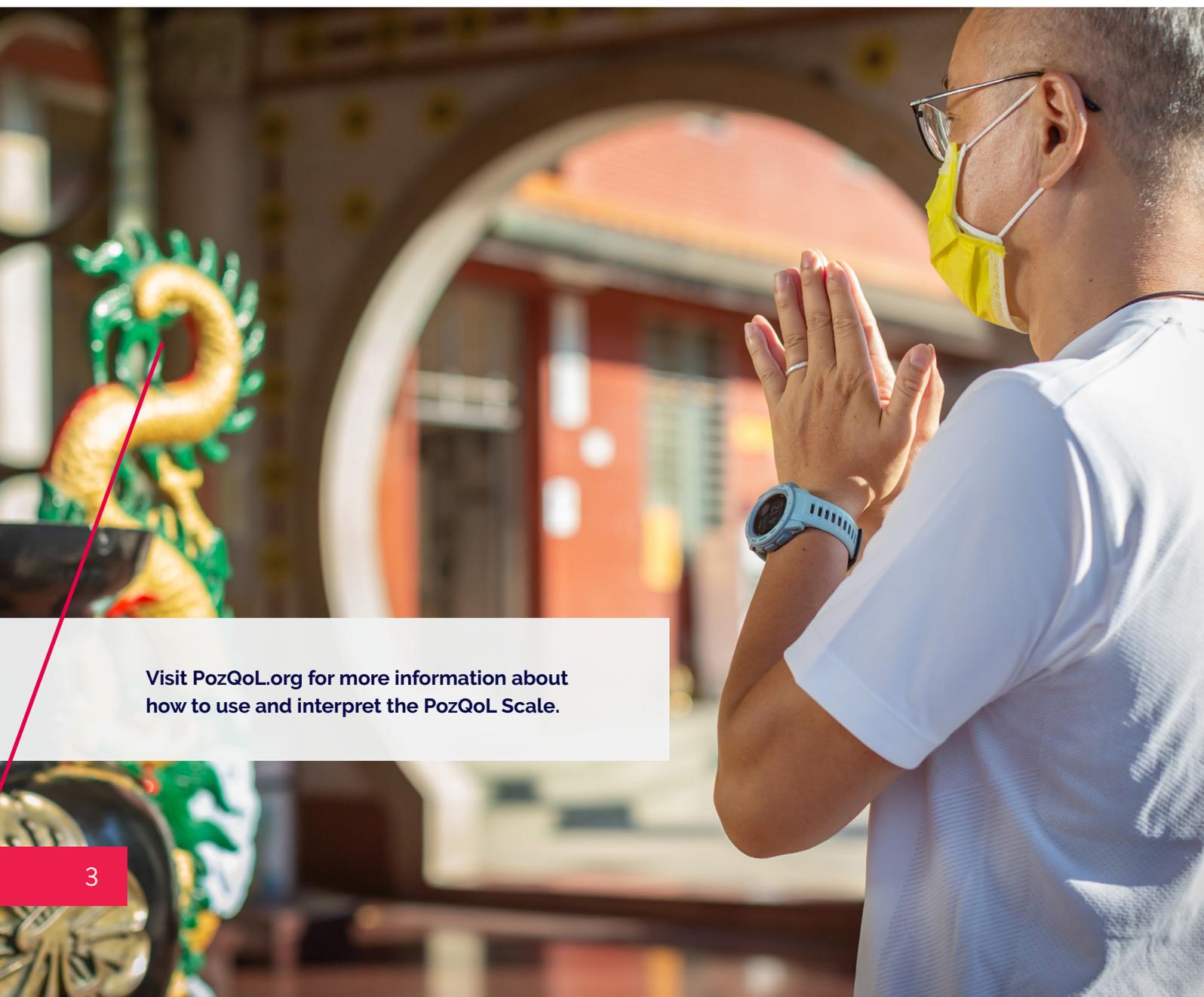
After completing the PozQoL Scale, it is important to educate people with HIV about what their results mean and guide discussions around maintaining or improving quality of life.

This resource contains guidance for the next steps following PozQoL, providing healthcare providers with suggestions for tailoring conversations on quality of life, and helpful hints and tips to empower people with HIV to engage with their care.

QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV

Quality of life is an increasingly important part of healthcare and represents the experiences of people with HIV.³⁴ The PozQoL Scale measures changes in quality of life among people with HIV over time.

Quality of life is a central goal in the care and support of people with HIV.³⁵ Treatment with antiretroviral therapy can help people with HIV to achieve good health and a similar life expectancy to the general population.³⁵ This can have a positive effect on quality of life. However, it is important to remember that quality of life can impact a person's ability to access and maintain treatment, or manage life with HIV.⁵

A photograph of a man in profile, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt, glasses, and a yellow face mask. He has his hands clasped together in a prayer-like gesture. He is wearing a blue watch on his left wrist. The background is a traditional Chinese building with a large circular window and a golden dragon sculpture on the left. A white text box is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

Visit PozQoL.org for more information about how to use and interpret the PozQoL Scale.

TIPS FOR DISCUSSING POZQOL RESULTS

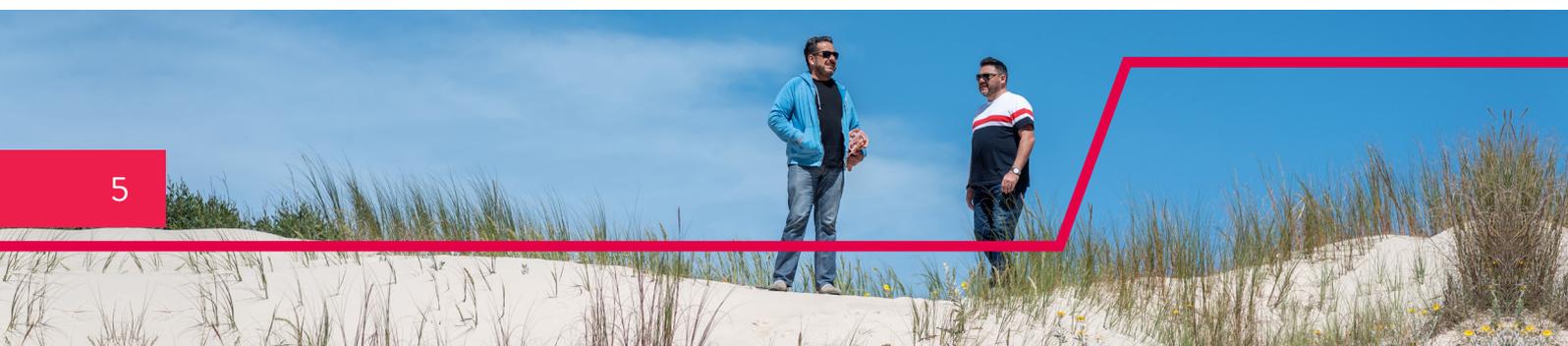
- Pursue open and active discussions around PozQoL scores and what each domain represents. Schedule a long or follow-up appointment to allow time for discussion.
 - / **Psychological domain** – includes mood, coping, hope for or fear of the future, and self-worth.
 - / **Social domain** – about personal and social life. It includes feelings of belonging, support, and social stigma.
 - / **Health concerns domain** – how someone feels about their own health. It includes health-related worries and energy, and how easy someone finds managing HIV and HIV treatment.
 - / **Functional domain** – whether a person feels that they can live what they would call a “normal” life. It includes independence, meaningful occupation, and good standard of living.
- People with HIV may benefit from extra support across different domains, but it is critical that they are involved in decisions.
- Ask people with HIV questions about how they answered the Scale and actively listen to their answers. For example:²
 - / Why do they think they scored the way they did in a particular domain?
 - / What kind of support do they need or would like to have?
- Remember that someone with a high overall score may still benefit from extra support if one of their Domain Scores is lower.
- PozQoL Domains do not cover every possible concern someone may have but they do indicate areas to focus discussion. For example, health concerns vary and asking about specific health concerns can highlight what information and support may be beneficial.

USING POZQOL SCORES TO IMPROVE HIV SERVICE AND OUTCOMES²

	Someone with a low score in this domain could be:	Actions that may benefit them:	Referrals to consider:
Psychological*	<p>Experiencing poor mental health, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low mood ▪ Negative outlook about themselves, their life, or their future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further discussion about their mental health ▪ Assessment using diagnostic mental health tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Counselling services ▪ Community rehabilitation and support services ▪ Care and support.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experiencing some difficulties in relationships with other people ▪ Experiencing HIV-related discrimination ▪ Lacking a sense of belonging and support. 	<p>Meeting people with HIV (peers), who can assist in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overcoming isolation due to fear of stigma ▪ Managing disclosure and confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peer support ▪ Peer navigation ▪ Care and support.
Health concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently experiencing some difficulties managing their health ▪ Concerned that their health will deteriorate due to HIV – even if they are enjoying good health at the moment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussing treatment options or revisions ▪ Speaking with people with HIV (peers) about managing HIV ▪ Information about maintaining good health with HIV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical services ▪ Health promotion ▪ Peer education ▪ Care and support ▪ Counselling services.
Functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experiencing some difficulties with incorporating HIV into their everyday life ▪ Lacking functional independence ▪ Experiencing some financial distress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting people with HIV (peers) ▪ Community or financial support or advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community support ▪ Financial and housing assistance ▪ Personal development.

* PozQoL is not a diagnostic tool. If you are not a mental health worker but you are concerned about your patient or client's mental health, it is important to refer them to a mental health service.

Adapted from PozQoL. Using PozQoL.²





For more information about how to use PozQoL and interpret PozQoL Scores, visit: [Pozqol.org/using-pozqol/](https://www.pozqol.org/using-pozqol/)

Or scan the QR code directly

References:

1. Brown G *et al.* *BMC Public Health*. 2018; 18(1): 527. 2. PozQoL. Using PozQoL. Available at: <https://www.pozqol.org/using-pozqol/> Accessed March 2022. 3. Lazarus JV *et al.* *Nat Commun*. 2021; 12(1): 4450. 4. Lazarus JV *et al.* *BMC Med*. 2016; 14(1): 94. 5. PozQoL. QoL and PLHIV. Available at: <https://www.pozqol.org/quality-of-life-people-with-hiv/> Accessed March 2022.

The PozQoL Scale is intended for use between healthcare providers and people with HIV.

The PozQoL Scale was developed by the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society (ARCSHS) in partnership with, National Association of People with HIV Australia (NAPWHA), Living Positive Victoria, Positive Life NSW, Queensland Positive People (QPP), and ViiV Healthcare.

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Brown, G, Mikotajczak, G, Lyons, A, Power, J, Drummond, F, Cogle, A, Allan, B, Cooper, C & O'Connor, S 2018, 'Development and validation of PozQoL: A scale to assess quality of life of PLHIV', *BMC Public Health*, vol. 18, p. 527.

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