

The Social Network Map

Beckers et al (2020) sets out a procedure for transforming the Social Network Map into two factors that can be used for statistical analysis. Although such quantification can be useful for research, the Social Network Map was originally conceived as a visual and conversational instrument to be completed jointly by the patient and a healthcare professional. Its primary purpose is to stimulate reflection, reveal hidden patterns of support and stress, and guide shared decision-making about care and recovery.

The present appendix therefore returns to the original spirit of the instrument. It offers step-by-step guidance on how to employ the Social Network Map in everyday clinical practice without applying the quantification method described in Beckers et al (2020). The practical instructions are presented first in English and then, for the convenience of Dutch practitioners, in Dutch.

English

1. Preparation (+/- 5 min)

- Book a quiet, private room.
- Have ready: a blank SNM diagram (circle with 8 segments), the rating grid, and a pen or pencil.
- Simple introduction:
“Together we will make an overview of the people who are important to you and what they mean to you. This shows us who can support you and how we can use that support.”
- Stress confidentiality and say there are no right or wrong answers.

2. Mapping the network (+/- 10 min)

1. Place the patient in the centre of the pie chart (see Figure 1).
2. Go through each **life domain** and write every relevant name or initial in the right segment.
3. Normalise empty segments (*“That happens quite often; it’s fine.”*).

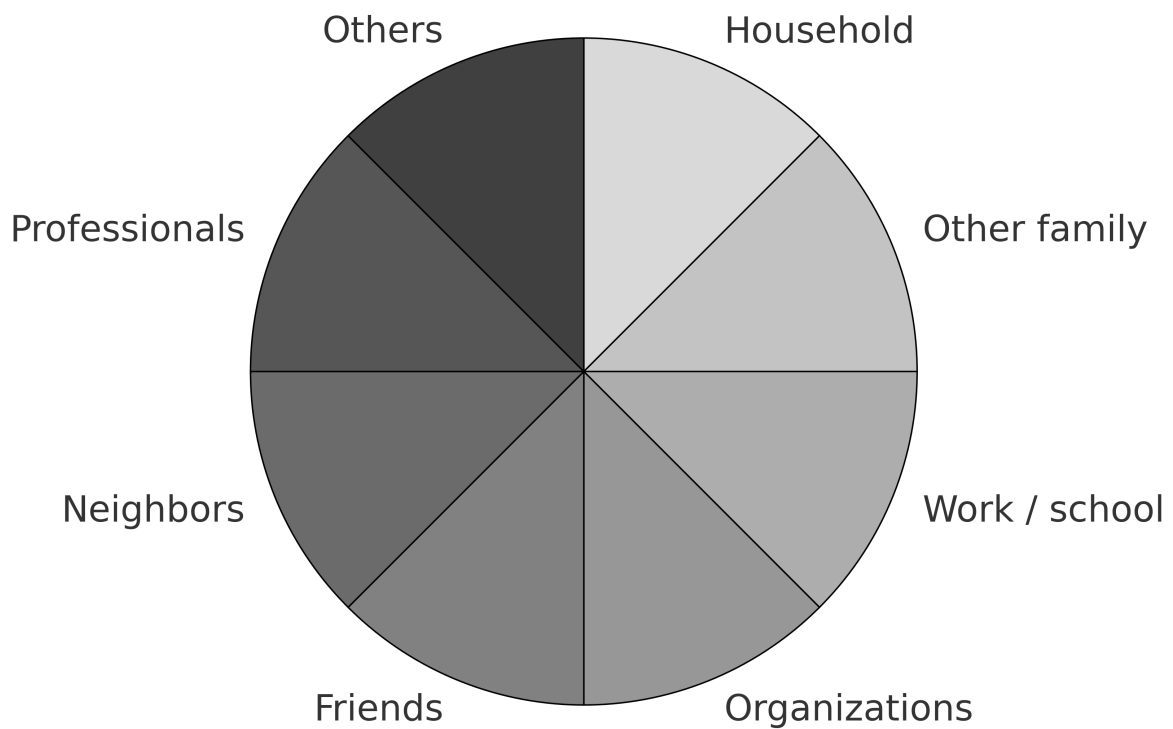


Figure 1: Social Network Map

3. Scoring relationship features (+/-15 min)

Use the questions in table 1 for every person; record the answers in the grid table 2).

Table 1: Questions for the Social Network Map

Core question	Scale ¹
Does this person listen to or comfort you? (emotional support)	1–2–3
Does he/she help you in practical ways? (practical help)	1–2–3
Does he/she give you advice or information?	1–2–3
Is he/she critical or stressful for you?	1–2–3
Direction of help ²	↔ / → / ←
Felt closeness (bond)	1–2–3
Contact frequency ³	0–4
Length of relationship ⁴	<1 yr / 1–5 yrs / >5 yrs

Practical tips:

- Show the answer options; let the client write or use sticky notes to increase involvement.
- Respond with empathy; acknowledge feelings and pause if needed.
- Keep structure: summarise regularly and move on to the next person.

4. Review and wrap-up (+/- 5 min)

1. Look at the full map together: name strong sources of support and areas for improvement.
2. Agree one or two follow-up actions (*e.g.* involve sister in appointments, thank neighbour, join a peer group).
3. Record this in the patient file and decide when to repeat the Social Network Map.

¹1 = almost never; 2 = sometimes; 3 = almost always.

²Two-way, mainly from client to other, or mainly from other to client.

³0 = none, 1 = a few times a year, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = daily.

⁴Duration of the relationship in years.

Table 2: Social Network Map

Nr	Name	Area of life	Concrete support (1-3)	Emotional support (1-3)	Information / advice (1-3)	Critical attitude (1-3)	Direction of support	Closeness (1-3)	How often seen	How long known (years)
01										
02										
03										
04										
05										
06										
07										
08										
09										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										

Nederlands

1. Voorbereiden (+/- 5 min.)

- Reserveer een rustige, vertrouwelijke ruimte.
- Leg klaar: leeg SNM-diagram (cirkel met 7 sectoren) en het raster voor relatiekenmerken, plus pen/potlood.
- Introductie in eenvoudige taal:
“We gaan samen een overzicht maken van de mensen die belangrijk zijn voor u en wat zij voor u betekenen. Zo krijgen we samen inzicht in wie u kan steunen en hoe we die steun kunnen benutten.”
- Benadruk vertrouwelijkheid en dat er geen foute antwoorden zijn.

2. Netwerk in kaart brengen (+/- 10 min.)

1. Zet patiënt(e) centraal in het taartdiagram (zie figuur 2).
2. Loop systematisch de **levensdomeinen** langs en noteer per sector alle relevante personen of initialen.
3. Normaliseer lege sectoren (*“Dat komt vaker voor; niet erg.”*).

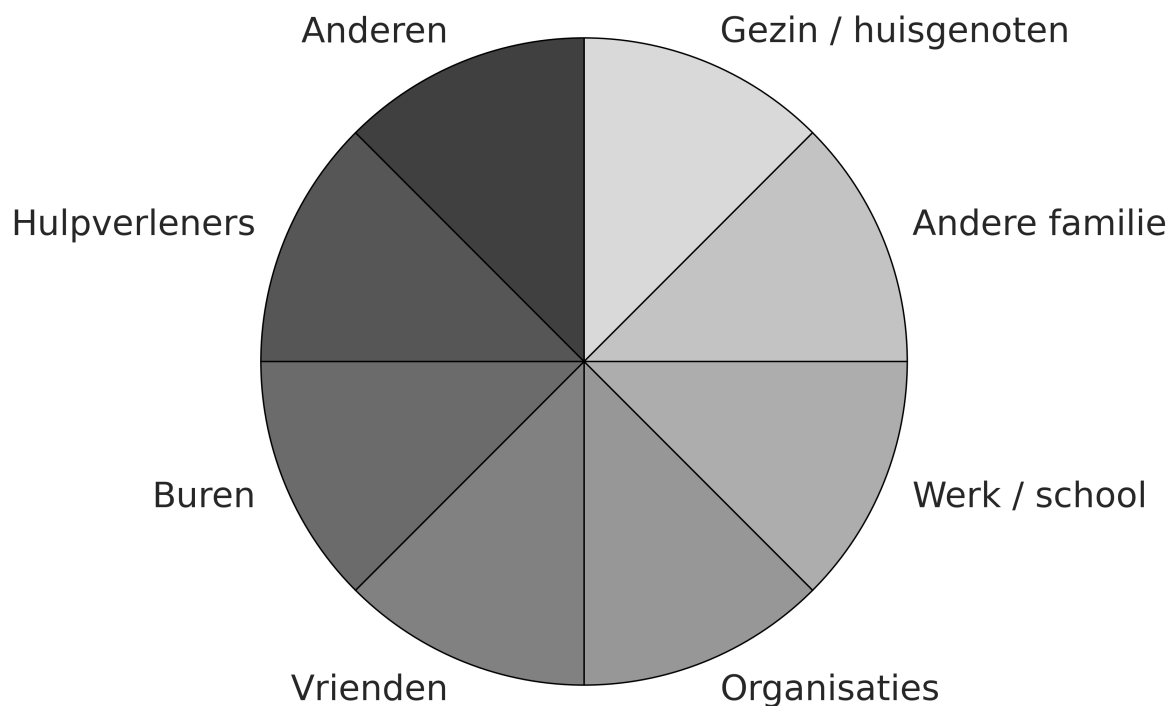


Figure 2: Social Network Map (Nederlands)

3. Relatiekenmerken scoren (+/- 15 min.)

Gebruik onderstaande vragen (tabel 3) bij elke genoemde persoon; noteer de antwoorden in het raster (tabel 4).

Table 3: Vragen bij de Social Network Map

Kernvraag	Schaal ⁵
Luistert of troost deze persoon u? (emotionele steun)	1–2–3
Helpt hij/zij u praktisch? (concrete hulp)	1–2–3
Geeft hij/zij advies of informatie?	1–2–3
Is hij/zij kritisch of belastend voor u?	1–2–3
Richting hulp ⁶	↔ / → / ←
Ervaren nabijheid (hechtheid)	1–2–3
Contactfrequentie ⁷	0–4
Relatieduur ⁸	<1 jr / 1–5 jr / >5 jr

Praktijktips:

- Toon visueel de antwoordopties; laat de cliënt meeschrijven of post-its plakken voor meer betrokkenheid.
- Reageer empathisch; erken emoties en pauzeer indien nodig.
- Bewaak structuur: vat regelmatig samen en ga door naar volgende persoon.

4. Overzicht & afronding (+/-5 min.)

1. Bekijk samen de volledige kaart: benoem sterke steunbronnen en mogelijkheden voor verbetering.
2. Formuleer één à twee vervolgacties (*bijvoorbeeld* zus betrekken bij afspraken, buurman bedanken, lotgenotengroep zoeken).

¹1 = bijna nooit, +; 2 = soms, +; 3 = bijna altijd.

²Tweerichtings, vooral van cliënt naar ander, of omgekeerd.

³0 = niet, 1 = paar keer/jaar, 2 = maandelijks, 3 = wekelijks, 4 = dagelijks.

⁴Duur van de relatie in jaren.

3. Leg vast in het dossier en spreek af wanneer de Social Network Map wordt herhaald.

Table 4: Social Network Map (Netherlands)

Nr	Naam	Levensgebeurtenis	Concrete hulp (1-3)	Emotionele steun (1-3)	Info/ advies (1-3)	Kritische houding (1-3)	Richting hulp	Ervaren nabijheid (1-3)	Contact -frequentie	Bekendheid duur (in jaren)
01										
02										
03										
04										
05										
06										
07										
08										
09										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										

Bronnen

References

- [1] Tracy, E. M., & Whittaker, J. K. (1990). *The Social Network Map: Assessing Social Support in Clinical Practice*. *Families in Society*, 71(8), 461–470.
- [2] Tracy, E. M., & Abell, N. (1994). *Social network map: Some further refinements on administration*. *Social Work Research*, 18(1), 56–60.
- [3] Beckers, T., Koekkoek, B., Tiemens, B., & Hutschemaekers, G. (2020). *Measuring Social Support in People with Mental Illness: A Quantitative Analysis of the Social Network Map*. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 41, 916–924.