

Doing What Works: Risk and Needs Assessment in Community Corrections

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Abstract

This research project reviews the need for a validated integrated risk and needs assessment tool to be used by community corrections. It looks at the benefits of community corrections using an integrated risk and needs assessment tool prior to sentencing and at various stages throughout an offender's term of supervision. Community corrections probation and parole officers have seen their caseloads grow to record numbers. With states dealing with challenging economic times the ability to increase probation officer positions has not occurred. Therefore community corrections agencies have had to look at other means to address rising caseloads by using evidence based practices approach of doing "what works". The research project provides documentation that the use of a validated risk and needs assessment tool enhances public safety. This research project also discusses that validated risk and needs assessment tools insure that officers are focusing on those offenders that need more intensive supervision while addressing the offenders' criminogenic needs to reduce the risk of re-offending.

Introduction/Literature Review

The purpose of this research is to review the need for a validated risk and needs assessment tool for community corrections that will address both criminal risks and the criminogenic needs of the offender. For many years the thought within the criminal justice profession was that there was nothing that could be done to change offender behavior. Presently, there is a substantial amount of solid research indicating the evidence based sentencing and corrections practices do work and can reduce recidivism rates as well as criminal justice costs (Warren, 2009). Currently the Florida Department of Corrections uses a validated risk assessment tool in community corrections that is not directly tied to an offender needs assessment tool. A survey conducted by the Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision in June 2011 indicated that 98% of the responding states use a validated risk assessment tool to assist with supervising offenders in the community (Ad Hoc Committee, 2011). The validated risk assessment tool currently in use by the Department of Corrections is a recidivism based assessment tool. Eight variables are used to assign a supervision risk level of minimum, medium, and maximum.

An Individual Supervised Plan (ISP) is currently being used by probation officers to identify the needs of the offender and to set goals to modify criminal behavior. The Individual Supervised Plan is not a validated needs assessment system nor is it linked

to the Department's validated risk assessment. Probation officers must use their professional experience and discretion to determine the best level of services and treatment for offenders. In addition, probation officers do not have the authority to provide any positive reinforcement or rewards to offenders when an offender completes a goal(s) that are not court ordered. Probation officers are currently relying on their professional experience attempting to match the appropriate level of treatment and services to the offender's level of risk.

Validated risk and needs tools have shown to more accurately predict risk and identify criminogenic needs than an officer's professional (clinical) judgment (VanBenschoten, 2008). Probation officers that do not use validated risk and needs assessment tools may increase the likelihood of offenders re-offending (VanBenschoten, 2008). This paper will explore the need to use validated and integrated risk and needs assessment tools to decrease offender recidivism and re-victimization. This research project will also review the need to use validated risk and needs assessments at various stages of the offenders' supervision period. In addition, this paper will review the barriers that may impede the path to implement an integrated risk and needs assessment tool in community corrections.

Correctional administrators are responsible for the custody of inmates and the supervision of offenders in their mission to protect the public. Correctional agencies are tasked with the mission to protect the public while managing challenging budgets. The sustained economic downturns of the past several years have forced many correctional agencies to examine their budgets to identify the cost effectiveness of specific expenditures (James, Eisen, & Subramanian, 2012). A journal study explains that, "Decades of criminal justice research have identified policies and programs that are effective at reducing recidivism" (James, Eisen, & Subramanian, 2012). The research collected has resulted in evidence based practices; "doing what works".

Starting at the sentencing stage of the criminal justice system; in Florida, subjects are sentenced using the Criminal Punishment Code. The criminal punishment code equates that sentences should be commensurate with the severity and circumstances of the primary offense, increase in length and nature with the subjects prior record and incarcerate subjects with serious offenses and those with lengthy criminal records (Uccello & Benacquisto, 2012). The criminal punishment code does not take into consideration any of the subjects' criminogenic needs that may have contributed to the root cause for the subject to have committed the offense in the first place. It has been found by the Pew Center on the States, that it cannot be determined whether a subject will recidivate based on the use of only the type of offense committed and the subjects prior criminal record (Uccello & Benacquisto, 2012). In corrections, evidence based practices is the method to reduce the risk of offender recidivism, which directly correlates to reduced victimization and reduced costs to the agency and public (Warren, 2009). To directly impact a reduction in recidivism, a validated risk and needs assessment tool is needed (Warren, 2009). Evidenced based sentencing is defined as using validated information obtained through a risk and needs assessment and provided to the court to help establish a supervision plan as part of sentencing. To allow the courts to make risk assessment decisions without a risk assessment tool on cases they sentence allows unreliable assessments of risk, possibly unfair sentencing

practices, and inefficient use of criminal justice resources (Bonta, 2007). Providing the courts accurate risk and needs assessment information before sentencing is critical for judges to be able to make good decisions when sentencing felony offenders (Warren 2009). Sentencing an offender to a treatment program that does not match or address the offender's criminogenic needs is an inefficient use of resources and adds additional barriers for offenders to successfully complete supervision (Warren, 2009). Warren (2009) advises that offenders should only be sentenced to those conditions of probation or supervision that the court deems as essential to address the offender's risks and needs. Sentencing authorities ordering additional conditions that are not directly related to the offender's risk level or needs will again impede and add barriers increasing the chance of the offender failing to complete supervision (Warren, 2009).

Using the risk and needs assessment prior to sentencing insures that those cases that can be diverted from prison to community supervision can decrease recidivism and reduce costs for criminal justice entities in tough economic times (Warren, 2009). The use of risk and needs assessments does not stop at the sentencing phase. Offenders on supervision should be assessed and continuously monitored to address the offender's behavior (Warren, 2009). James Byrne, of the University of Massachusetts Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology indicated that, "risk assessment is the single most important decision made by probation and parole officers today" (Byrne, 2006). It is important that probation officers are trained and understand the importance of the risk and needs assessment tools. In the past, risk and needs decisions were primarily made by probation officers using professional experience or their "gut feeling" referred to as clinical decision making. Using a validated risk assessment is important to eliminate officer perceptions that are not in line with empirical data. Clinical (officer) judgment, is "wrought with bias and subjectivity" and "the cornerstone of effective supervision is the use of a risk and needs tool" (VanBenschoten, 2008).

Over the years, research has been collected on risk and needs assessment tools referred to as actuarial assessments. Experts on risk assessment, Stephen Gottfredson and Laura Moriarty indicate, "in virtually all decision making situations that have been studied, actuarially developed devices outperform human judgments" (Byrne, 2006). The purpose of a risk and needs assessment is to predict the probability of re-offending and construct the best supervision plan for successful completion of supervision. The risk and needs assessment is another tool used to determine the risk level of an offender's probability of re-offending as well as to identify types of programs which may increase their chances of successfully completing supervision.

The intensity of an offender's supervision must be proportionate to his or her level of risk (VanBenschoten, 2008). Many officers relate risk to the seriousness of the crime or offense. Offenders identified as low risk of re-offending should receive less attention and referral of mandatory services and those offenders identified with many risk factors should receive more intense services and supervision (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004).

Without the use of validated actuarial risk and needs assessment tools, officers are basically guessing whether an offender is a high or low risk. The real danger comes when an officer places an actual low risk offender into a high-risk level and exposes

them to intensive intervention. Studies clearly indicate that low risk/needs offenders should be identified and excluded from higher end correctional interventions (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004). Placing low risk/needs offenders in intensive treatment or supervision programs either shows no difference or increases their chances of re-offending (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004).

In 2011, many states mandated the use of risk assessment tools, requiring assessments at different stages of the criminal justice process from pretrial to parole release decisions (James, Eisen, & Subramanian, 2012). In 2010, in a survey completed by the Vera Institute of Justice indicated that 60 community supervision agencies in 41 states reported using an actuarial assessment tool and of those responding 82 percent used an integrated risk and needs assessment while the remaining 18 percent used only a risk tool (Uccello & Benacquisto, 2012). A review of literature indicates that when criminal justice professionals embrace validated risk and needs assessments that recidivism rates are significantly reduced (VanBenschoten, 2008), (Byrne, 2006) & (Gottfredson & Moriarty, 2006).

The importance of probation officers using a validated risk assessment tool and utilizing its assessment is imperative. For example, substance abuse is one of the eight most robust risk factors for recidivism yet a probation officer may perceive an offender with a mental disorder as being a major risk factor and rate the offender as a high risk offender (Louden & Skeem, 2012). An offender with a mental disorder may score as a low risk level, but if the officer who believes that a mental disorder strongly predicts violence may override that risk assessment and assign the offender a higher risk level. When this occurs, it gives an offender who has a low risk of recidivism an additional barrier to overcome with a higher likelihood of failure from the beginning of supervision (Louden & Skeem, 2012). Also, resources could be better spent on those offenders who are at a higher risk for re-offending.

Method

For this research project, an eleven question survey (see appendix A) was prepared for twenty (20) of the Florida Department of Corrections Community Corrections Circuit Administrators who are responsible for covering the twenty judicial circuits in Florida. Circuit Administrators are responsible for leading and managing field probation officers and serving as liaisons to their judiciary. The survey was formatted and created on SurveyMonkey.com and a link was forwarded to all twenty circuit administrators via email. The survey was sent out on May 31, 2013 with a completion date of June 17, 2013. A link to the web based survey easily allowed the 20 circuit administrators to connect to the active web based survey where they were provided a brief introduction. The survey was confidential and voluntary.

The survey consisted of eleven (11) questions. The questions were single response questions with some being in the Likert Scale format. The survey asked questions of the circuit administrators regarding any current risk and needs assessment tools that might be in use prior to sentencing within the twenty judicial circuits.

Additional survey questions requested data regarding the Florida Department of Corrections current validated risk assessment tool and the non-validated needs assessment tool referred to as an Individual Supervision Plan (ISP).

There were no noticeable issues with the survey instrument with the exception of possible computer user error. With regards to the computer user error, one Circuit Administrator indicated that he or she thought he or she took the survey, but it did not register as completed. This issue was not made known until the survey had closed.

Results

Of the twenty circuit administrators surveyed, nineteen circuit administrators successfully responded resulting in a 95% response rate. All nineteen respondents answered all questions. The only demographic question asked was a single question asking for the respective judicial circuit the circuit administrator is responsible for. The remaining ten questions surveyed the circuit administrators regarding the use of risk and needs assessments in their judicial circuit, their professional opinion regarding the need for risk and needs assessment to assist with violation of probation recommendations to the court, the benefits of having a risk and needs assessment for inmates being released from prison to supervision, and their professional opinion of the Department of Corrections Community Corrections current risk and needs system.

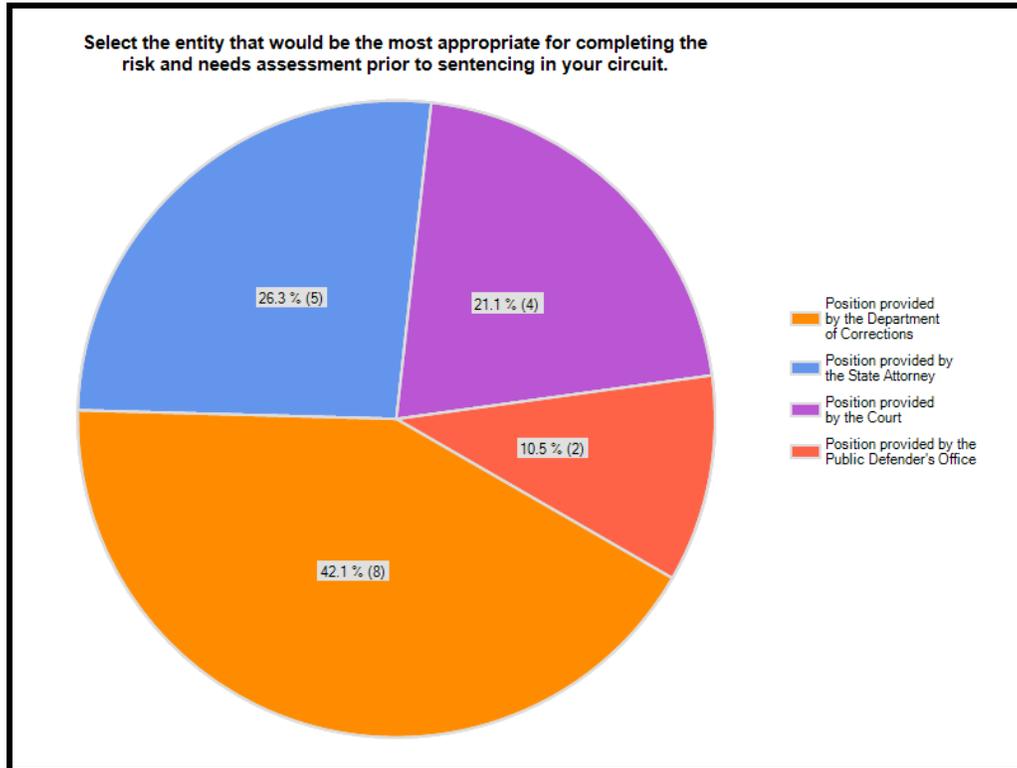
The nineteen circuit administrators who responded to the survey all indicated that their judicial circuits do not use a validated risk and needs assessment prior to sentencing. Comments from respondents indicated that their courts do not use an actual risk and needs assessment tool, but certain drug courts and Veterans courts use an assessment tool to determine eligibility. Other comments indicated that their courts rely on the pre-sentence investigation to assist with sentencing, but also noted that pre-sentence investigations are rarely ordered anymore.

Only one respondent indicated that he or she were sure his or her judicial circuit would support the use of a validated risk and needs assessment tool to assist in developing a supervision plan prior to sentencing. The remaining 18 respondents indicated that there was a “possibility” that their judicial circuit would support the use of a validated risk and needs assessment tool prior to sentencing. Comments received on this question, indicated that some judicial circuits are made of several counties and it would be difficult as all are not uniform. Additional comments indicated that some circuit administrators would be willing to discuss with their Chief Judge the use of a validated risk and needs assessment tool to be used prior to sentencing to assist with developing a supervision plan.

Conducting a validated risk and needs assessment prior to sentencing lends the question of what entity should be responsible for providing the resources and providing an employee(s) to conduct the risk and needs assessment prior to sentencing. Of the nineteen circuit administrators who responded (*Figure 1*): 42.1% indicated that the Department of Corrections should be responsible; 26.3% indicated that the state attorney should be responsible; 21.1% indicated that the Court should be responsible;

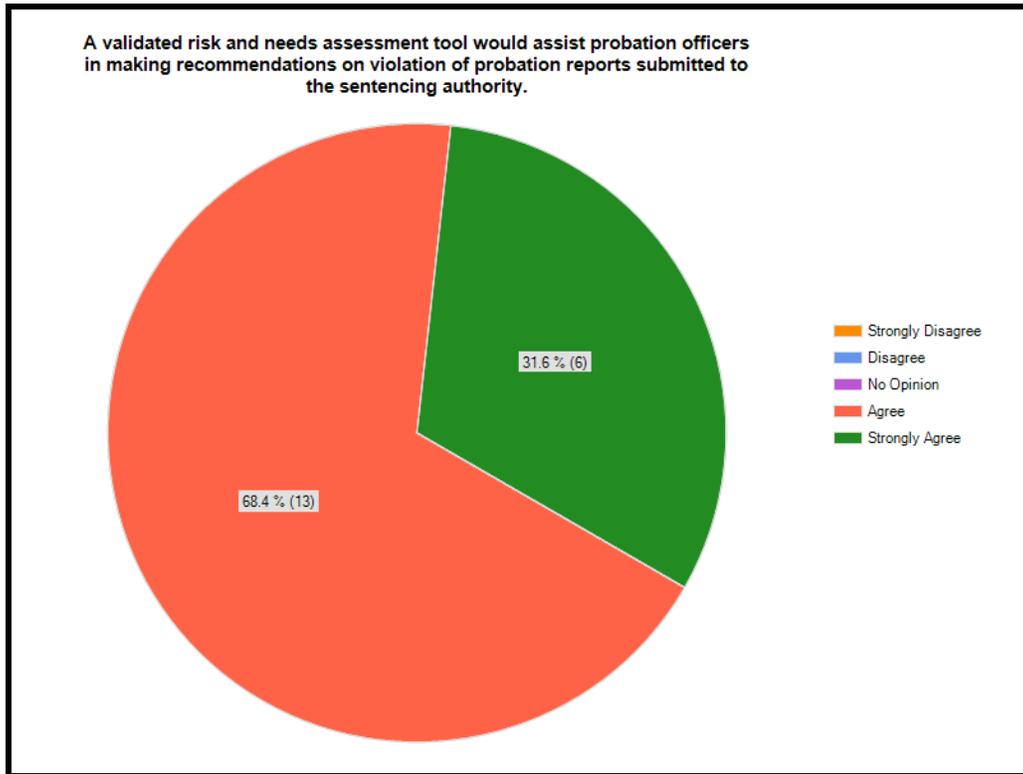
and 10.5% indicated that the public defender's office should be responsible for providing a position to conduct a validated risk and needs assessment prior to sentencing. No circuit administrator provided any comments for this question.

Figure 1



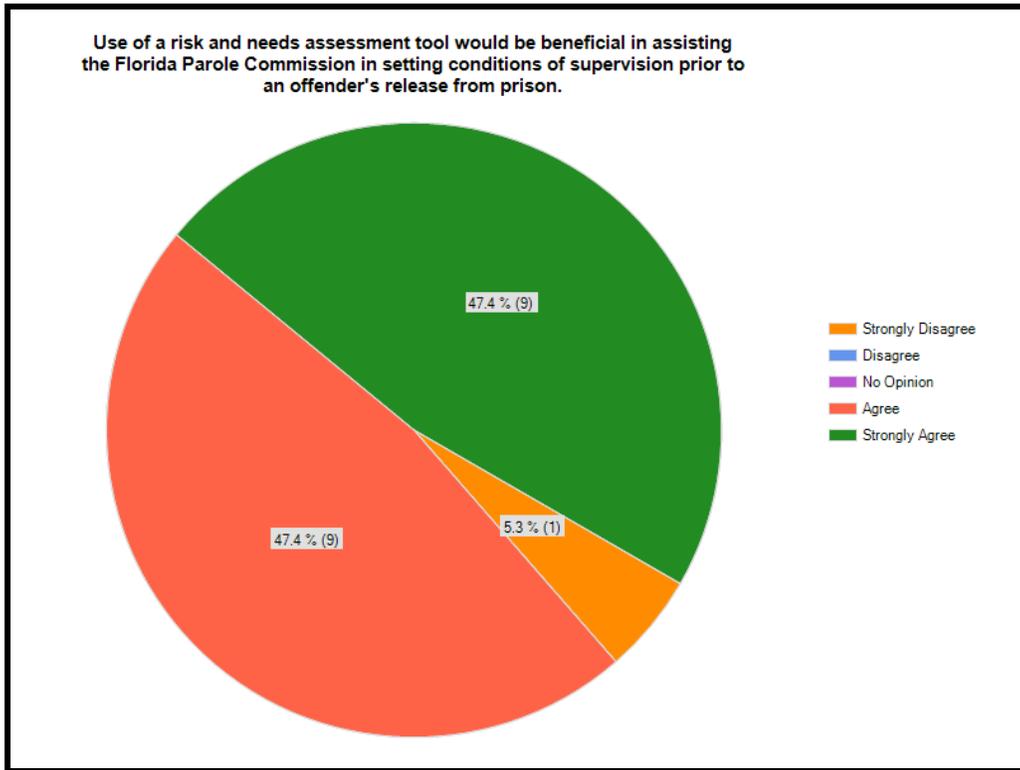
Circuit administrators were then asked on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree with a no opinion being the medium if they thought a validated risk and needs assessment tool would assist probation officers in making recommendations on violation of probation reports submitted to the sentencing authority. Of the nineteen circuit administrators responding (*Figure 2*) 68.4% indicated that they agreed a validated risk and needs assessment tool would assist probation officers in making recommendations on violation of probation reports. In addition, 31.6% indicated that they strongly agreed that a validated risk and needs assessment tool would assist their probation officers.

Figure 2



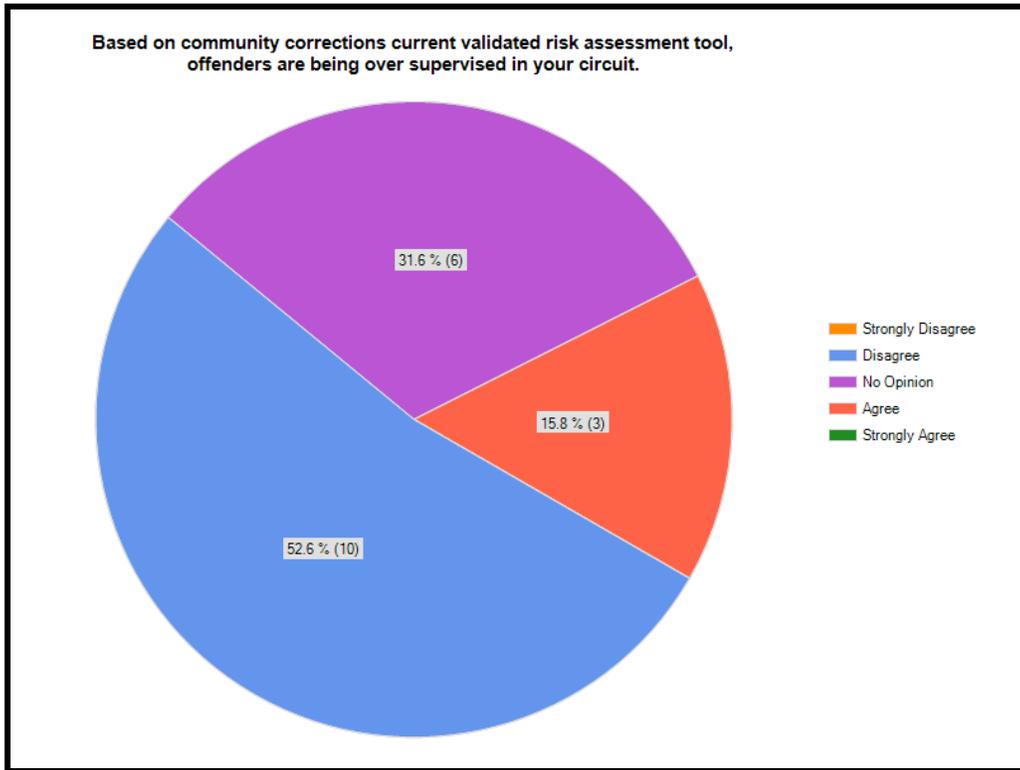
The Courts are not the only sentencing authority in Florida. The Florida Parole Commission has jurisdiction on felony cases that have been previously sentenced to prison. Therefore, circuit administrators were surveyed on whether their circuits would benefit from having validated risk and needs assessment results available to parole examiners with the Florida Parole Commission prior to setting conditions of supervision for conditional releases, addiction and recovery supervision cases, and old parole cases. The majority of circuit administrators indicated (*Figure 3*) by responding 47.4% for strongly agreed and 47.4% agreed that a validated risk and needs assessment would be beneficial in setting conditions of supervision. Only one circuit administrator or 5.3% indicated that he or she strongly disagreed that a validated risk and needs assessment would not be beneficial.

Figure 3



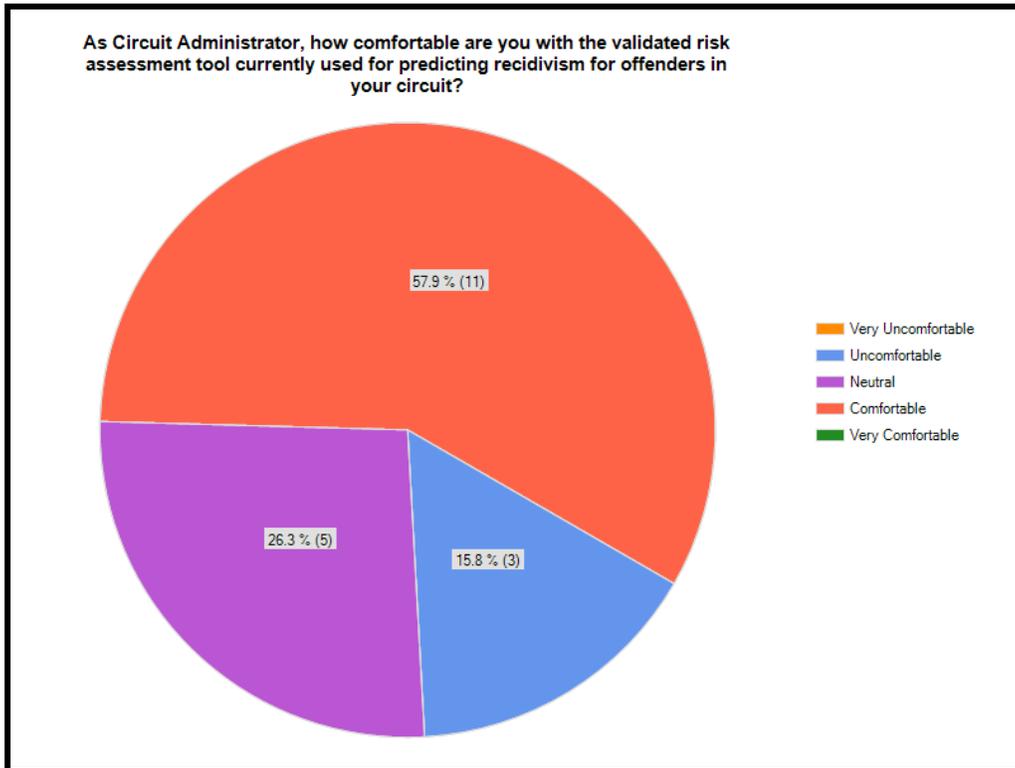
The Florida Department of Corrections currently uses a validated risk assessment system in community corrections, but it is not conducted prior to sentencing. Circuit administrators responding (*Figure 4*) consisted of 52.6% indicated that they disagreed that offenders are being over supervised based on the current risk assessment system being used. Only 15.8% of the circuit administrators agreed that offenders were being over supervised on the current validated system, while 31.6% of the circuit administrators responded with no opinion of whether offenders were currently being over supervised.

Figure 4



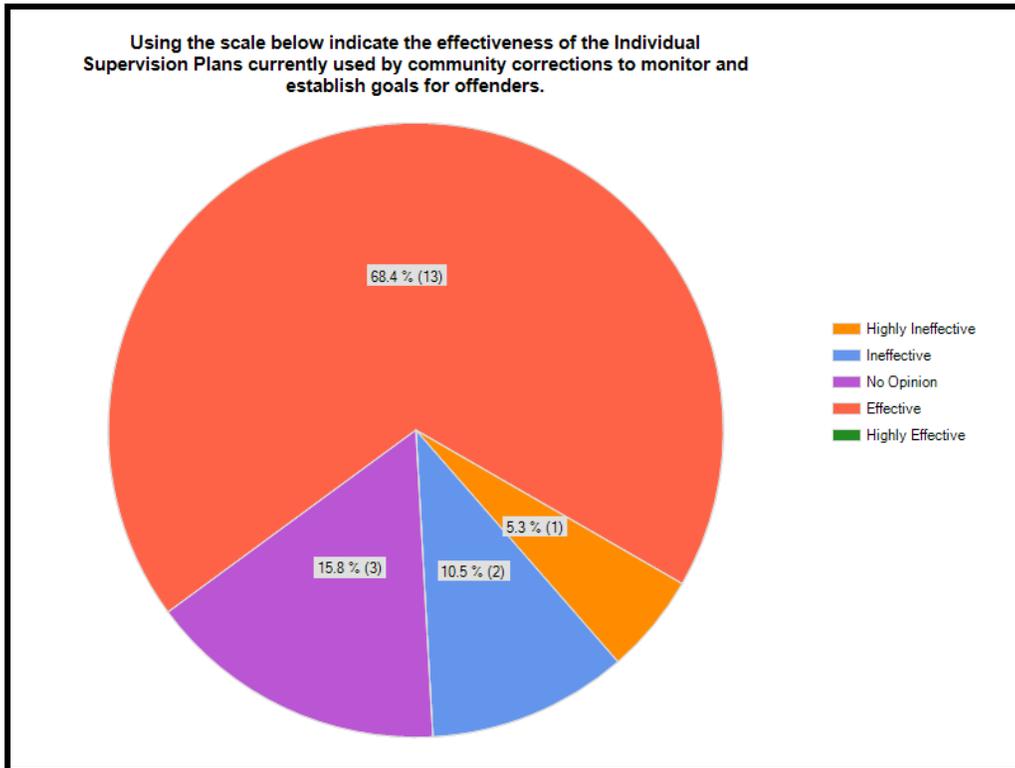
The current risk assessment system used by the Department of Corrections has been validated and offers supervisors the ability to manually override the risk class of offenders. The circuit administrators were surveyed on how comfortable they are with the current risk assessment system being used in community corrections within the Florida Department of Corrections. Circuit administrators responding (Figure 5) with 57.9% indicated that they are comfortable with the current system, while 15.8% of circuit administrators indicated they were uncomfortable with the current system. Five or 26.3% of the circuit administrators opted to respond indicating that they had a neutral feeling regarding the current validated risk assessment system.

Figure 5



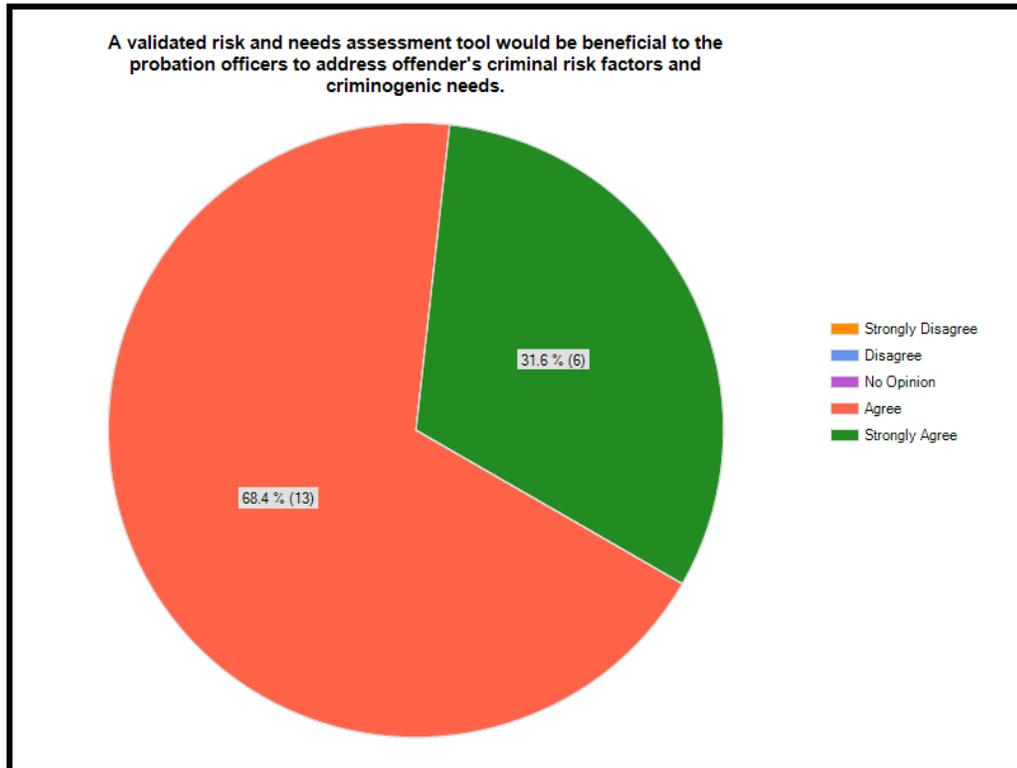
As previously indicated, the Florida Department of Corrections currently uses a validated risk assessment system, but it is not linked to an offender needs assessment system to determine the criminogenic needs of the community corrections offenders. Currently in the Florida Department of Corrections, Community Corrections uses an Individual Supervision Plan to assist with identifying offender needs. The circuit administrators were surveyed as to their opinion regarding the effectiveness of the current Individual Supervision Plan. Thirteen or 68.4% circuit administrators responding (*Figure 6*) indicated the Individual Supervision Plan is “effective”, with 5.3% of the circuit administrators indicating the Individual Supervision Plan system is “highly ineffective”. Two or 10.5% of the circuit administrators indicated the current system was “ineffective” and 15.8% of the circuit administrators opted to voice no opinion.

Figure 6



Lastly, to take an overall snap shot at the circuit administrators' perspectives, they were surveyed on their opinion regarding whether they thought a validated risk and needs system would be beneficial to their probation officers within their circuit. The response was overwhelming in favor of an integrated validated risk and needs assessment system. The majority, 68.4% (*Figure 7*) of the circuit administrators responding, indicated that they "agreed" that a validated risk and needs system would assist probation officers address offenders' criminal risk factors and criminogenic needs. The other 31.6% of the circuit administrators indicated that they "strongly agreed" that a validated risk and needs system would assist probation officers in addressing offender's criminal risk factors and criminogenic needs.

Figure 7



Discussion

With many municipalities, county governments, and state governments dealing with the rough economy and tight budgets it is understandable that more and more are turning to an evidence based practices approach. Part of evidence based practices is to do what works by following the data. As mentioned previously regarding the use of validated risk and needs assessments, these tools assist in reducing recidivism thus reducing victims and ultimately reducing criminal justice costs. In addition, a validated risk and needs assessment system is also good for overall public safety.

It was surprising that the State of Florida seems to be lagging behind many other states that have already implemented statewide risk and needs assessment systems prior to sentencing to assist with developing sentencing plans and recommendations in addition to being punished. None of the nineteen judicial circuits in Florida that responded use any type of risk and needs assessment tool prior to sentencing. Therefore prior to sentencing, defendants are not being assessed to determine their chances of ever committing another crime or whether there are needs that could be addressed to reduce the chances of the defendant ever re-offending. The ultimate plan would be for every defendant to be assessed prior to sentencing; yet this plan does not come cheap. In 2012, Florida's Government Efficiency Task Force made a recommendation to Governor Rick Scott for the need to investigate the implementation of

a web based risk and needs assessment tool to be made available at the time of sentencing.

It takes resources and staffing to conduct the risk and needs assessments. So who is to foot the bill for this service? The results of the survey would lead you to believe that the Florida Department of Corrections should provide the resources and staffing to conduct the risk and needs assessment tool. Yet, not every defendant that comes to court will be sentenced to probation or state prison. So some will contend that the state attorney or the court itself should provide staffing and resources. The minority were of the opinion that the public defender should conduct the risk and needs assessment prior to sentencing. When resources and staffing are involved it makes it very difficult to get a system that many agree needs to be implemented up and running. The recommendation made by Florida's Government Efficiency Task Force indicated and recommended a study be conducted to determine the costs savings of implementing a risk and needs assessment tool for the judges at sentencing. The notion of an online tool to be provided to the judges would indicate that the courts would be the ultimate entity responsible for conducting or administering the risk and needs assessment. It is possible that a portion of the savings derived from reduced incarceration could be redirected to fund the positions to conduct the risk and needs assessments prior to sentencing.

The barriers to implement a validated risk and needs assessment tool seem to be lack of resources and ample time needed to conduct the assessments. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, staffing is a large budget issue. In addition, with more criminal justice entities doing more with less, it is hard to find the required time for staff to conduct an in depth risk and needs assessment that requires extensive work hours to complete for each offender or subject. Other resource issues are the specific risk and needs assessment tool. What risk and needs assessment tool is going to be used and how much is it going to cost to implement and sustain?

Using the risk and needs tool to assist with sentencing would be the most beneficial to both the offender, to the criminal justice system and to public safety. Yet, the use of the risk and needs assessment tool should be used throughout the different stages of an offender's supervision whether it be at stages to reassess progress after certain goals have been met or for use in assisting the probation officer with a recommendation during a violation of probation. Currently probation officers are using their best professional judgement when making recommendations of violation reports to the sentencing authority. The use of a validated risk and needs assessment tool could provide an evidenced based approach to insure that a violation of probation recommendation is made based on proven data to address the core reason for the initial violation based on the criminogenic needs of the offender. It is also understandable that there will be times when the violation is so severe and the need to impose punishment of incarceration outweighs the intent to address the criminogenic needs of the offender.

There is also an element of trust with regards to probation officers trusting the risk and needs assessment tool. When the Department of Corrections Community Corrections first implemented the validated risk assessment tool, probation officers were constantly performing manual overrides of offender risk class levels. Officers had a very

hard time trusting the validity that it was a recidivism based tool. For example when an offender who had an offense with violent circumstances with no prior criminal history scored as minimum or medium risk, probation officers would feel the need to manually override the case to a maximum risk class level and circumvent the data the validated risk class based the suggested risk class level at. This led to many offenders being over supervised and required probation officers to be concentrating on offenders who were actually at a low risk for re-offending. Thus wasting resources and not focusing on the cases that were at a higher risk of not successfully completing supervision or re-offending and subsequently creating more victims. As a barrier, it will take time for probation officers to embrace a risk and needs system that may not coincide with their professional or clinical experience.

Recommendations

The implementation of a statewide risk and needs assessment tool to be used prior to sentencing would be the ultimate recommendation, but would require legislative action. To stay within the scope of the Florida Department of Corrections, the following recommendations are made for consideration:

- Violation Reports submitted to sentencing authority
 - Pilot the validated risk and needs assessment tool by starting with using it in the recommendations of violation of probation report submitted to the Court.
 - Identify a target offender population within judicial circuits that are willing to partner with the Department.
 - Use the validated risk and needs assessment tool to assist probation officers to develop recommendations for use in violation reports being submitted to the Court with the understanding that the recommendation is based on the risk and criminogenic needs of the offender.
 - Insure that a system is in place to capture the data for using evidence based recommendations in comparison to offenders' successful completion of supervision.

- Risk and Needs Assessment prior to sentencing
 - Advance by implementing a pilot program using a validated risk and needs tool by conducting risk and needs assessments prior to sentencing.
 - An initial risk and needs assessment could be completed by a probation and parole specialist with the results forwarded to the Court.
 - For those offenders eligible for community supervision, use the results of the risk and needs assessment in partnership with the Court to develop conditions of supervision that will address the offenders needs to reduce the risk of re-offending.
 - Continue to conduct risk and needs assessments throughout the offenders supervision to continuously monitor any changes so that offender risk and needs are addressed.

- Florida Parole Commission
 - Encourage the Florida Parole Commission to use the validated risk and needs assessment tool when voting on conditions.
 - The use of the validated risk and needs assessment tool by the Commission will insure the offenders are not being over supervised commensurate with their risk level.
- Insure that the risk and needs assessment tool used in Community Corrections is interchangeable and reciprocal with the risk and needs assessment tool being used in the Department of Corrections Institutions.
- Invite our criminal justice partners to ongoing training when provided to staff.
- Continuously inform and remind the Courts, state attorney, and public defenders of the Department's use of an evidence based practices validated risk and needs assessment tool.

Assistant Regional Director Michael Anderson has been in corrections since 1991 with the Florida Department of Corrections. He began his career as a classification officer at Hardee Correctional Institution and later was promoted to a classification senior officer. In 1999, he transferred to Community Corrections within the Department of Corrections and worked as a field probation officer performing the duties of supervising various types of offenders. He has worked through the ranks and has had many different assignments to include Tampa Bay Multi-Agency Gang Task Force, warrants team and field leasing agent. He is currently the Assistant Regional Director for the Southern Region Community Corrections with the Florida Department of Corrections. Assistant Regional Director Anderson has an A.S. degree in Criminal Justice from Lakeland Community College and a Bachelors of Science in Administration of Justice from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

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APPENDIX A

Florida Department of Corrections Risk & Needs Assessment

The purpose of this survey is to collect information regarding the twenty Florida Department of Corrections Community Corrections Circuits regarding the need to implement a validated risk and needs assessment tool at various times throughout the offender's supervision process.

***1. Please select your Circuit to continue.**

***2. At present time, is the judiciary in your Circuit using a risk and needs assessment tool prior to sentencing?**

- Yes
 No

If yes, please explain, if NO, please feel free to make any comments

***3. Would the judiciary in your circuit support the use of a validated risk and needs assessment (RNA) tool to assist in developing a supervision plan as a part of offender sentencing?**

- Yes
 No
 Possibly

Please make comments if there has been discussion of implementing a risk and needs assessment tool prior to sentencing. In your circuit.

***4. Select the entity that would be the most appropriate for completing the risk and needs assessment prior to sentencing in your circuit.**

- Position provided by the Department of Corrections
 Position provided by the State Attorney
 Position provided by the Court
 Position provided by the Public Defender's Office

Florida Department of Corrections Risk & Needs Assessment

***5. A validated risk and needs assessment tool would assist probation officers in making recommendations on violation of probation reports submitted to the sentencing authority.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- No Opinion
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

***6. Use of a risk and needs assessment tool prior to an offender's release from prison would assist probation officers in developing a case management/supervision plan for offender's being released back into the community.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- No Opinion
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

***7. Use of a risk and needs assessment tool would be beneficial in assisting the Florida Parole Commission in setting conditions of supervision prior to an offender's release from prison.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- No Opinion
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

***8. Based on community corrections current validated risk assessment tool, offenders are being over supervised in your circuit.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- No Opinion
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Florida Department of Corrections Risk & Needs Assessment

***9. As Circuit Administrator, how comfortable are you with the validated risk assessment tool currently used for predicting recidivism for offenders in your circuit?**

- Very Uncomfortable
- Uncomfortable
- Neutral
- Comfortable
- Very Comfortable

***10. Using the scale below indicate the effectiveness of the Individual Supervision Plans currently used by community corrections to monitor and establish goals for offenders.**

- Highly Ineffective
- Ineffective
- No Opinion
- Effective
- Highly Effective

***11. A validated risk and needs assessment tool would be beneficial to the probation officers to address offender's criminal risk factors and criminogenic needs.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- No Opinion
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Please feel free to make any comments regarding your professional opinion regarding Risk & Needs Assessment: