



Research at a glance

Sexual Offenders with an LTSO Designation Residing in a Community Correctional Centre (CCC): Comparison to Other Groups Residing in CCCs

KEY WORDS: Long Term Supervision Order (LTSO), high risk, mental illness, Statutory Release (SR), parole

Why we did this study

The majority of incarcerated offenders will be released to the community, with some offenders requiring a more structured release. The available options include the use of Long Term Supervision Orders (i.e. LTSO) and/or transition through a community based residential facility. Few studies have investigated the needs of high risk groups in the community. This study compared sex offenders serving LTSO's to other groups of offenders living in a Community Correctional Centres (CCC).

What we did

There were 478 offenders living in CCCs as of March 2008. Offenders were divided into four groups based on supervision type and history of sexual offending. There were 56 sex offenders serving a LTSO, 58 sex offenders released on Statutory Release (SR), 280 offenders on SR with no history of sexual offending and 84 parolees with no history of sexual offending. Data were collected regarding demographics, risk, need and mental health.

What we found

The rates of mental health diagnosis at admission for LTSO sex offenders (40%) was two times higher than for SR non-sex offenders (18%), four times higher than for SR sex offenders (9%) and six times higher than for parolees (7%). The LTSO sex offenders were more likely than the SR sex offenders to have a current or past mental health diagnosis, though they were similar on every other mental health variable reported (e.g. prescription medication, hospitalization). All sex offenders were more likely than the SR non-sex offenders and parolees to have a prescription for psychotropic medication at admission.

The most recent offender risk and need assessments indicated that over 90% of the LTSO group was both high risk and high need, with over half assessed as having low levels of motivation and over 80%

assessed as having low reintegration potential. No clear pattern of risk emerged between groups.

The two sex offender groups were assessed as having similar levels of need to the lower risk parole group in most of the seven need domain areas at intake. The notable exceptions to this were that sex offenders tended to have lower levels of need related to Associates and higher levels of need related to the Personal/Emotional domain. Both sex offender groups were also less likely than the SR non-sex offender group to be assessed as having need related to Employment, Substance Abuse and Associates.

What it means

LTSO sex offenders present with a different criminogenic need profile when compared to other groups of offenders living in CCC's. In particular, this group has significantly greater mental health needs at intake, though they also tend to be assessed as having fewer traditional criminogenic needs (i.e. fewer gang affiliations). Community-based treatment programs targeting high risk sexual offenders must account for these differences in criminogenic need, particularly needs related to mental health, in order to ensure a safe transition from the institution.

For more information

Axford, M. & Abracen, J. (2011). *Sexual offenders with an LTSO designation residing in community correctional centres (CCC's): Comparison to other groups residing in CCC's*. Research Report R252. Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada

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