

BETTER TOGETHER

2018 ATSA Conference | Friday October 19 | 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

F-27

“Dynamic Smackdown” Dynamic Assessment – Promise or Pretext? (Part 1)

Symposium Chair: Andrew J.R. Harris, PhD, CPsych
Offenderrisk

Dynamic Smackdown – F-27: First Afternoon Session 13:30 to 15:00hrs	Time Allotted
Introductory remarks by the Symposium Chair – Andrew J. R. Harris	12 min
1) Dynamic assessment using the STABLE-2007 - Yolanda Fernandez	25 mi
1a) Data presentation on High Risk Men – Jan Looman/Jeff Abracen Very short 10 min TED-style talk	10 min
2) Dynamic Assessment using the VRSSO – Mark Olver	25 min
BREAK	
F- 43: Second Afternoon Session 15:30 to 17:00hrs	
3) Dynamic assessment of protective dynamic factors – The SAPROF-SO Sharon Kelley	25 min
4) The case against the use of dynamic assessment – Brian Abbott	25 min
5) “Open Mic” – all presenters panel discussion responding to audience questions	35 min

Note: the organizers intend to audio-record this double symposium for use as a foundation to a position paper on this issue.

Validation studies show that dynamic prediction tools (STABLE-2007, VRSSO, LSI group of instruments, and others) can extend the predictive validity of risk assessments beyond static, actuarial assessments alone. Vociferous controversy has recently erupted in the sex offender risk assessment world as to whether these instruments can be ethically and reliably used in conjunction with well established and researched actuarially based assessments. Some claim that as static actuarial measures do not consider dynamic risk factors that the presence of any dynamic risk factors for an offender indicates a higher level of re-offence risk than indicated by static testing alone. Other assessors apply these instruments impressionistically, not bothering to refer to the scoring manual for guidance or score it “through a psychodynamic lens” reflecting their basic theoretical leanings. However, more serious concerns must be weighed.

Several commentators believe that until longer-term follow-up studies on indeterminately detained offenders are completed that it is not ethical to apply these measures. Others question whether treatment gains shown while detained are illusory given the environmental restrictions. Still others chafe at having their clinical judgement restricted or

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limited to a set of empirically determined risk factors which may well not consider all contextual variables that should be part of an individual sex offender risk assessment. This symposium includes an extended panel discussion focussed on and responding to the questions of ATSA audience members some of whom are confronted on an almost daily basis with these issues. This symposium is designed to present both sides of this debate with one speaker specifically arguing the case against - leading to a lively and informative debate and ATSA's first Dynamic Smackdown.

Clinical Application of STABLE-2007 in an Institutional Setting

Yolanda Fernandez, Ph.D.
Correctional Services of Canada

Conceptualizing and assessing dynamic risk factors in a secure environment can be a considerable challenge. Assessing change on dynamic risk factors is more difficult within highly restricted environments where restricted access to means and opportunity and consequences for behaviours are highly structured, regulated, and scrutinized in comparison to offenders in the community. The current presentation provides an overview of the application of STABLE-2007 in Canadian Federal Institutions and this application is used to provide guidance for clinicians assessing items from the STABLE-2007 in other secure settings.

Learning Goals:

- Participants will understand challenges to assessing dynamic risk factors in secure settings
- Participants will learn strategies assessing STABLE-2007 items in secure settings
- Participants will learn strategies for promoting better quality assessments in secure settings.

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Utility of the Stable-2007 with Incarcerated High Risk Sexual Offenders

Jan Looman, PhD, C. Psych.

This presentation will provide a summary of research examining the predicative validity of the Stable-2007 on two samples of incarcerated sexual offenders. The first of these samples consisted of 165 high risk offenders assessed and/or treated at the Regional Treatment Centre (Ontario) between September 1975 and November 1996, and who had been released to the community; with an average follow-up period of 22.4 years. The second sample consisted of 442 incarcerated Canadian sexual offenders. These subjects served an average of almost 3 years of incarceration before release and were followed for about 6 years of follow-up.

Data will be presented which a) will demonstrate that the Stable-2007 is able to predict sexual recidivism among asexual offenders who are in a carceral setting when the instrument is scored; b) that the Stable-2007 has predicative validity even when the offenders are serving lengthy sentences. Conclusions regarding the utility of the Stable-2007 for incarcerated samples will be offered.

Learning Goals:

- Participants will be able to describe the extent to which the Stable-2007 adds to the predictive validity of the Static-99R
- Participants will learn the extent to which the Stable-2007 is valid for men serving longer sentences
- Participants will be able to discuss scoring modifications employed when scoring the Stable 2007 with incarcerated offenders.

Dynamic Risk Assessment Using the VRS-SO with Indeterminate Detention Offenders

Mark Olver, Ph.D., R.D. Psych
University of Saskatchewan

Indeterminate detention (ID) is a high stakes sanction reserved for exceptionally high risk-high need (HRHN) persons who are deemed to pose an undue risk to public safety. It is one of the most extreme measures that is routinely taken by justice systems to manage sexual violence risk and prevent sexual and violent recidivism. Naturally, risk assessment is most frequently employed as a mechanism to keep dangerous people in custody; but seldom is

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risk assessment viewed as a possible ticket to freedom for men with an ID designation who have made substantive risk changes and whose risk can be safely managed in the community.

This presentation features applications of a dynamic sexual violence risk assessment and treatment planning tool, the VRS-SO, with ID offenders and other HRHN men, to assess risk in a dynamic manner to inform risk management efforts and release decisions. VRS-SO data on an ID sample will be presented along with clinical illustrations of dynamic risk assessment with ID men. Several propositions are made with supporting data from VRS-SO normative research with treated sexual offender samples, regarding the use of dynamic tools with ID men and the perils and pitfalls of relying solely on static measures: 1) Sexual offending treatment programs (SOTP) in Canadian corrections have a long history of treating HRHN men and releasing them back to the community without evidence of new sexual offenses occurring. 2) Scrutiny of the risk and need profiles of ID men demonstrate that they are not necessarily higher risk or greater need than other HRHN men who are not given an ID designation; in fact, they are similar to other high risk ID cases in international jurisdictions. 3) Even ID men can make substantial risk relevant changes from SOTPs and concordant risk management and release planning. 4) The prognosis for HRHN men who fare well in treatment, cooperate with their correctional plans, and actively engage in release planning is quite positive and estimated recidivism rates are lowered. 5) Dynamic risk instruments can be used as repeated measures assessment tools to track progress and monitor risk change over multiple assessments to inform release and reintegration decisions with ID offenders; thus, dynamic assessment has the potential to help, rather than hinder, ID offender reintegration and can inform safe, fair, and humane decisions.

Learning Goals:

- Participants will be able to discuss applications of the VRS-SO in dynamic sexual violence risk assessment with ID offenders and other HRHN populations.
- Participants will be able to outline the risk-need profiles of ID men and contrast these with those of other HRHN populations.
- Participants will be able to articulate the evidence supporting applications of the VRS-SO to measure changes in risk and incorporate change information into risk appraisals of HRHN men.

Financial Interest Disclosure:

Dr. Andrew Harris: I provide fee-for-service trainings on the STABLE-2007 instrument. The copyright for the STABLE-2007 is held by the Government of Canada by right of Her Majesty the Queen.

Dr, Mark Olver: He is co-author of the VRS-SO and receives some remuneration from consultation and training activities with the tool.

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Andrew J R. Harris, PhD, CPsych completed doctoral research on the intersection of Hare's (1991) conception of psychopathy and sexual deviancy in a community sex offender sample. Andrew has a private practice as a consulting clinical forensic psychologist having worked as a psychologist, a researcher, and a research director under the Solicitor General Canada and Public Safety Canada. Previously employed in both research and clinical capacities at the Oak Ridge (Maximum Security) Mental Health Centre, Ontario, Dr. Harris speaks extensively on pornography, the history of prison architecture, and the risk assessment of sexual and violent offenders.

Dr. Yolanda Fernandez is a registered clinical psychologist and currently holds the position of Regional Manager Institutional Mental Health for the Ontario region of Correctional Services of Canada. Prior to this Dr. Fernandez worked as the Clinical Director at Rockwood Psychological Services, providing a sex offender treatment program at a medium-security federal penitentiary and supervising all intake assessments of sex offenders entering the Ontario region of CSC. Dr. Fernandez is a certified Master Trainer and member of the development team for the Dynamic Supervision Project providing trainings in Static-99/R, STABLE-2007 and ACUTE-2007. She was the lead author on the extensive revisions to the STABLE-2007 manual and the ACUTE-2007 manual and is the second author for the revised 2016 Static-99R manual. Dr. Fernandez has multiple presentations at international conferences and publications in peer reviewed journals as well as a number of co-authored and co-edited books.

Dr. Jan Looman completed his PhD in Clinical/Forensic psychology at Queen's University in Kingston Ontario in 2000. He is currently a psychologist on the Forensic Unit at Providence Care Mental Health Services in Kingston, ON. Previously he worked for Correctional Services of Canada where he supervised the delivery of the High Intensity Sexual Offender Treatment Program at the Regional Treatment Centre (Ontario). Dr. Looman's research interests include risk assessment, treatment outcome, and psychopathy in sexual offender populations. He has published over 50 articles in peer-reviewed journals on these topics.

Dr. Mark Olver PhD is a Full Professor and Registered Doctoral Psychologist (R.D. Psych) at the University of Saskatchewan, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, where he is involved in program administration, graduate, and undergraduate teaching, research, and clinical training. Mark's research interests include offender risk assessment and treatment, young offenders, psychopathy, and the evaluation of therapeutic change. He is the co-developer of the Violence Risk Scale-Sexual Offense version (VRS-SO) and he provides training and consultation services internationally in the assessment and treatment of sexual, violent, and psychopathic offenders.