



VICTORIA
HOSPICE

Victoria Respiratory Congestion Scale (VRCS)

VRCS Score	Observation
0	Congestion absent
1	Congestion audible at 12 inches (30 cm) from patient's chest but not further
2	Congestion audible at the end of the bed but not further
3	Congestion audible at the doorway of the room

Instructions:

- The staff member stands beside the patient's bed, bends slightly over the patient's chest, turns his or her head at 12 inches (30 cm) from the chest, and listens for several breaths. The staff then moves to the end of the bed and listens again for several breaths, and similarly at the doorway of the room
 - ◊ If no congestion is heard at the chest, the score is 0/3
 - ◊ If congestion is heard at the chest but not the foot of the bed, the score is 1/3
 - ◊ If congestion is heard at the chest and at the foot of the bed only, the score is 2/3
 - ◊ If congestion is heard at the doorway, the score is 3/3
- Distinction should be made between 'congested breathing' and 'snoring' or 'tachypnea' which are not counted as congestion
- Room noise should be reduced as possible (e.g. radio or television turned down) during assessment
- The room size is based on an approximate single room. If in a larger four-bed ward, the distance from the bed to where an average doorway would be is used
- Whatever the room size or ambience, repeated measurements should replicate as best as possible the same conditions in order to compare changes in the VRCS