

Tip #17 Responsiveness of the COPM

A key characteristic of an outcome measure is responsiveness, its ability to detect statistically significant (beyond chance) and clinically important change over time. Let's look at this for the COPM:



Numerous studies over the past 35 years provide evidence that the COPM detects statistically significant changes over time.



For many years, a change of 2 points or more was considered a clinically important difference. However, recent research indicates that changes both below and above 2 points can reflect clinically important change.



For adults, the range of clinically important difference appears to be between 1.3-3.5 points. Research shows that this range is based on the population, type of occupational performance problems and the context in which clients receive intervention.



Future research, particularly with children, will provide additional information on levels of clinically important difference across different populations.