

# Defining a high risk offender – lessons from practice



**A PRESENTATION TO THE EUROPEAN  
TREATMENT AND TRANSITION  
MANAGEMENT OF HIGH RISK OFFENDERS**

**DUBLIN  
JUNE 2013**

# Risk of What?



- Risk of re – offending - LSIR ( Standard Probation Tool in Ireland)
- Need for tool that addresses risk of Harm – allowing a definition
- Development of PS RoSH and PS Rosh (SO) allowing staff to guage level of risk and imminency.
- Guided professional judgement tool devised and standard in Probation in Ireland

# RISK of Serious Harm



- The Irish Probation Service has selected the following definition of risk, which is drawn from the Metropolitan Police (2003)
- SERIOUS HARM IS
- *“.....personal, physical or psychological harm which is life threatening and/or traumatic and from which recovery is usually difficult or incomplete.”*

# A Tool for Practice



- PS Rosh and PS Rosh (SO) are designed specifically for use within community and custodial settings.
- They are also designed to provide the Probation Officer with a grading that indicates the level of action required to reduce risk levels.
- PS Rosh allows for the development of defensible practice – providing staff, partner agencies and stakeholders with confidence in practice.

# Steps



- STEP ONE – Complete LSIR ( RM 2000 and S&A for Sex offenders) - Divert those who have committed DV offences to SARA assessment – *EXIT OR PROCEED*
- STEP TWO – Screen on basis of offending history *EXIT OR PROCEED*
- STEP THREE – Complete assessment of harmful behaviour – *EXIT OR PROCEED ( serious harmful behaviour)*
- STEP FOUR – Final ROSH assessment and assigning of Risk Level

# Cases in practice



## Case A

- 35 Year old man
- Convictions for murder (1)/ serious assault (4)
- Life sentence
- Differential mental health diagnoses/ ?abi
- Issues of drug and alcohol misuse
- Convicted at 24

## Case B

- 48 Year old man
- Convictions for murder (1)/theft (2)/public order(3)
- Life sentence
- Diagnosed with Schizophrenia
- Issues of Alcohol misuse
- Convicted at 24



## Cases in Practice

### Case A

- PROTECTIVE
- In Custody
- Subject to Parole Review
  
- RISKS
- A voyeuristic interest in violence
- A social isolate
- Hard to Engage
-



## Cases in Practice

### Case B

- PROTECTIVE
- Motivated
- Engaged with Mental Health Services
- Engaged with Probation
- Positive Family Support
  
- RISKS
- Managing change relationships
- Managing Transition



# RISK as one factor



**IN DEALING WITH THOSE WHO PRESENT A RISK TO OTHERS WE MUST DEVELOP SYSTEMS AND TOOLS THAT WILL HELP MEASURE THAT RISK**

**RISK MANAGEMENT IS BOTH CONTAINING RISK AND MEETING NEEDS**

**CENTRAL TO BOTH ARE DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE SYSTEMS BUT ALSO EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE OFFENDER.**