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The accreditation process and the practice of behavioural programs in Dutch probation

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Accreditation in The Netherlands

- 1 accreditation panel
- Since 2005
- 11 behavioural scientists and/or experts in practice

Tasks

- Behavioural programs for juvenile / adult offenders
- Analyzed on 10 criteria



Criteria

1. Theoretical model
2. Clear selection criteria
3. Direct criminogenic factors
4. Effective or promising methods
5. Training of skills
6. Intensity based on risk principle
7. Attention to motivation of participants
8. Continuity intervention and supervision trajectory
9. Intervention integrity
10. Evaluation plan (continuous evaluation)

Ambition probation and department 2005

To select a set of behavioural programs, that:

- Addresses all criminogenic needs
- Reaches all (possible) groups of offenders
- Have a limited number of different programs
- That are effective or at least promising

Erasmus University Rotterdam Study

(Fischer, Captein, Zwirs, 2012)

- Which criminogenic needs unaddressed?
- Which offender groups unreached and why?
- Which adjustments or additions can be advised?



Methods

- Content analyses
 - program manuals (probation)
 - methods of diagnosis manual
- Interviews
 - policy makers
 - trainers
 - program supervisors
 - RISC advisors
- Client database (2010)
 - RISC items (criminogenic needs/exclusion criteria)
 - course of correctional program participation (files)

Results about relation of accreditation with

1. Selection of programs



2. Indication criteria for programs



3. Practice and position of programs

1. Selection of programs offered by probation

Approved programs for adult offenders 2012

- Cognitive skills
- Cognitive skills for intellectually disabled
- Addiction related relapse prevention regular
- Addiction related relapse prevention short
- Working skills
- ART-Wiltshire
- Alcohol and Violence (temporarily approved)



Not approved programs adult offenders

- Financial behaviour/budgetting (had temporal status)
- Housing and living behaviour (had temporal status)
- Behavioural program partner violence



General characteristics programs

- All programs are fixed group programs
- No modular programs
- For intellectually disabled, just cognitive skills training

Conclusions selection of programs

- Important criminogenic needs not addressed
 - housing and living behaviour
 - financial behaviour/budgetting
- Limited set fixed programs → limited individual fit?
 - no 'easy to enter' motivational programs
 - overload when more criminogenic needs
 - no individual versions of group programs
 - no supply for short sentenced prisoners



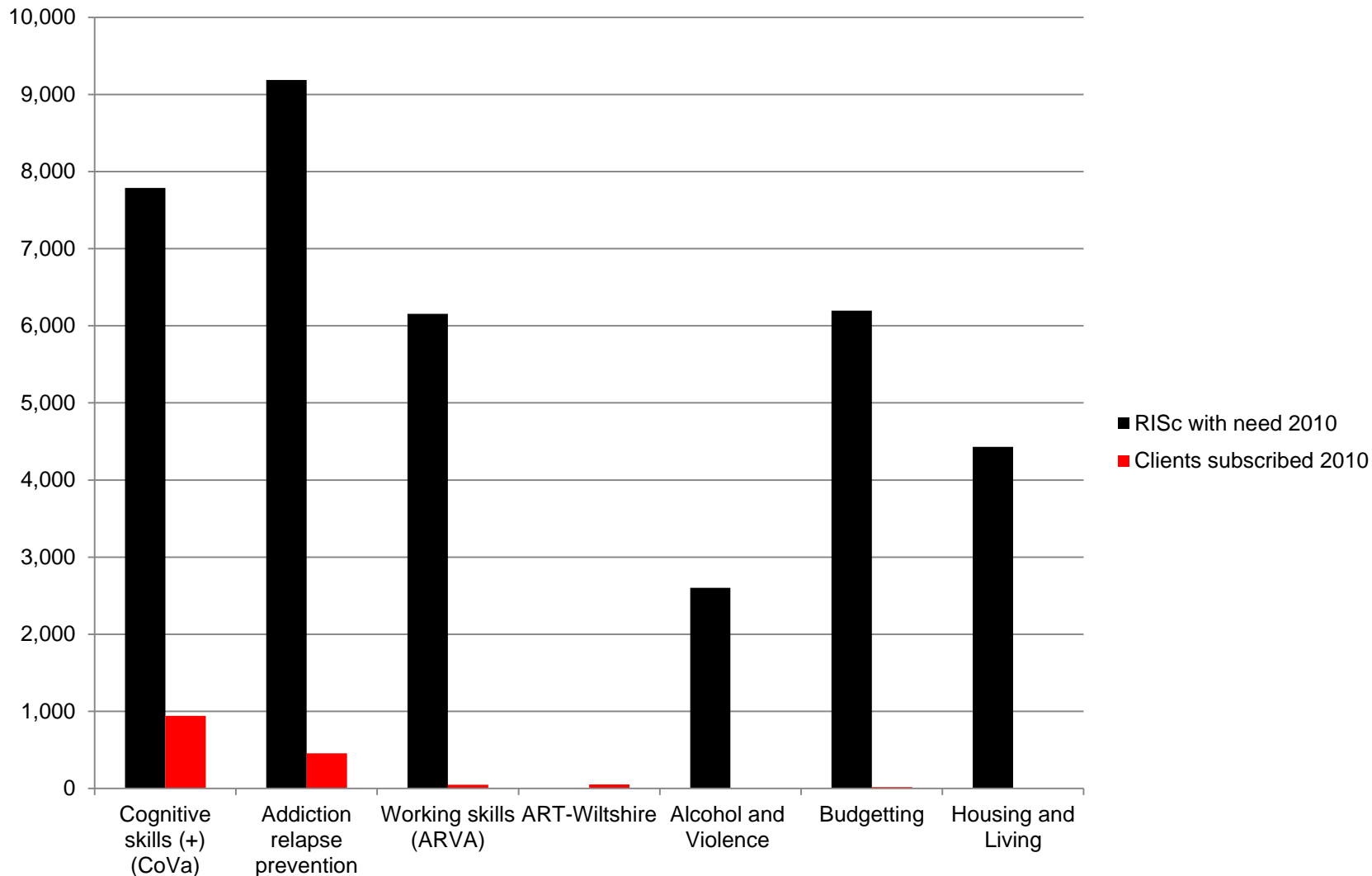


2. Theory/practice indication criteria

- Programs clearly describe criteria based on RISc

but

Difference between needs and subscriptions (N=12.226)



Partly explained by indication and advise process

- Prevalence exclusion criteria high

Exclusion criteria with high prevalence (>20%)

- psychiatric problems (up to 45% in probation)
- addiction
- intellectual disabilities
- lack of motivation
- disruptions in daily living (housing/relations)
- dominant behavior

All these factors are difficult to diagnose



Partly explained by indication and advise process

- Prevalence exclusion criteria high
- Criteria complex and varying
- Reasoning for criteria not always clear
- Ask for in depth diagnostics
- Uncertainty leads to indicating forensic treatment/care?



3. Practice and position of programs

Strong focus on quality and integrity of programs

but:



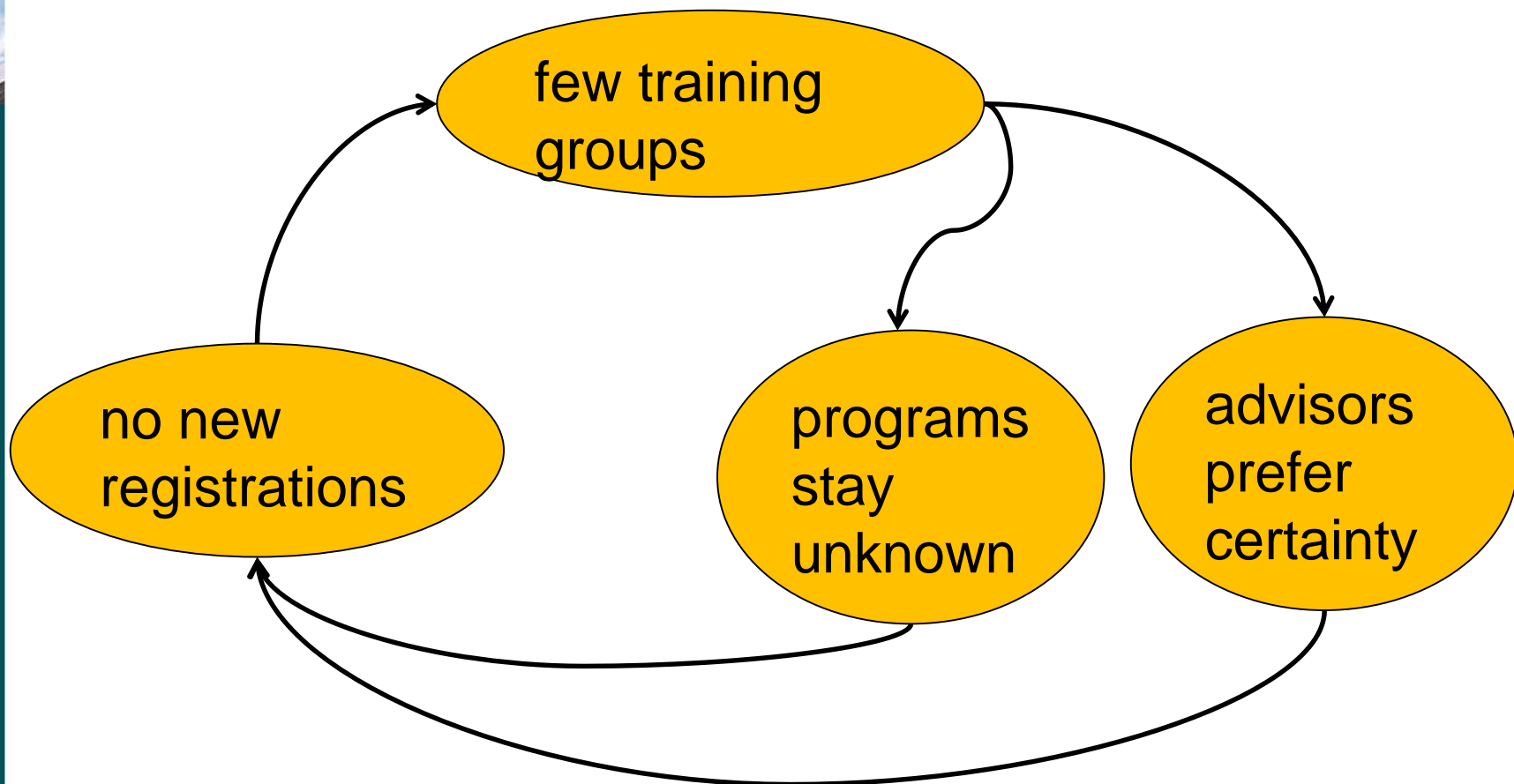
Trainers experience limited flexibility when

- Examples do not concern the participants
- The level of the exercises is too high/low
- Participants need more individual attention

Few evaluation studies available

program name	approved since	proces evaluation	effect evaluation
Cognitive skills	2005	2009	2012 (?)
Cognitive skills +	2006	2011	-
Relapse prevention	2006/2007	2012 (?)	-
Working skills	2006	-	-
ART-Wiltshire	2007	-	-
Alcohol & Violence	2009	-	-

Uncertainty and long waiting times



Programs have an isolated position:

- Within organization
 - advisors are unfamiliar with programs
- Within trajectories; with respect to:
 - supervising probation officer (varies strongly)
 - motivational interventions
 - psychiatric/addiction treatment?
 - work, housing and budgeting programs?



Summary of results

1. Selection of programs

- not for structural needs
- individual fit limited
- groups unreached

2. Indication criteria for programs

- many excluded
- more diagnostics
- relation forensic care?

3. Practice and position of programs

- stagnation
- isolated position



Future research

- Practice of indicating / advising with RISC
- Differences between regions:
 - advise for behavioral programs
 - % of starters
 - % of no-shows/drop outs
- Process/effect evaluations

Main conclusions

- Theoretically well developed programs
- Most important criminogenic factors addressed

Stagnation in:

- participation → clients unreached?
- evaluation → improving of practice of the programs

Isolation with respect to:

- trajectories → behavioral changes may not sustain
- other providers → inefficiency