

## Risk Assessment Tool Pilot Training

For the Mississippi Department of Corrections

March 2016

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## Presentation Overview

- Training Objectives
- HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements
- Risk Assessment Performance Indicators
- Previous Risk Assessment Results
- Developing New Risk Assessment
- Principles of Effective Intervention
- MDOC Risk Assessment
- Needs – Q
- Inter-rater Reliability



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## Training Objectives

- Understand the benefits of new MDOC risk assessment
- Demonstrate how the Principles of Effective Intervention relates to risk assessment
- Practice scoring MDOC risk assessment & increase proficiency
- Practice completing the Needs-Q
- Understand the activities and importance of inter-rater reliability



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## HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements



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## HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements

### • Institutions

- Administer a validated risk and needs assessment at admission for parole eligible offenders
  - Informs the case plan
  - Assists with program and service referral within the facilities



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## HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements

### • Community Corrections

- Administer a validated risk and needs assessment upon placement on probation or parole at admission for parole eligible offenders
  - Informs the supervision case plan
  - Assists with program and service referral within the community
  - Guides decision-making and supervision levels



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## Risk Assessment Performance Indicators



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## Risk Assessment Performance Indicators

- Measuring risk assessment performance
  - How well does the tool predict future recidivism?
  - Two primary measures are calculated to examine risk tool performance
    - Pearson's r
    - AUC-ROC
  - How well does the tool classify offenders by low, moderate, and high risk?
    - Observe substantial differences in recidivism rates between the risk levels



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## Risk Assessment Performance Indicators

- Common Performance Indicators
  - Correlations
    - Measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the risk factor and recidivism
      - Example: Increases in the number of prior incarcerations are related to increases in recidivism
    - Measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the total score and recidivism
      - Example: Increases in total risk assessment score are related to increases in recidivism
  - AUC-ROC
    - Measure the overall predictive accuracy of the risk assessment
    - AUC-ROC values of .50 suggest the risk assessment does not predict much better than chance



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## Risk Assessment Performance Indicators

### • Performance Ratings for Correlations & AUC-ROC

Predictive Validity	Correlation (r value)	AUC-ROC
Poor	< .10	< .55
Fair	.10-.23	.56-.63
Good	.24-.36	.64-.73
Excellent	.37-1.00	.72-1.00



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## Previous Risk Assessment Results



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## Previous Risk Assessment Results

### • Performance of previous risk tool is fair in predicting recidivism

Risk Assessment Factors	r value
Prior Revocations	.075
Prior Felony Convictions	.064
Current Offense	.061
Active Gang Affiliation	.065
Gender	.090
Current Age	.074
Total Assessment Score	.150
	AUC-ROC Value: .589



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## Previous Risk Assessment Results

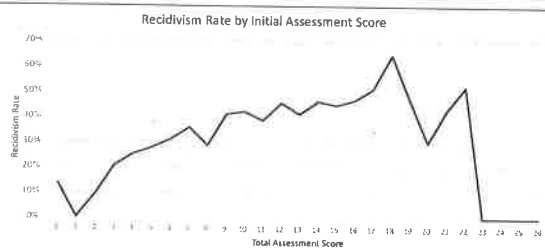
- Knowing the offender's gender predicts recidivism nearly as well as previous risk assessment
- Previous risk assessment was poor for black offenders in comparison to white offenders even with similar recidivism rates

Breakout - Gender and Race	r value	Recidivism rates
Total w/o Gender	.134	
AUC-ROC Value	.579	
Black Offenders	.109	38.3%
White Offenders	.203	37.0%



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## Previous Risk Assessment Results



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## Previous Risk Assessment Results

- Previous risk assessment limitations
  - Risk factors to develop tool were not strong individual risk factors to predict recidivism
  - Knowing an offender's gender performed nearly as well as the full tool
  - Tool performed poorly by race
  - These limitations may result in poor decision-making for offenders, which can promote harm



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## Developing New Risk Assessment



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## New Risk Assessment Goals

- Three goals were established for developing new MDOC risk assessment
  - Increase overall performance – ensure the new tool is a strong predictor of recidivism
  - Develop new risk assessment so that the instrument performs well regardless of race and gender
  - Ensure that the new risk assessment properly classifies offenders by low, moderate, and high risk



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## New Risk Assessment Goals

- Strategies employed to satisfy new MDOC risk assessment goals
  - Identified individual risk factors that produced significant correlations of .70 and above
  - Selected individual risk factors that produced significant correlations by race and gender before developing risk assessment scales for testing
    - Risk assessments are typically fully developed and then overall performance is tested by gender and race; tools are not typically developed starting with this step
  - Ensure risk factor weights did not promote disparity
  - Rigorously tested multiple risk scales to determine overall performance before selecting final actuarial risk assessment
    - Actuarial instruments are developed based on research and data



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## Sample Description

### • Sample sizes

- Community corrections
  - Original sample size = 10,679
  - Construction and validation samples = 5,242 & 5,437 respectively
- Institutions
  - Original sample size = 31,050
  - Construction and validation samples = 3,021 each



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## Sample Description

### • Community Corrections' Demographics – Total Sample

Demographics	N	%
Gender		
Male	8,700	81.5
Female	1,976	18.5
Race		
Black	5,856	54.9
White	4,682	43.9
Other	122	2.2
Average Age = 39 years		



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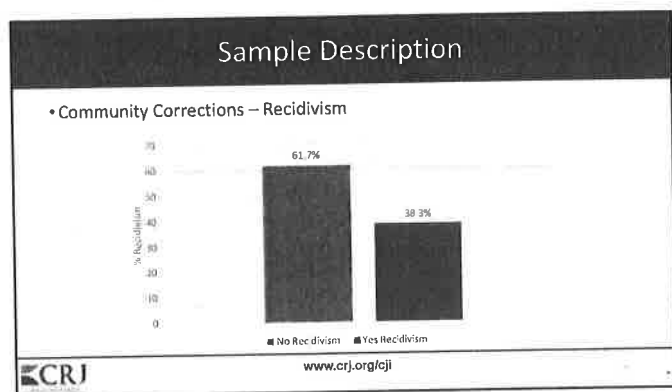
## Sample Description

### • Institutions' Demographics – Total Sample

Demographics	N	%
Gender		
Male	26,646	85.8
Female	4,402	14.2
Race		
Black	18,523	59.8
White	12,057	38.8
Other	419	.4
Average Age = 32 years		



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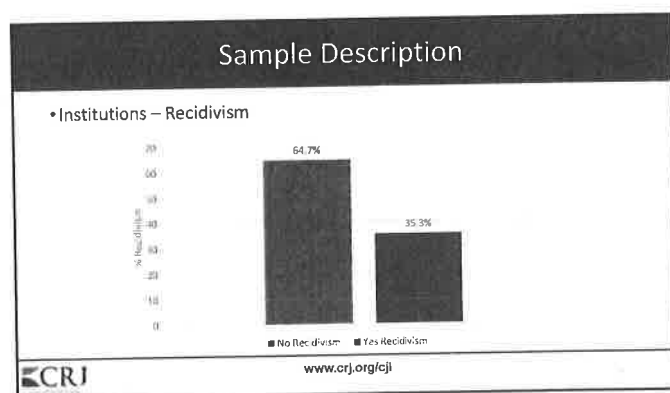
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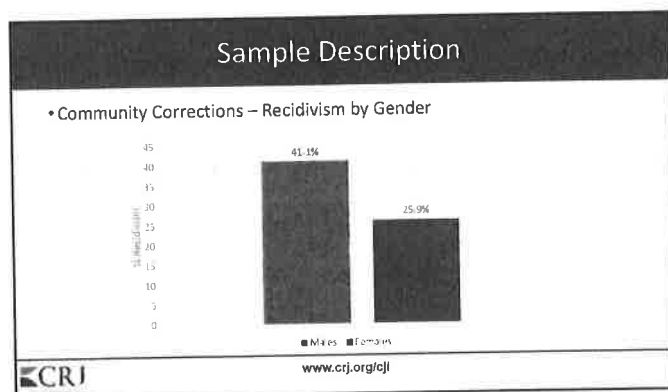
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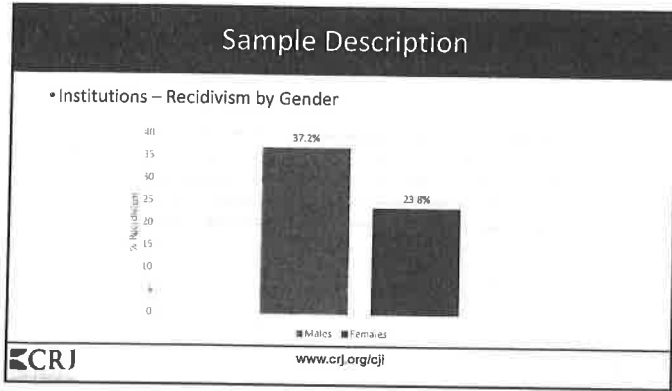
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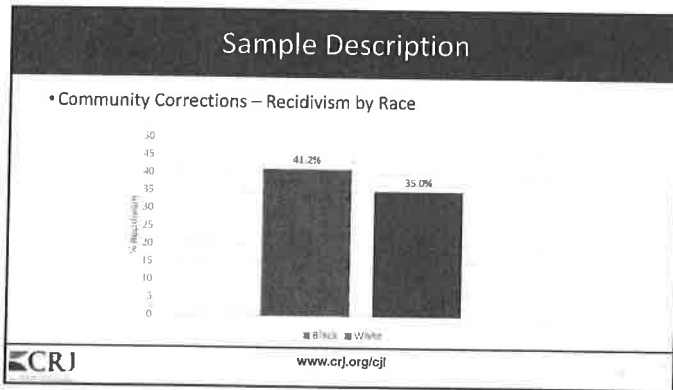
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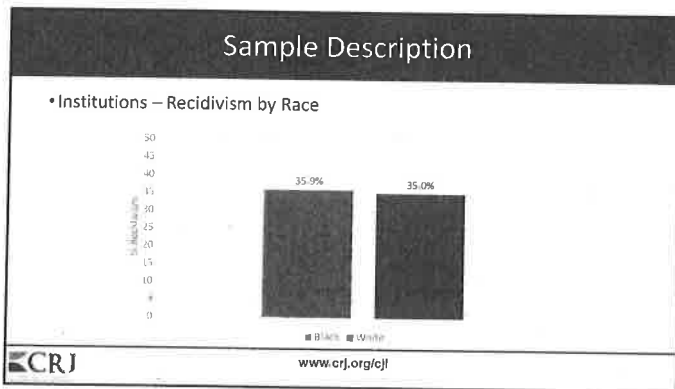
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## Findings

- Multiple static criminal history risk factors were examined for possible inclusion in the risk assessment
- Five risk factors emerged as the strongest predictors of recidivism for both community corrections & institutions
  - Age
  - Gang
  - Total number of current felonies
  - Number of prior prison incarcerations
  - Institutional violations



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## Findings

- Risk factors, such as offense types, were found to be not statistically significant predictors or even strong predictors by gender and race
  - Property offenses only a significant predictor for white offenders & current property resulted in an inverse relationship with recidivism
  - Drug possession only a significant predictor for female offenders
  - Drug trafficking was not a significant predictor



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## Findings

- Risk factors, such as prior felony convictions, prior supervisions, and prior incarcerations were measuring the same risk
- Similarly, prior revocations and prior incarcerations were measuring the same risk
  - The strongest risk factor, prior incarcerations, was included in the new risk assessment
  - The other risk factors were excluded due to measuring the same risk



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## Findings

## • Risk Factor Correlations – Community Corrections

Risk Factors	Total	Male	Female	Black	White
Age	.119**	.121**	.059	.133**	.090**
Gang	.172**	.172**	.052	.178**	.143**
Total # current felonies	.189**	.186**	.153**	.190**	.177**
Number prior prison incarcerations	.149**	.111**	.204**	.141**	.143**
Institutional violations	.197**	.109**	.153**	.209**	.152**



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## Findings

## • Risk Factor Correlations – Institutions

Risk Factors	Total	Male	Female	Black	White
Age	.125**	.097**	.061**	.094**	.127**
Gang	.096**	.085**	.087	.100**	.089**
Total # current felonies	.125**	.177**	.098**	.179**	.140**
Number prior prison incarcerations	.077**	.067**	.071**	.062**	.091**
Institutional violations	.097**	.081**	.063**	.096**	.089**



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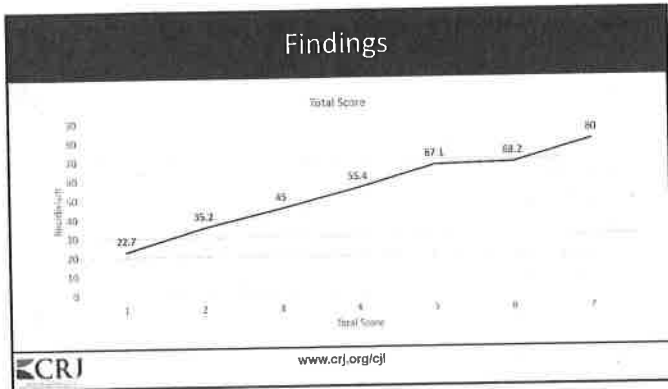
## Findings

## • Total Score Correlations &amp; AUC-ROC

Risk Factors	Correlations C/V	AUC-ROC C/V
Community Corrections	.262**/.300**	.648/.673
Institutions	.220**/.231**	.672/.626
Male	.244**/.236**	.643/.672
Female	.246**/.229**	.638/.614
Black	.318**/.248**	.607/.641
White	.235**/.263**	.633/.644



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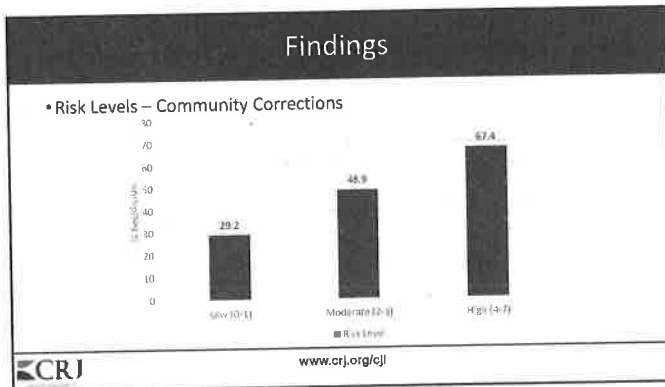
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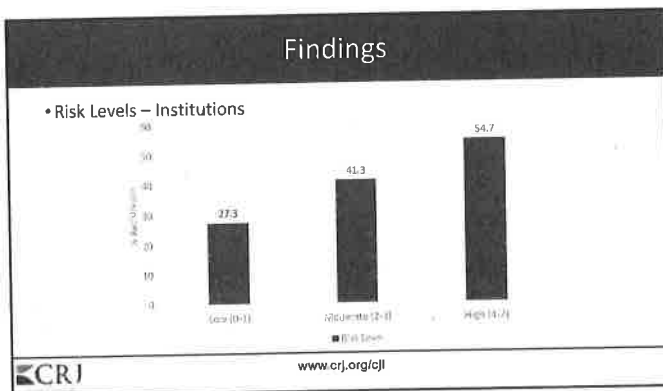
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## Benefits of MDOC Risk Assessment

- The three goals to develop the MDOC risk assessment were satisfied
  - The new risk tool is a stronger predictor of recidivism than the previous risk tool
  - The new risk tool performs well regardless of gender or race
  - The new risk tool properly classifies offenders by risk both in the community and the institutions
- Overall, the MDOC risk tool containing 5 risk factors is a significant predictor of recidivism and predicts well regardless of gender and race
  - For every one point increase in the total score, the odds of recidivism increase 1.5 times



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## Benefits of MDOC Risk Assessment

- The MDOC risk assessment can be completed efficiently to quickly assess and identify the offender's risk level using data already captured in OffenderTrak and Caseload Explorer
- The Needs-Q is a survey that will be administered to offenders to help identify criminogenic needs (dynamic risk factors) that can be targeted for case planning, programming, and interventions
- This information will eventually be combined into a final risk and needs tool which will fully satisfy HB 585 requirements



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## Principles of Effective Intervention



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## Principles of Effective Intervention

- Risk Principle – tells us **WHO** to target
- Need Principle – tells us **WHAT** to target
- Responsivity Principle – tells us **HOW** to target
- Fidelity Principle – tells us how to do this work **RIGHT**



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## Risk Principle

- The Risk Principle tells us **who** to target
- Risk assessments should be used to objectively and appropriately classify an offender's risk
- The best way to assess offenders' risk factors is by using an actuarial assessment
- Target those offenders with higher probability (higher risk) of recidivism



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## Risk Principle

- **High risk** offenders are more likely to recidivate and are more active when they do recidivate
  - Require the most intensive intervention (supervision and treatment) for the high risk offender
- **Low risk** offenders are not as likely to recidivate
  - Too much intervention can increase likelihood of recidivism for low risk offenders
  - Intervention may not be necessary



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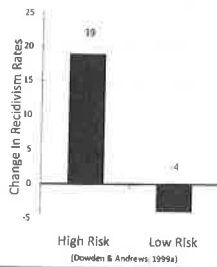
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## Risk Principle



- Dowden and Andrews' meta-analysis shows that when there are interventions targeted at high risk, recidivism is reduced 19%, but target the low risk and recidivism increased 4%
- Knowing who is high risk and who is low risk matters
- Using a risk assessment to properly classify offenders is essential

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## Risk Principle

- Risk assessments that contain static risk factors often look at an offender's prior criminal history
  - Prior convictions
  - Prior incarcerations
  - Prior supervision and supervision failure/revocation
  - Prior violations within institutional settings or on supervision

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## Need Principle

- The Need Principle tells us *what* to target
- Certain factors are tied to recidivism
- Risk and needs assessments will allow for proper identification of an offender's needs
- Targeting these factors will result in a reduction in future offending

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### Need Principle

- Distinguishing risk factor from criminogenic need
- Risk factor = any characteristic related to recidivism
  - Static = things that cannot change, such as prior incarcerations, prior institutional violations
  - Dynamic = things that can change, such as drug use, antisocial peers, employment
- Criminogenic = crime-producing
- Criminogenic needs = risk factors which predict recidivism AND are dynamic



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### Need Principle

- "Big Four" – Criminogenic risk factors
  - Antisocial attitudes
  - Antisocial peers
  - Antisocial personality
  - History of antisocial behavior
- Other criminogenic risk factors
  - Substance abuse
  - Employment/education
  - Low family affection/poor supervision/poor communication
  - Leisure/recreation

(Andrew & Bonta, 1994)



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### Need Principle

- Field struggles with targeting the Big Four
  - Easier to identify if the more objective criminogenic needs are being addressed
    - Confirm individual is employed
    - Conduct drug tests
    - Confirm individual is residing at appropriate address
- Failing to match proper services with criminogenic needs increases likelihood of recidivism
  - Currently, only 5% of at-risk offenders actually receive needed evidence-based services

(Vera et al., 2009)

(Henggeler and Schoenwald, 2011)



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## Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

- One international study that looked at the risk factors associated with heart attacks
  - Gathered data on all heart attacks
  - Compared to case-matched controls



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## Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

- Risk Factors of Heart Attack
  - Increased LDL/HDL ratios (i.e., high LDL and low HDL levels)
  - Smoking
  - Diabetes
  - Hypertension
  - Abdominal obesity
  - Psychosocial (i.e., stress or depression)
  - Failure to eat fruits and vegetables daily
  - Failure to exercise
  - Failure to drink any alcohol



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## Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

- The risk of heart attack for individuals who had all 9 of these factors, amazingly, was almost 130 times higher than for somebody with none of them. The first two of these risk factors (bad lipid readings and smoking) predicted 2/3 of all heart attacks



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## Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| • Increased LDL/HDL ratios                   | • Attitudes            |
| • Smoking                                    | • Peers                |
| • Diabetes                                   | • Personality          |
| • Hypertension                               | • Substance Abuse      |
| • Abdominal obesity                          | • Family               |
| • Psychosocial (i.e., stress or depression)  | • Education/Employment |
| • Failure to eat fruits and vegetables daily | • Recreation           |
| • Failure to exercise                        | • Accommodations       |
| • Failure to drink any alcohol               | • Financial            |



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## Need Principle

- Criminogenic needs, or dynamic risk factors that can be targeted for change are also included on risk and needs assessments and can be used as priority areas for setting goals for a case plan
- Using the Needs-Q will help identify criminogenic needs
  - Antisocial personality
  - Antisocial attitudes
  - Antisocial peers
  - Substance abuse
  - Employment
  - Education



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## Responsivity Principle

- The Responsivity Principle tells us **how** to target
- What gets in the way of the offender benefiting from supervision and treatment?
  - Take into account individual learning styles so we can effectively work with offenders
  - Consider barriers to engaging and interacting with offenders to conduct risk assessments, develop appropriate and individualized case plans, and to provide targeted interventions to improve offender outcomes
- Targeting responsivity factors will increase the likelihood for success



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## Responsivity Principle

- General
  - Interventions and programs that are based on cognitive behavioral/social learning theories are most effective for individuals
  - Can be implemented in all settings and interactions – including when conducting a risk assessment
- Specific
  - Offenders learn differently and have certain barriers that should be removed before conducting a risk assessment, identifying criminogenic needs, developing a case plan, and may need to be addressed before or during programming programming



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## General Responsivity

- General responsivity is related to conducting a risk assessment and developing an appropriate case plan
- Cognitive-behavioral approaches, such as using core correctional practice skills, are necessary for properly administering a risk assessment and learning about an offender's criminogenic needs
  - Professional rapport
  - Role clarification
- Being objective and non-judgmental when completing a risk assessment is important to promote responses



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## Specific Responsivity

- Specific Responsivity is related to conducting a risk assessment and developing an appropriate case plan
  - Barriers that may need to be identified & addressed prior to or while conducting a risk assessment and in the development of a case plan
    - Language
    - Acute mental illness
    - Physical disabilities
    - Learning or cognitive disabilities
    - Anxiety and depression
    - Trauma and victimization
    - Motivation



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## Fidelity Principle

- The Fidelity Principle tells us how to do this work **right**
- Risk assessment fidelity
  - Tool must be properly developed to ensure that the risk assessment predicts recidivism for the target population
  - Assessment staff must be properly trained
  - Coaching must follow training to support assessment staff with scoring and decision-making
  - Risk tool must be piloted before statewide roll out
  - Inter-rater reliability process must be adopted and maintained to ensure consistent scoring
  - Tool must be validated every three years to ensure that the risk assessment continues to predict recidivism



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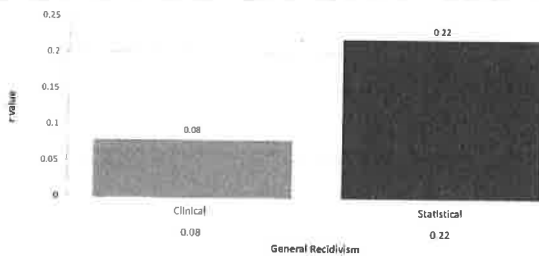
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## Risk Assessment Fidelity



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## Risk Assessment Fidelity

- Why a risk assessment tool is used
  - Using a risk assessment tool allows offender to be assigned to appropriate interventions based on their risk level
  - If low risk offender are assigned high risk interventions, low risk offenders can have higher recidivism rates
- How to maintain fidelity to a risk tool
  - Must have a process for inter-rater reliability to ensure the tool is accurately scored to predict low, moderate, and high risk for the target population
  - Must be validated on the target population



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## PEI is Related to Risk Assessment

Principle	Definition	How this relates to risk assessment
Risk Principle	Tells us <b>WHO</b> to target	Distinguishes low, medium, and high risk offenders
Need Principle	Tells us <b>WHAT</b> to target	Incorporate dynamic needs focusing on antisocial attitudes, peers, and personality
Responsivity Principle	Tells us <b>HOW</b> to target offender issues	Identify and address barriers to success-motivation, mental health, etc.
Fidelity Principle	Tells us how to do this work <b>RIGHT</b>	Implementation plan for training on tool, validation and norming by objective researchers, and making changes after reviewing the data



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## MDOC Risk Assessment



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## MDOC Risk Assessment

- Contains five risk factors – so the new risk tool acts as a screener to properly and promptly identify an offender's likelihood to engage in recidivism
  - Age
  - Gang
  - Total number of current felony convictions
  - Number of prior prison incarcerations
  - Total number of institutional violations



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### Facility Risk Factor Definitions

- Age – measured as age at intake into MDOC for the current admission
- Gang involvement – measured as the offender having known gang involvement
- Total number of current felonies – measured as the total number of felony convictions on the current case at the time of booking into the DOC
- Number of prior prison incarcerations – measured as the total number of prior prison incarcerations for the offender (does not count the current intake incarceration, only prior incarcerations)
- Institutional violations – measured as any institutional violation in the offender's history


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### Facility Risk Factor Weights

Risk Factors	Weights
Age	0 points = 27 and older 1 point = 26 and younger
Gang involvement	0 points = no gang involvement 1 point = gang involved
Total number of current felonies	0 points = 1 felony at booking 1 point = 2 felonies at booking 2 points = 3 or more felonies at booking
Number of prior prison incarcerations	0 points = 0 prior prison incarcerations 1 point = 1 prior prison incarceration 2 points = 2 or more prior prison incarcerations
Institutional violations	0 points = no institutional violations 1 point = at least one institutional violation


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### Community Risk Factor Definitions

- Age – measured as age at supervision start
- Gang involvement – measured as the offender having known gang involvement
- Total number of current felonies – measured as the total number of felony convictions on the current case at the time of supervision start
- Number of prior prison incarcerations – measured as the total number of prior prison incarcerations for the offender
- Institutional violations – measured as any institutional violation in the offender's history


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## Community Risk Factor Weights

Risk Factors	Weights
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Gang involvement	0 points = no gang involvement 1 point = gang involved
Total number of current felonies	0 points = 1 felony at supervision start 1 point = 2 felonies at supervision start 2 points = 3 or more felonies at supervision start
Number of prior prison incarcerations	0 points = 0 prior prison incarcerations 1 point = 1 prior prison incarceration 2 points = 2 or more prior prison incarcerations
Institutional violations	0 points = no institutional violations 1 point = at least one institutional violation


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## MDOC Risk Assessment Scoring Steps

- All information to score MDOC risk assessment is taken directly from OffenderTrak and Caseload Explorer
- When completing the risk assessment, please following the information provided in the scoring guide
- Respond to each of the five risk factor items by clicking on the correct response
- Once all five risk factor items have been responded to, the total score and corresponding risk level will be displayed on the screen
- Confirm that you have entered in the correct information, submit, and save your responses


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## Practice Activity #1

- Read the information provided in Activity #1
- Respond to all five risk factors on the MDOC risk assessment tool
- Record the total score based on a sum of the points (weights) for each risk factor that is present
- Record the corresponding risk level based on the total points
- Compare your responses in small groups


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## Practice Activity #2

- Read the information provided in Activity #2
- Respond to all five risk factors on the MDOC risk assessment tool
- Record the **total score** based on a sum of the points (weights) for each risk factor that is present
- Record the corresponding risk level based on the total points
- Compare your responses in small groups



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## Needs – Q



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## Needs – Q Purpose

- Needs – Q contains simple 'yes' or 'no' questions that will help identify an offender's criminogenic needs
- Needs – Q is to be conducted immediately after the risk assessment has been scored and a risk level has been assigned
- Needs – Q questions have been built into OffenderTrak and Caseload Explorer to allow for easy completion of the items
- Total criminogenic needs present will be automatically calculated as the Needs – Q is calculated
- These criminogenic needs can be used to develop offender case plans and identify programming and interventions



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## Needs – Q Overview

## Offender Information

Offender Name

Needs – Q Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

MDOC #

Custody Status (e.g., DOC, Community Corrections)

Current Risk Assessment Total Score &amp; Risk Level

Earlier Needs – Q Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Self report: Age at first arrest (in years):

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## Needs – Q Overview

## Employment/Education

Yes

No

Are you currently unemployed or were you unemployed prior to incarceration?

☐☐

Have you ever been fired from a job?

☐☐

Have most of your jobs been for less than a year?

☐☐

Were you unable to graduate from high school or earn a GED?

☐☐

Were you ever suspended or expelled from school?

☐☐

Have you typically had poor relationships with job supervisors, fellow workers, teachers, and fellow students?

☐☐

Would your most recent job supervisor or most recent teacher say your work performance was poor or you had difficulty getting along with others?

☐☐

Total (Add the number of Yes responses)

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## Needs – Q Overview

## Substance Abuse

Yes

No

Do you have a history of alcohol abuse or problems with alcohol?

☐☐

Do you have a history of drug abuse or problems with drugs?

☐☐

Do you have family or friends who have problems with drugs or alcohol?

☐☐

Have drugs or alcohol caused problems with your jobs or school?

☐☐

Have drugs or alcohol caused problems with any relationships?

☐☐

Have you been in trouble with the law for drugs or alcohol?

☐☐

Have you ever participated in treatment for drugs or alcohol?

☐☐

Do you believe drugs or alcohol are a current problem?

☐☐

Total (Add the number of Yes responses)

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## Needs – Q Overview

Attitudes	Yes	No
Do you believe that most people get into trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you believe that your trouble with the law is due to bad luck or misunderstanding?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you believe the police and court treated you unfairly?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Was your sentence on the current case fair?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did the police or court make a bigger deal out of your case than necessary?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Should the law focus more time on other crimes instead of the crime you were convicted of?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		


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## Needs – Q Overview

Relationships	Yes	No
Do you have family members who have been in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you have at least one close friend who has been in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you participated in activities with family or friends that could get you in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have family members ever been upset with you for being in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have close friends ever been upset with you for being in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have the majority of your friends or associates been in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your family members, who have not been in trouble with the law, avoid seeing you or talking with you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is it hard to have a close relationship with family or friends who have not been in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you spend the majority of your free time with others who have been in trouble with the law?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		


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## Needs – Q Overview

Personality	Yes	No
Do you often do things without thinking?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you act immediately to situations that are stressful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is it hard to pay attention?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you try new things because 'you only live once'?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel that sometimes you are not in control?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you respond to many situations in an angry manner?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is it hard to be calm when you are stressed or upset?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you enjoy taking risks?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do people close to you know how to make you angry or intentionally 'push your buttons'?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do some individuals just ask for trouble or problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you find it easier to give up or ignore a problem rather than deal with it?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		


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## Needs – Q Overview

Needs – Q Total	Total Yes
Employment/Education (Total possible = 7)	
Substance Abuse (Total possible = 8)	
Attitudes (Total possible = 6)	
Relationships (Total possible = 9)	
Personality (Total possible = 11)	
Total (Total possible = 41)	


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## Needs – Q Scoring Steps

- Begin the Needs – Q immediately after the risk assessment is scored and the risk level for the defendant has been recorded
- Information about the offender and risk assessment score and risk level will pre-populate into the 'Offender Information' section in the Needs – Q
- Confirm that this information is accurate
- Complete the self-report question in the 'Offender Information' section. Ask the offender to provide you with his/her age (in years) at first arrest. This information must be entered and an estimate is acceptable. Otherwise, record the youngest age at first contact into the MDOC whether on supervision or incarcerated
- Move through the Needs – Q one section at a time in the order listed


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## Needs – Q Scoring Tips Overview

- Introduce yourself to the offender
- Briefly describe that you are going to ask the offender some questions related to his/her history
- Advise the offender that the information provided will be used to develop case plans and identify appropriate programming and services
- Use active listening skills and check in with the offender as you are completing the Needs – Q to see if he/she has any questions or needs clarification
- As sections within the Needs – Q are scored, remind the offender of how many sections are remaining and thank the offender for responding


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## Assessment Skills

- Reliable information is most likely to be obtained when appropriate skills are used to complete the Needs – Q
- Successful assessment staff are
  - Objective
  - Non-judgmental
  - Clear in describing the purpose of the Needs – Q
  - Use follow-up questions to clarify information or to learn more about the offender
  - Express appreciation for the offender's response and acknowledge the importance of honesty
  - Employ active listening skills to summarize the information provided



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## Active Listening Skills

- Look at the person who is talking
- Focus and listen to the information being shared without being distracted, interrupting, or passing judgment
- Think about what is being said, then verbally summarize what you heard after each section in the Needs – Q has been addressed
- Ask for clarification to confirm your understanding



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## Education/Employment Scoring Steps

- Introduce this section by indicating to the offender that you are first going to ask some questions about the offender's education and employment history
- Advise the offender that he/she only needs to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the questions as you ask them
- Encourage the offender to ask for clarification as needed
- Record 'yes' or 'no' responses as they are provided
- Summarize the information shared once this section is completed to ensure the information collected is accurate



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### Substance Abuse Scoring Steps

- Introduce this section by indicating to the offender that you are now going to ask some questions about the offender's history with drugs and alcohol
- Advise the offender that he/she only needs to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the questions as you ask them
- Encourage the offender to ask for clarification as needed
- Record 'yes' or 'no' responses as they are provided
- Summarize the information shared once this section is completed to ensure the information collected is accurate



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### Attitudes Scoring Steps

- Introduce this section by indicating to the offender that you are now going to ask some questions about the offender's thoughts about the law and his/her treatment in the criminal justice system
- Advise the offender that he/she only needs to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the questions as you ask them
- Encourage the offender to ask for clarification as needed
- Record 'yes' or 'no' responses as they are provided
- Summarize the information shared once this section is completed to ensure the information collected is accurate
- Thank the offender and indicate there are just two sections left



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### Relationships Scoring Steps

- Introduce this section by indicating to the offender that you are now going to ask some questions about the offender's family and friends
- Advise the offender that he/she only needs to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the questions as you ask them
- Encourage the offender to ask for clarification as needed
- Record 'yes' or 'no' responses as they are provided
- Summarize the information shared once this section is completed to ensure the information collected is accurate
- Thank the offender and indicate there is just one section left



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### Personality Scoring Steps

- Introduce this section by indicating to the offender that you are now going to ask some questions about how the offender responds to situations
- Advise the offender that he/she only needs to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the questions as you ask them
- Encourage the offender to ask for clarification as needed
- Record 'yes' or 'no' responses as they are provided
- Summarize the information shared once this section is completed to ensure the information collected is accurate
- Thank the offender for his/her honest responses and patience



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### Finalize Needs – Q Scoring

- Confirm that all Needs – Q information has been responded to and entered into OffenderTrak or Caseload Explorer
- Review each section and ensure that a total number of items present has been pre-populated
- Review the Needs – Q Total section and ensure that the total number of items present has been captured and the total number of items has been pre-populated
- Save your responses and submit



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### Needs – Q Practice Activity #1

- Using practice activity #1, complete the information for the Needs – Q
- Sum the total number of items present for each section
- Sum the total number of items present for the whole Needs – Q once all items have been responded to
- Compare responses within your small groups



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## Needs – Q Practice Activity #2

- Using practice activity #2, complete the information for the Needs – Q
- Sum the total number of items present for each section
- Sum the total number of items present for the whole Needs – Q once all items have been responded to
- Compare responses within your small groups



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## Inter-rater Reliability



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## Inter-rater Reliability

- Inter-rater reliability (IRR) is a fidelity process
  - Ensures proper and consistent scoring of the MDOC risk assessment
  - Ensures proper and consistent scoring of the Needs – Q
  - Assists with objective decision-making so that regardless of who conducts the assessment, the assessment team would reach the same total score and risk level on the MDOC risk assessment and the same information on the Needs – Q
  - Provides us with the specific data on what coaching is needed to increase scoring proficiency and consistency across the assessment team staff
  - Must be systematized across MDOC facilities and community – since new colleagues will join and will need the same training and coaching



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## Inter-rater Reliability

- Two primary activities
  - On-site observations and coaching
  - Scoring vignettes and scenarios online and reviewing the scoring data across the assessment team staff to identify scoring challenges and strengths



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## Inter-rater Reliability

- Measuring and sustaining progress
  - Inter-rater reliability (IRR) activities will be conducted monthly
  - IRR data will be reviewed to confirm scoring proficiency and practices
  - Specific guidance focusing on item scoring challenges, scoring guide definitions, or where to locate information in the MDOC data systems (e.g., OffenderTrak and Caseload Explorer) will be provided after each monthly activities are completed
  - Goal is to track and sustain scoring proficiency from the MDOC baseline up to 80% to 85%



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## Inter-rater Reliability

- Benefits and importance of inter-rater reliability
  - Provides information about scoring practices during a pilot period to improve the training and roll – out of the MDOC risk assessment and Needs – Q
  - Sets the stage for systematizing risk assessment fidelity efforts within the MDOC
  - Clearly defines the timeframe and assessment data to be used for future validation studies to confirm that the risk assessment accurately predicts recidivism and properly classifies offenders by their appropriate risk level



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## Summary



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## Summary

- Benefits of new MDOC risk assessment
- The three goals to develop the MDOC risk assessment were satisfied
  - The new risk tool is a stronger predictor of recidivism than the previous risk tool
  - The new risk tool performs well regardless of gender or race
  - The new risk tool properly classifies offenders by risk both in the community and the institutions
- Overall, the MDOC risk tool containing 5 risk factors is a significant predictor of recidivism and predicts well regardless of gender and race



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## PEI is Related to Risk Assessment

Principle	Definition	How this relates to risk assessment
Risk Principle	Tells us <b>WHO</b> to target	Distinguishes low, medium, and high risk offenders
Need Principle	Tells us <b>WHAT</b> to target	Incorporate dynamic needs focusing on antisocial attitudes, peers, and personality
Responsivity Principle	Tells us <b>HOW</b> to target offender issues	Identify and address barriers to success-motivation, mental health, etc.
Fidelity Principle	Tells us how to do this work <b>RIGHT</b>	Implementation plan for training on tool, validation and norming by objective researchers, and making changes after reviewing the data



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## Summary

- Inter-rater reliability has multiple benefits
  - Provides information about scoring practices during a pilot period to improve the training and roll – out of the MDOC risk assessment and Needs – Q
  - Sets the stage for systematizing risk assessment fidelity efforts within the MDOC
  - Clearly defines the timeframe and assessment data to be used for future validation studies to confirm that the risk assessment accurately predicts recidivism and properly classifies offenders by their appropriate risk level
- Inter-rater reliability involves two primary activities to ensure scoring proficiency and consistency
  - On-site observations and coaching
  - Scoring vignettes and scenarios online and reviewing the scoring data across the assessment team staff to identify scoring challenges and strengths



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## MDOC Risk Assessment - Community

### Scoring Exercise #1

#### Case 1 – Rick [REDACTED]

Age – 25

Current Conviction – 2 counts Drug possession with intent to distribute (F2), Receiving stolen property (M1)

Sentence – 2 years prison – paroled 10/26/15

#### Criminal History

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 10/12/10 | Arrested for misdemeanor theft (M2) – convicted, 6 months probation (unsupervised)                |
| 5/24/11  | Arrested for drug possession (M3) – charges dropped   |
| 2/7/12   | Arrested for drug possession (M3) – convicted, 1 year probation                                   |
| 5/15/12  | Probation violation – Multiple failed U/As, failure to attain employment – continued on probation |
| 6/1/13   | Probation successfully terminated   |

#### Social History

Rick has some criminal history and troublesome social history. He reports that he was first arrested at the age of 13 for shoplifting. He was raised with his mother and two younger sisters. His father left the home when he was young and was not present in Rick/s life. Rick's mother is deceased. He reports that he has "strained" relationships with both of his sisters, saying that they do not approve of his drug use and criminal behavior and have cut ties with him since his most recent arrest. He has nieces and nephews that he does not see and reports no other family members in his life. Rick has been divorced twice, and at the time of his arrest was living with a woman. She has no criminal history, however Rick reports that she drinks and uses marijuana and cocaine on a regular basis. He says that he is happy in his relationship, however he admits that they argue "often" and that on

occasion these arguments have become physical (law enforcement has not been involved). Rick and his girlfriend belong to a circle of friends and acquaintances that regularly ride motorcycles, drink and party together. While incarcerated, Rick is associated with the Aryan Brotherhood. Rick does not report having any friends that don't have a criminal history or use drugs. One of his best friends was with him at the time of his arrest and was arrested as well.

In terms of substance use, Rick reports that prior to his arrest he drank alcohol and smoked marijuana on a daily basis. He says he "used to have a problem" with cocaine, but only uses it occasionally now. He admits that most of the arguments that occur with his live-in girlfriend are the result of arguing about drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol. He states that he started using alcohol when he was 15 and has used it almost consistently since, except for when he was incarcerated. He reports attending a drug treatment program during one of his prior incarcerations, but says that when he is outside of prison, he is rarely completely sober.

Rick dropped out of high school when he was 16 and has not attained a GED, despite attending classes while incarcerated. He was never suspended or expelled from school, but was truant often. Previously he has worked odd jobs as a carpenter, mechanic, and as a dishwasher. He reports never holding the same job for more than 7 or 8 months and that he usually gets fired or just stops going to work.

When asked to describe himself, Rick reports that he just "goes with the flow" and doesn't spend too much time thinking about what he is going to do next in his life. He claims to like "adventure," which he says is why he uses drugs. He says that he has a bad temper, particularly when he drinks (which is often) and that there are only a couple of people in his social circle that he has not had a fist fight with. When asked about how he copes with stress he said "I don't." When pressed to explain that response, Rick refused to elaborate and appeared frustrated. When asked about his criminal history, Rick explained that he has "runs of bad luck" in his life and that is why he gets in trouble. In terms of his current case, he says that the 2 year prison sentence was unfair, and that was angry about going back to prison. Throughout the interview he said that his behavior and drug use was "no big deal" and that when he gets off parole he wants to move to Colorado "or someplace where weed is legal" so that he won't have the issues with the police that he has had.

## MDOC Risk Assessment - Community

### Scoring Exercise #2

#### Case 2 – Jeanine [REDACTED]

Age – 30

Current Conviction – Prostitution (F3), Drug distribution (F2)

Sentence – 2 years probation

#### Criminal History

- 11/13/05      Arrested for drug possession (M2) – convicted, 1 year probation
- 2/28/06      Probation violation – Failed U/A – probation continued
- 7/7/07        Arrested – Prostitution (F3), drug possession with intent to distribute (F2) – convicted  
                    – 1 year jail, 1 year probation
- 3/14/10      Arrested – Prostitution (F3) – 1 year probation
- 4/1/11        Probation terminated successfully

#### Social History

Jeanine is a repeat offender with a history of drug abuse and distribution. She reports that she grew up in a two parent household and is the oldest of 2 children. Neither her sibling or parents are involved in criminal behavior. While she reports that she is very close to all of her family members, she says that the trouble he has gotten in has strained her relationship with her father.

For the past 12 years, Jeanine has been married to a man who has an extensive criminal history and a history of drugs use. While she has a few girlfriends that have not been involved in crime, she spends a majority of her time with her husband and his friends. She is not affiliated with a gang, nor is her husband. Jeanine was not involved in drugs or alcohol before meeting her husband. She met him while performing as a stripper and they were married shortly thereafter. She then began using

cocaine and drinking. She reports that she never wanted to be involved in prostitution, but when her husband lost his job in 2007, he insisted that she do it "to make some extra cash." Jeanine reports that her husband is often verbally and physically abusive and that she has thought about leaving but is afraid of what he will do. She reports that she uses drugs to "escape" from the problems in her daily life.

Jeanine graduated high school after having some trouble. She was repeatedly suspended for acting out and truancy in school, and was held back in the sixth grade. She began working as a stripper when she was 18, and reports that before meeting her husband she "had her life on track." She did not have any trouble at work and was making enough money to support herself. In the past year, she has had problems at work, primarily for being late or not showing up without calling. She reports that she gets along with all of the other girls at work, but that she doesn't spend much time with them outside of work.

When asked to describe herself, Jeanine says that she often feels like a "victim of life," and that she always seems to have bad things happen to her. She says that she often feels overwhelmed, and reports that she often feels depressed. She recognizes that her prostitution and drug use are illegal and therefore wrong, but says that she doesn't feel like she has much choice. She says that she is willing to comply with all of her conditions of probation, but expressed worry that her husband would not cooperate with her conditions regarding alcohol and drugs. While she says she would like to change some things about her current circumstances she says that she "doesn't have the willpower" to resist either the substances or the requests of her husband.