

POSTER

Assessing Dynamic Risk Factors in Unconvicted Perpetrators of Sexual Abuse

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A conviction is the “crucial hook” on which most measures for dealing with perpetrators of sexual abuse hang (Cobley, 2003). This is reflected in current risk assessment practice, where available risk assessment tools place much weight on previous convictions for a sexual offence. Thus there is a significant gap in existing knowledge with regard to carrying out risk assessment with unconvicted perpetrators of sexual abuse. The aim of the present research was to investigate the measurement of dynamic risk factors in men who have perpetrated sexual abuse but do *not* have a conviction for a sexual offence (n = 30), attending community-based services in the island of Ireland. These men were compared on their level of risk, as assessed by the STABLE 2007 instrument (Hanson & Harris, 2007) and 8 psychometric measures, with men incarcerated for sexual offences (n = 30). As this was part of a larger cross-border initiative (the TISO Project), half of the total sample was from the COSC community service (n = 15) and the Irish Prison Service (n = 15) in the Republic of Ireland, and half from the PPSA community service (n = 15) and the NI Prison service (n = 15) in Northern Ireland. The results are discussed in relation to carrying out risk assessment with unconvicted perpetrators of sexual abuse, and the efficacy of concentrating on stable dynamic risk factors with this unconvicted population.