

Using Validated Assessments to Guide Supervision: Partnerships for Sustainability

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Introduction

In 2002 within the state of Hawai'i, the Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions (ICIS) implemented a five-year strategic plan implementing "best-practice" principles to assist in the management of offenders. The overall vision is to reduce recidivism of all types of offenders by 30 percent and included the following objectives: (a) to implement a system-wide application of standardized assessment protocols, (b) to establish a continuum of services that match risk and needs of adult offenders, (c) to create a management information system capable of communicating among agencies to facilitate sharing of offender information, and (d) to evaluate the effectiveness of intermediate sanctions in reducing recidivism. To this end, ICIS contracted another company (Cyzap Inc.) to develop the Sex Offender Risk Assessment Framework (SORAF), which includes the LSI-R along with the Static-99, Stable-2007, and Acute-2007. This framework was designed to assist probation and parole officers to allocate resources and to decide what factors to target in the formulation of the case management plan. In this poster, we present preliminary findings on the utility of the framework and on the challenges to implementation.

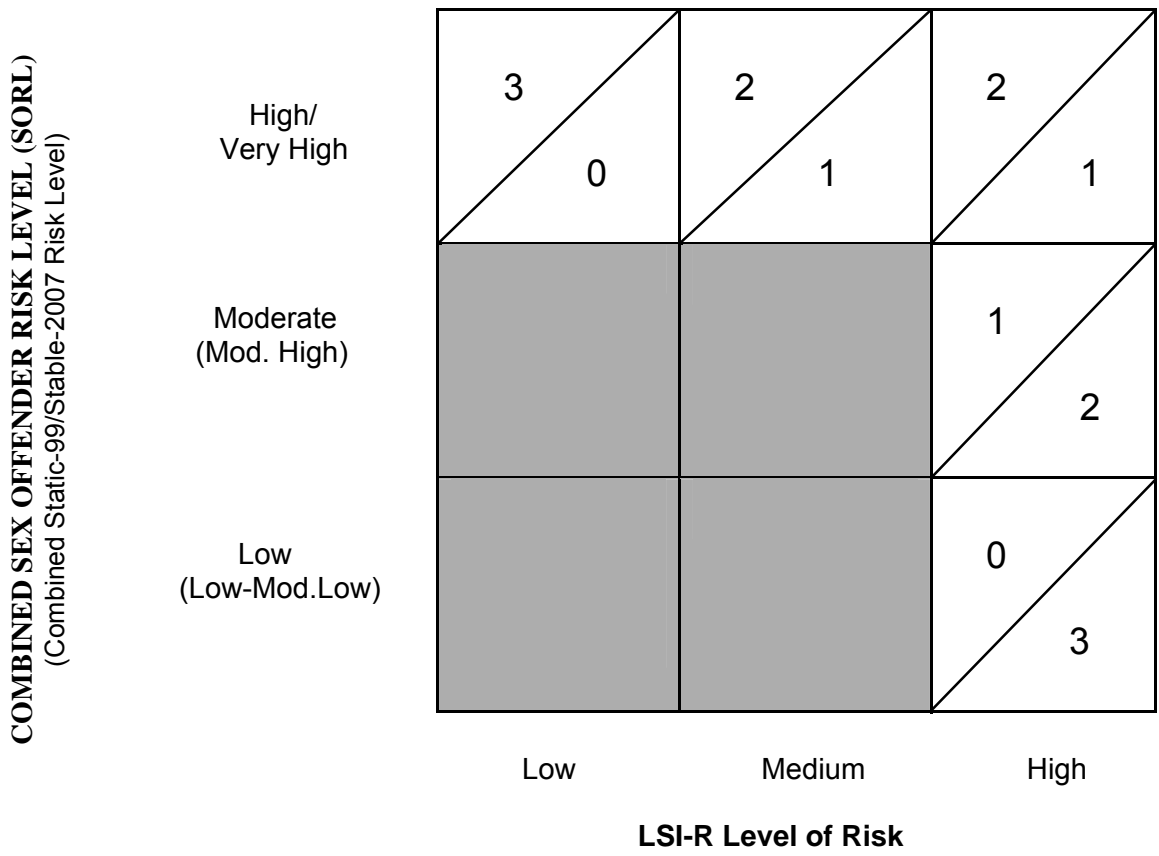
Method of Implementation: Developing Collaborative Partnerships

In 2005, the Hawai'i Sex Offender Management Team (SOMT) began a campaign to expand participation and interest in its statewide activities. Challenges to this process included the geographical separation of the parties, due to separate islands, and thus video-teleconferencing technology has been utilized to unite state, city, and county agencies along with private treatment vendors. Subsequently, training on the administration of the Static-99, Stable-2007 and Acute-2007 was provided to probation and parole officers, treatment providers, administrators, and mental health professionals from all 3 islands.

Prior to the inclusion of the sex-offender specific instruments, ICIS had implemented statewide

community supervision case planning utilizing the top three risk targets identified in the LSI-R Big 6. Now, the officers were tasked with choosing three risk targets using the LSI-R and the Stable-2007, which has been completed by the treatment providers in order that the workloads of the parole/probation officers continued to be manageable. Sex offenders under community supervision in the State of Hawaii would now be supervised according to the highest determined risk level by the LSI-R or the Stable-2007. The Sex Offender Risk Level (SORL) Case Planning Matrix (Figure 1) was developed to help PO's integrate the use of both the LSI-R and the Stable-2007 into their offender case plans. This allows for attention to be given to both sexual and general criminal risk factors.

Figure 1. Supervision Case Planning Matrix



Formal written case plans are developed for offenders whose scores fall into all but those in the shaded areas. The case planning boxes are divided such that the top left section of each box represents the number of risk targets that need to be chosen from the Stable-2007, which have been identified as a need, scoring either a '1' or a '2' (on a scale of 0-2; priority is given to items

scored with a '2'). The bottom right section of each box represents the number of risk targets that need to be chosen from the LSI-R Big 6 (taken in order of highest scores). For example, for an offender who scores Medium on the LSI-R and High/Very High on the Combined SORL (Static-99/Stable-2007), the officer will develop a supervision case plan on two Stable risk factors and one LSI risk factor. This matrix was developed to assist officers in determining the level of intensity of supervision required based on empirically validated risk factors. As well, it is designed to assist officers to develop individually-tailored plans based on the qualitative picture of criminogenic needs.

Results

Descriptives:

To date, 833 risk assessments have been completed on 335 sex offenders throughout the State of Hawai'i. Of these, 210 Static-99 assessments have been completed on 199 offenders; 115 Stable-2007 assessments were completed on 110 offenders; and 208 Acute-2007 assessments were completed on 144 offenders. On average, offenders were 42 years old, were male (99.4%) and single/never married (45%). The main categories of ethnicity of the 335 offenders assessed are Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian (25%), Caucasian (19%), Filipino (17%), Japanese (6.6%), Samoan (6.6%), Other (26%).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of risk measures.

Measure	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	Minimum	Maximum
Static	210	2.3	1.6	0-12	0	8
Stable	115	6.2	5.8	0-26	0	23
Acute	208	-	-	0-14	-	-
Sex/Violence	-	.9	1.2	-	0	4
General	-	1.2	1.5	-	0	6

Table 2. Scoring frequencies for Static/Stable Combined.

Risk Category	%	Sample Size	<i>n</i>
High/Very High	6.5		7
Moderate (Moderate-High)	21.5		23
Low (Low/Low-Moderate)	72.0		77
Total	100		107

Impact on Allocation of Resources:

The inclusion of the sex offender specific measures has impacted, albeit minimally, the level of supervision beyond what was determined by the LSI-R alone (Table 3) such that fewer offenders were supervised at the tail ends of the distribution and more were considered “moderate”.

Table 3. Percent of Scoring Change from LSI Alone to Static/Stable Combined.

Supervision Level	LSI-R	Static/Stable Combined	% Change
Low	82.5	74.0	8.5
Moderate	8.2	20.5	12.3
High/Very High	9.3	5.5	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	

Officer Perceptions of Utility and Challenges:

A random sample of twenty probation and parole officers from across the state completed a survey regarding their perceptions of the STATIC-99, STABLE-2007, and ACUTE-2007. The responses to the main questions are summarized below.

FACTOR ASSESSED	RESPONSES (%)		
Supervision Level Impacted?	Yes -higher (53%)	Yes –lower (5%)	No Change (42%)
Assisted in allocating time?	Yes (58%)	No (42%)	
Assisted with monitoring?	Yes (56%)	No (44%)	
Main Challenges/Barriers:			
-Time required	15%		
-Failure to Receive Assessments from Providers	12%		

Follow-up communication with agencies suggests that at least half of the officers are not yet implementing the use of the sex offender specific measures in developing case plans, and this might be due to the lack of receipt of the STABLE-2007 measures and/or to the failure of management/supervisors to ensure the measures are being completed and utilized as intended.

Summary

Thus far, it appears that the inclusion of the STATIC-99, STABLE-2007, and ACUTE-2007 as part of the best-practices initiative is resulting in the same overall level of officer time required on sex offender caseloads as a whole; however, it appears the measures may be assisting officers in shifting their supervision of more offenders into a moderate level. As well, officers are assisted, insofar as the measures are being implemented, in developing case plans according to the individual criminogenic needs of each offender. However, the problems in implementation highlight the importance of a structure to ensure quality control within the organization and reiterate the need for “conscientious officers”, as noted in Hanson et al. (2007) in order to obtain good data on which we might conclude whether the measures have been truly useful. The data sample from the State of Hawai’i will continue to be of interest in that it offers a structured method for including the

sex offender specific measures with the measure of general recidivism (which is being done by other organizations, although apparently without a proposed formal structure). As well, the diverse ethnicity of the Hawaiian population provides another element to this independent sample for which we will eventually see the predictive utility of the measures with the different types of recidivism and breaches.

References

Hanson, R.K., Harris, A.J.R., Scott, T., and Helmus, L. (2007). *Assessing the risk of sexual offenders on community supervision: The Dynamic Supervision Project*, Public Safety of Canada.