Abstract

Although the developers of the Static-99R describe the “Preselected for High-Risk/High-Needs Sample,” as including offenders “referred for services at forensic psychiatric facilities, such as offenders referred as Mentally Disordered Sex Offenders, Sexually Violent Predators,” etc., no persons involved in SVP proceedings are included in any of the 22 research samples that comprise the four Static-99R comparison groups. We compiled sexual-recidivism base-rate data from recent USA samples at various stages of the civil-commitment process. Available data do not consistently support the use of the High-Risk/High-Needs comparison group for persons involved in the civil commitment process.

Introduction

At least twenty states have instituted procedures for civil commitment of sexual violence predators. In each state, psychological or psychiatric evaluators are a necessary part of the civil-commitment process, and an assessment of risk for sexual reoffense is an essential part of these evaluations. “As in other civil commitment settings, the stakes are in these determinations are high.” The stakes are significantly higher in the context of sex offender commitments, because the consequences of the prediction are so severe. If predictions about future violence are too optimistic, sexual violence may result. Unduly pessimistic predictions result in unnecessary, prolonged deprivation of liberty. In addition, sex offender commitments entail treatment that is expensive and intrusive, while sexual-violence is exceedingly destructive. Thus, both types of prediction errors are costly in many ways” (Smeets & Meelken, 1997, p.66), so it is important to measure the accuracy of sexual-violence predictions in SVP cases (Campbell & DeCecco, 2000).

The most researched and most widely used instrument for sexual-recidivism risk assessment has been the Static-99. The instrument was revised in late 2006, and the developers now recommend the Static-99R for all purposes. To effectively use the Static-99R as an actuarial instrument, local norms are recommended. We combine group risk assessment scores, but also the relevant base rate. Although the developers of the Static-99R describe the “Preselected for High-Risk/High-Needs Sample,” it is not consistently supported by available research.

Results and Conclusions

Screened by SVP/SDP program and referred for a face-to-face evaluation; PCL-R = 30 or higher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Observed Sexual Recidivism Rate</th>
<th>Length of Follow-up</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Released from prison after serving a sentence for a sex offense</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>0.8% (mandatory supervision); 7.5% (no mandatory supervision)</td>
<td>2.25 - 7.5 years (M = 4.77, SD = 1.52)</td>
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<td>WA</td>
<td>34/135 (25.2%)</td>
<td>6 years</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>6/93 (6.5%)</td>
<td>4.7 years</td>
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We obtained reports of findings by searching the Internet, using professional listservs, and directly contacting researchers and SVP programs.

Notes


Sexual-Recidivism Base Rates Relevant to SVP Assessments

Denis L. Zavodny, Ph.D.  
dlzavodny@dhr.state.ga.us

Gregory DeClue, Ph.D., ABPP  
http://gregdeclue.myakktake.com  
gregdeclue@mailmt.com

Jeanine Cohen, J.D.  
jeanine@cohenanddepaул.com

APA Annual Convention, Orlando, Florida, August 4, 2012

Group                  | Observed 5-Year Sexual Recidivism Rate | Observed 10-Year Sexual Recidivism Rate |
-----------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
Routine                | 6.0                                     | ---                                    |
Preselected for Treatment | 9.1                                     | 13.6                                   |
High-Risk/High Needs   | 21.0                                    | 29.1                                   |
Non-Routine            | 14.8                                    | 20.4                                   |

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Civilly committed as SVP/SDP; subsequently judicially released without completing SVP/treatment program

Civilly committed as SVP/SDP; subsequently judicially released without completing SVP/treatment program

FL 1/31 (3.2%) 2.5 years