Using Assessment to Identify Treatment Targets or to Engage in Therapeutic Assessment

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Individuals who sexually offend vary in their treatment needs, and assessment provides the basis of decisions that direct treatment. Whether clinicians wish to use that assessment to identify treatment targets before beginning therapy or whether they wish to share assessment results with their clients to form a collaborative basis for therapy (cf. Finn, Fischer, & Handler, 2012; Smith, 2010), they must use assessment tools that accurately measure the issues germane to each client. This workshop will teach participants how to interpret and use two instruments that provide reliable, valid information about all the facets underlying sexual offending that have been shown in the research literature to be valid treatment targets.

The Structured Risk Assessment (SRA) was created as an overarching theoretical framework to measure risk for sexual reoffending. It defines psychological risk factors at a conceptual level, allowing multiple psychometrically sound assessments of these factors to serve as valid measures of each construct. The predictive validity of the SRA Need Assessment framework has been directly tested (Beech, Fisher, & Thornton, 2003; Craig, Thornton, Beech, & Browne, 2007; Harkins, Thornton, & Beech, 2009; Thornton, 2002), has been tested by constructing protocols from extant assessments that are theoretically or empirically consistent with the SRA framework (e.g., Allan, Grace, Rutherford, & Hudson, 2007; Beggs & Grace, 2010; Olver et al., 2007), and by assessing risk using a hybrid of these methods (Thornton & Knight, 2015). AUCs from these studies have averaged in the low 0.7s and support the viability of this approach. The framework organizes static risk indicators and enduring psychological risk factors (i.e., Needs or Long-Term Vulnerabilities) into four domains: sexual interests, distorted attitudes, relational style (previously called socioaffective functioning), and self-management.

The Multidimensional Inventory of Development, Sex, and Aggression (the MIDSA) is a computerized, contingency based inventory that has been created to assess the developmental histories and current behaviors, attitudes, and cognitions of both juveniles and adults who have sexually offended. It provides a detailed clinical report to support therapeutic interventions with both juveniles and adults. The MIDSA has been administered to more than 5000 juveniles and adults in outpatient, criminal, and community settings. Its reliability and validity have been extensively tested, and 30 publications (21 peer-reviewed articles and 9 chapters) have reported the results of studies using its scales. Recently, the MIDSA has been programmed to provide an assessment of a version of the SRA, the SRA Forensic version.
The present workshop will introduce the SRA and the MIDSA, including its version of SRA:FV. First, the four domains of the SRA and additional domains of the MIDSA will be introduced. Second, case histories will illustrate how the MIDSA and the SRA can be used to identify these domains and provide more detailed information about a respondent’s specific needs within each treatment domain. Third, participants will discuss how to apply sample assessments. All workshop participants will be given a CD with MIDSA manuals, case histories and examples of MIDSA reports, a copy of the workshop presentation, and all MIDSA publications.

Learning Goals and Objectives:
- Participants will be introduced to the advantages of using structured assessments to identify treatment targets or to engage in therapeutic assessment practices.
- Participants will be introduced to the four domains captured by the Structured Risk Assessment (SRA).
- Participants will be introduced to the Multidimensional Inventory of Development, Sex, and Aggression (the MIDSA) and the additional treatment domains it assesses.
- Participants will learn to use the MIDSA to identify treatment targets.
- Participants will be given an introduction to the use of these assessment domains in therapeutic assessment.

Financial Disclosure:
Drs. Sims-Knight and Knight have financial interests in the Multidimensional Inventory of Development, Sex, and Aggression (the MIDSA), which is now commercially available as a clinical instrument. Dr. Sims-Knight is president of Augur Enterprises, Inc., which markets the MIDSA, and Dr. Knight has been involved in the creation, validation, and marketing of the current version of the MIDSA.

References


