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## The Instrumental-Expressive Social Support Scale - validation in a sample of older adults

L. Lima<sup>1,2</sup>, C. Bastos<sup>1,2</sup>, C. Santos<sup>1,2</sup>, M. Martins<sup>1,2</sup>, M. Guerra<sup>3,4</sup>, P. Costa<sup>5,6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Escola Superior de Enfermagem do Porto, Portugal

<sup>2</sup>CINTESIS - Center for Health Technology and Services Research, Portugal

<sup>3</sup>Faculdade Psicologia e Ciências da Educação, Portugal

<sup>4</sup>Laboratório de Reabilitação Psicossocial- FPCE-UP, Portugal

<sup>5</sup>Universidade do Minho, Portugal

<sup>6</sup>Life and Health Sciences Research Institute (ICVS), School of Health Sciences, Portugal

Social support is a major determinant of health in all stages of the life cycle, but particularly important in older age. The aim of the study was to adapt and validate a social support scale: the Instrumental-Expressive Social Support Scale, in a sample of older individuals.

Participants were 964 community-dwellers, aged between 64 and 99 years old (M= 74,4), who completed the Instrumental-Expressive Social Support Scale, The Reported Adherence to Medication Scale and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule. The sample was randomly divided in two groups. The first group was used as a calibration sample, to study the number of factors underlying social support through Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) and the second group as a validation sample, to test the “best fit” model via Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and study the associations between social support and affect and adherence to medication.

Results from PAF showed a three factor structure, which was confirmed by CFA. The factors were similar to pre-existing dimensions in the original instrument and showed high values of internal consistency. They were named as Sense of control ( $\alpha = 0.900$ ), Financial support ( $\alpha = 0.802$ ), Familiar and Socio-Affective Support ( $\alpha = 0.778$ ).

CFA showed acceptable fit ( $\chi^2/g.l = 5.418$ ; CFI = 0.903; NFI = 0.884; RMSEA = 0.098). Significant associations were also found between the three dimensions of social support and negative affect and adherence to medication.

This instrument constitutes a useful and valid measure for the assessment of social support in older adults.