This report provides a literature review of contemporary assessment and treatment paradigms for sexual offenders. The importance of a thorough, comprehensive assessment and subsequent individualized treatment is emphasized. The report tentatively concludes that current treatment paradigms are encouraging in terms of recidivism reduction. This appears to be especially true for comprehensive approaches that follow a cognitive behavioural model with adjunctive relapse prevention components. For some offenders, treatment with anti-androgen or hormonal medications might prove beneficial.

Some fundamental problems with recidivism and treatment outcome research have been identified. Notwithstanding those issues, some sound research has converged on several correlates and predictors of both sexual and non-sexual recidivism in samples of sex offenders.

Sexual offending remains a serious problem in Canada today. With the numbers and proportions of sex offenders in federal custody on the rise, there is an urgent call for empirically robust longitudinal research. Although preliminary results regarding the effectiveness of current approaches appear favourable, assessment and treatment are invariably designed for the prototypical sex offender. More specifically, there has been little or no consideration of female or Aboriginal sex offenders, despite evidence that they do not fit the prototype. The author is hopeful that prospective research will provide methods to improve on current assessment and treatment models whereby recidivism is reduced and protection of the public is enhanced.