



## Tool 1.12: The Modified Caregiver Strain Index (MCSI)

Directions: Here is a list of things that other caregivers have found to be difficult. Please put a checkmark in the columns that apply to you. We have included some examples that are common caregiver experiences to help you think about each item. Your situation may be slightly different, but the item could still apply.<sup>14</sup>

**Yes, on a regular basis = 2**

**Yes, sometimes = 1**

**No = 0**

My sleep is disturbed (For example: the person I care for is in and out of bed or wanders around at night)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caregiving is inconvenient (For example: helping takes so much time or it's a long drive over to help)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caregiving is a physical strain (For example: lifting in or out of a chair; effort or concentration is required)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caregiving is confining (For example: helping restricts free time or I cannot go visiting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There have been family adjustments (For example: helping has disrupted my routine; there is no privacy)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There have been changes in personal plans (For example: I had to turn down a job; I could not go on vacation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There have been other demands on my time (For example: other family members need me)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There have been emotional adjustments (For example: severe arguments about caregiving)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some behaviour is upsetting (For example: incontinence; the person cared for has trouble remembering things; or the person I care for accuses people of taking things)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is upsetting to find the person I care for has changed so much from his/her former self (For example: he/she is a different person than he/she used to be)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There have been work adjustments (For example: I have to take time off for caregiving duties)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caregiving is a financial strain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel completely overwhelmed (For example: I worry about the person I care for; I have concerns about how I will manage)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Total Score: Sum responses for “Yes, on a regular basis” (2 pts. each) and “Yes, sometimes” (1 pt. each).</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14 Thornton, M., & Travis, S. S., *Analysis of the reliability of the Modified Caregiver Strain Index*, The Journal of Gerontology, Series B, Psychological. Sciences and Social Sciences, 58(2), p.S129.

A range of other tools are available by reviewing the following websites:



*NSW Government: South Western Sydney Local Health District Carer program*  
[swslhd.nsw.gov.au/carers/assessment.html](https://swslhd.nsw.gov.au/carers/assessment.html)

*Alzheimer's Association: caregiver stress check if caring for someone with dementia*  
[alz.org/care/alzheimers-dementia-stress-check.asp](https://alz.org/care/alzheimers-dementia-stress-check.asp)