



Treatment Needs of Intimate Partner Violence Offenders

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WHAT DID WE DO & WHY?

Treatment programs for intimate partner violence (IPV) do not show good results in terms of reducing re-offending. Researchers have suggested changing the treatment paradigm to one that is based on the principles of effective intervention for offenders. Offender treatment is most effective when it focuses on changeable risk factors that are known to be related to reoffending. These “criminogenic” treatment needs include: antisocial personality traits, attitudes supportive of crime, criminal peers, substance use, poor marital and family relationships, employment or school problems, and lack of prosocial leisure activities. We studied these treatment needs as documented in the medical records of forensic patients, who are admitted to forensic hospital because of their involvement with the criminal justice system. We compared 99 patients with a history of IPV offences, with 233 violent offenders without a history of IPV, and 103 patients with no violent offenses.

OUR FINDINGS

Patients with a history of IPV offenses had significantly more criminogenic needs than other violent offenders and non-violent offenders. Each criminogenic treatment need that we studied was more common in the IPV offenders than other offenders, except for substance use. Other kinds of treatment needs, such as mental illness, were equally prevalent across the three groups.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Male IPV offenders have criminogenic treatment needs that should be addressed in order to reduce future offending. This may require a change in treatment paradigm for IPV treatment programs. Treatment programs should also adhere to other principles of effective intervention. These include ensuring the highest risk individuals receive the most treatment.

KEY MESSAGES

- Male IPV offenders have criminogenic treatment needs.
- They have more criminogenic treatment needs than other violent offenders.
- These needs should be targeted in IPV treatment programs.