

Can routine risk/needs assessment guide gender-informed practice, policy and service delivery?

International Symposium to consider the future direction
of custody for women in Scotland

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Assessing risk and needs of women

1. Tools developed on general offender population – predominantly male e.g.
 - * LSI-R (and many others)
2. Tools with gender-informed revisions e.g.
 - * LS/CMI
 - * HCR-20 with Female Additional Manual (FAM)
3. Tools developed on female offender population e.g.
 - * Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA)

Responsivity

“A gender-informed responsivity principle states that in general, optimal treatment response will be achieved when treatment providers deliver structured behavioural interventions [grounded in feminist philosophies as well as social learning theory] in an empathic and empowering manner [strength-based model] while simultaneously adopting a firm but fair approach.”

(Blanchette & Brown, 2006, p. 126)

Level of Service /Case Management Inventory



- * The LS/CMI includes normative data collected from over 20,000 females from prison and community populations, guidelines that instruct users to consider gender-specific factors, and assessment items that address gender-informed responsivity factors, health and social needs. In addition strengths may be highlighted.
- * Research studies support the use of LS/CMI with women.
- * Preliminary evidence that it performs well for men and women in Scotland

Risk /Needs Assessment in Scotland



prison

community

Framework for Risk Assessment,
Management and Evaluation:

FRAME

Working towards a Safer Scotland

What can we learn from routine assessment practice?

- * Individualised case plans based on comprehensive assessment of:
 - * Risks and needs
 - * Strengths
 - * Social and health needs
 - * Responsivity issues
- * Service planning
- * Policy

Informing the future model



Informing the future model



- * **Endorsing the approach**
- * **Purpose of each tier**
 - Evaluation criteria for placement decisions
 - Women's needs
 - Required services
 - ✓ Existing provision
 - ❖ Unmet need

What can we learn from routine assessment practice?

- * Assessment method incorporating LS/CMI and FRAME practice process introduced in 2011
- * By May 2014 assessments completed on 17423 individuals at commencement of community supervision
 - * 14683 males
 - * 6874 with history of custodial sentence
 - * 7809 with no history of custodial sentence
 - * 2740 females
 - * 664 with history of custodial sentence
 - * 2076 with no history of custodial sentence

Lifestyle stability/safety (possible total 8)		Engagement/compliance (possible total 5)	
Third party threat	2.4	Prior breach	1.8
Finance	4.1	Poor towards supervision	1.39
Accommodation	4.3	Compliance issues	2.1
Parenting concerns	4.5	Motivation issues	5.1
Current family violence	4.17 e-h	Denial/minimisation	5.2
Trauma/abuse experience (possible total 11)		Vulnerability/complexity (possible total 7)	
Family violence	4.17 a-h	Suicide attempts/threats	4.11
Physical assault	4.18	Self-harm	4.12
Sexual assault	4.19	Low self-esteem	4.13
Emotional abuse	4.20	Serious mental health illness	4.15
		Moderate mental health/emotional distress	4.16
		Interpersonally anxious	5.3
		Mental disorder	5.9
Behavioural needs (possible total 9)			
Personality traits		1.40	
History of violence		1.41 b	
Compliance issues		2.1	
Psychopathy		2.2	
Personality disorder		2.3	
Self-management		2.5	
Anger management		2.6	
Inappropriate sexual activity		2.8	
Personal/interpersonal skills		2.9	

Women with/without experience of custodial sentence

- * Higher general risk/needs level
- * Higher criminal history score
- * Companions
- * Engagement/compliance
- * Alcohol and drugs
- * Behavioural needs
- * Higher prevalence and diversity of violence

Custody/ needs	No	Yes
Self -management	47%	66%
Anger management	29%	40%
Compliance	19%	43%
Financial	49%	61%
Parenting concerns	31%	37%
Suicide attempts	26%	31%
Self-harm	24%	34%
Serious mental health	8%	9%
Emotional distress	38%	41%
Victim of family violence	40%	48%
Victim of physical assault	43%	58%
Motivation	26%	42%
Personality disorder	7%	10%

Types of offences

Custody/ offence types	No	Yes
Physical assault adult male extra familial	20%	44%
Physical assault adult female extra familial	23%	44%
Physical assault adult partner	16%	18%
Assault authority figure	21%	41%
Knife use	8%	22%
Two or more types of violence	22%	35%
Shoplifting	26%	66%
Theft/housebreaking	16%	44%

Identifying groups within women with experience of custodial sentence

Identifying groups within women with experience of custodial sentence

- * Overarching/underpinning issues of trauma and recovery, safety and stability
 - * Higher risk and needs with engagement/compliance and behavioural needs
 - * Lesser risk but substantial needs
 - * Lower risk and needs
- * Indications for community based preventive approach in all of the above

Foundations



Potential for future work

- * Dialogue with practitioners
- * Training
- * Gender-informed
 - * Practice
 - * Planning
 - * Service delivery
 - * Research