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BRIK

Needs and resources assessment in Norwegian corrections

The BRIK - tool

CEP-workshop
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Directorate of Correctional Service
Norway

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Two theoretical approaches

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- *What works* -
Factors increasing the risk of re-offending
What characterises those who reoffend?
- *Desistance theory* –
Factors reducing the risk of re-offending
What characterises those who do not reoffend?



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What Works? - RNR

Risk –	intensity of the intervention
Need –	contents of the intervention
Responsivity –	form of the intervention

Criminogenic factors
Structured activities
Programs (cognitive behavioural)

Assessment tools based on RNR:
LSI-R in Canada, OASys in England & Wales



Criticism of What works-tools

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- Needs are redefined as dynamic risks
- Needs are being quantified
- Decisions during sentence are based on an addition of all scores
- Only evidence-based criminogenic needs addressed
- Aggregated statistics are prioritised over individual differences
- Little weight on the relationship between assessor and assessed
- The offender's own opinions are largely ignored

-- De-individualisation --



Desistance approach

To abstain from offending is:

- usually a slow and unstable individual process
- governed by the offender's own wish to stop committing crimes.
- Practical barriers include money, work, education, addiction, accommodation etc. and must be addressed
- Strong points must be inventoried and put to use



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Features of BRIK

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- Electronic tool
- BRIK provides a guide for the conversation
- For now, only sentenced offenders
- Criminogenic factors
- Other factors the individual deems to be relevant for his or her criminal behaviour
- Resources, competence, skills, strenghts
- Possibilities for positive contributions



Features of BRIK

- Assessment done together with the offender, facing the same screen
- The offenders' vision of their future is included
- Stimulates feeling of procedural justice
- Stimulates personal relationships, and contributes to dynamic security
- No quantitative scoring - reduces labelling effects
- Results function as a guide for further case management



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Some screenshots

Basic data

General information

Living conditions

Financial situation

Education / work / employment

Private social network

Physical health status

Mental health status

Alcohol consumption

Use of narcotic substances and medicines

Aggression and use of violence or threats

Addiction treatment

Participation in Correctional programme

Education / work / employment

☐ Reservation

What is the convicted person's highest level of completed education?*

Describe highest level of completed education

Does he/she wish to pursue further education?*

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Declines to respond

Specify

Basic data
General information
Living conditions
Financial situation
Education / work / employment
Private social network
Physical health status
Mental health status
Alcohol consumption
Use of narcotic substances and medicines
Aggression and use of violence or threats
Addiction treatment
Participation in Correctional programme
Resorative practices
Victim of aggression and use of violence
Self-assessment
General impression of assessment

Does the convicted person have previous work experience?*

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Declines to respond

Has the convicted person previously been unemployed for extended periods?* ?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Declines to respond

Is there anything that hinders the convicted person's ability to work?* ?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No
☐ Declines to respond

Other expertise/skills* ?

Any hobbies/interests* ?

What does the convicted person consider to be his/her strengths?* ?

Does the convicted person have any reading/writing difficulties that should be given attention?*

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Hjelp

Describe the convicted person's views of his/her own strengths/skills. These can be developed and maintained during execution of the sentence.

difficulties that

Self-assessment

☐ Reservation

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Victim of aggression and use of violence
Self-assessment
General impression of assessment

What does the convicted person want **his/her future** to look like?* [?](#)

What specific goals does this include?* [?](#)

How has the convicted person thought to achieve these?* [?](#)

What expectations does the convicted person have about **execution of the sentence**?* [?](#)

What activities does the convicted person want to participate in during execution of the sentence?* [?](#)

In what way does the convicted person believe that this period can be used to achieve his/her goals?* [?](#)



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Some screenshots

- Private social network
- Physical health status
- Mental health status
- Alcohol consumption
- Use of narcotic substances and medicines
- Aggression and use of violence or threats
- Addiction treatment
- Participation in Correctional programme
- Resorative practices
- Victim of aggression and use of violence
- Self-assessment
- General impression of assessment**

General impression of assessment

Own comments from the convicted person (including other requirements and requests that are not covered by the assessment).



Assessor's own comments ?

↓ Lagre



Pros and cons

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- Both assessors and assessed are very satisfied
- Useful as a tool for follow-up case-management
- Establishes a good relationship and mutual trust
- Pleased with being asked about positive factors
- Appreciate the possibilities for commenting

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- May create expectations that cannot be met
- Takes time
- Participation is voluntary → refusals



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Percentage of refusals

Year	Offered	Consent	Refusal	% Refusal
2018	2,660	1,892	768	29 %
2019	2,837	1,906	931	33 %
2020	2,301	1,562	739	32 %
2021	3,291	2,118	1,173	36 %

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Reasons for refusals

In percentages

Did not get enough information	4
Reluctant to give more information than necessary	10
Afraid CSN will share information	4
Afraid information will be used against me	10
Not worth my time	6
Doubt that it is useful for me	40
Did some form of assessment before	26



Conclusions for offenders

- The need to convince of the use of participating – but without applying pressure
- Remove some misunderstandings
- Better communication on contents and use
- Better internal communication when placed in a different unit
- Avoid having to answer the same question twice



Suggestions for improvement - staff

Practicalities

- Drop the shared screen
- Use of «you» in questions instead of «the offender»
- Simplify navigation through the instrument
- Make it easier to «jump» from one subject to another

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Suggestions for improvement - staff

Process

- A more structured selection of candidates
- Realistic production quota
- A clearer description of the process during training
- A clearer description of roles (assessor – case manager)
- A more structured exchange of information with partners

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Further developments

BRIK

- A version has been developed specifically for 15 – 24 year olds which will probably be launched in 2023
- A new sentence planning instrument will be developed to be used as an extension to BRIK
- The Directorate has requested a change in legislation making it possible to use BRIK for persons on remand. The answer is pending.



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Thank you for your attention!

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