

## **Risk Assessment: Pre-cursors and Indicators**

### ***Evaluating Imminent Danger Due to Mental Illness: A Data-Based Model***

Imat Amidjaya

*Douglas H. Singer Mental Health and Development Centre, Rockford, Illinois*

The latest theories and models on assessing imminent dangerousness or dangerousness due to mental illness will be briefly described. My current research, which has been taking place for almost one year, designed to test the accuracy of predicting imminent dangerousness, will be presented. The assessment model is intended to measure whether behaviours which are dangerous to one's self or others are imminent, and whether such dangerous behaviours are associated with, or caused by, a mental illness. Four crucial components, which appear to be necessary and sufficient for predicting imminence, will be discussed: recency of the dangerous behaviours, the role of active mental illness symptomatology or causality, history of dangerous behaviours, and internal and external similarity between the present, the recent, and the past behaviours. It will be shown that this empirically-derived assessment model is greatly useful, not only for making decisions to commit or not to commit persons with mental illness to psychiatric treatment or a hospital, but also for a host of forensic psychiatric and clinical decisions which require knowledge of whether a person with a mental illness can be reasonably expected to inflict serious physical harm on one's self or others.

### ***Criminal Behaviour in Psychotics and its Precursors in Childhood and Adolescence***

K.R. Goethals

*Pompe Foundation, Nijmegen*

Starting from the Dutch situation, the international literature concerning this theme will be reviewed. Topics include:

1. The co-morbidity of psychosis, substance abuse and the antisocial personality disorder;
2. criminal motives in psychotics and,
3. early versus late starter typology in schizophrenics in relation to substance abuse and psychopathy.

This theoretical framework is a starting point for a proposed research project, focusing on acting-out behaviour in relation to psychosis. Further aims will be the comparison of patients with a personality disorder, a psychotic disorder and double diagnosis respectively, with regard to psychosocial stress factors, behaviour problems in adulthood and the HCR-20 H items.

### ***Trauma, Substance Abuse, and Violence***

Norbert Schalast

*University of Essen*

Especially in males, a strong interaction and interdependence is known between experiences of abuse and neglect in childhood, and the early onset of alcohol abuse and violent behaviour. Assumptions on causal pathways shall be presented, as well as data from an ongoing project, considering patients sentenced to addiction treatment in forensic hospital departments (§ 64 of the German prison code) and prison inmates. A retrospective assessment of the degree of experienced child abuse/neglect was attempted, using a German version of the "Childhood Trauma Questionnaire" (Bernstein et al.). Difficulties in this assessment, and questions with regard to the validity of the CTQ will be discussed.

### ***Violence Exposure in Urban American Youth: An Exploration of Pathways to Delinquency and Psychopathology***

Mary Schwab-Stone, Stephanie M. Jones and Vladislav Ruchkin

*Yale University*

This presentation will examine the role of violence exposure in relation to delinquent and symptomatic outcomes in an urban sample of adolescents from the U.S. These youth have been surveyed as to participation in problem behaviours, psychiatric symptomatology, and risk and protective factors. Much of the violence exposure research has examined exposure and potential developmental outcomes in cross-sectional studies and has documented clinically relevant associations. While these findings set a foundation for community violence research, they cannot tease apart the processes that underlie these associations, nor can they provide a clear understanding of the degree and nature of change in these risks and conditions over time. Most importantly, they cannot help us understand the degree to which particular patterns of exposure (increasing, decreasing, and stable high or low) are associated with patterns of change in psychopathology. We will track and describe the longitudinal course of violence exposure in an ethnically diverse, high-risk, urban sample followed over three time points from 6th to 10th grade. In this work, violence exposure is considered in three distinct ways: witnessing violence, victimization by violence, and involvement in committing violence. Using a group-based method for analyzing developmental trajectories, we will:

- (1) characterize change in the three forms of violence exposure over three time points, and,
- (2) describe relationships between specific patterns of change in violence exposure (*e.g.*, stable high exposure, increasing exposure, stable low exposure, decreasing exposure), and psychological and achievement outcomes, including internalizing and externalizing symptoms, as well as, academic investment.

Finally, implications for intervention will be considered.