

Circles UK: Dynamic Risk Review

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Circles of Support and Accountability

Selected volunteers from the community, trained and guided by professional Circle co-ordinators, work with convicted sexual offenders (mostly released from prison) known as a Core Member (CM) in order to provide them with social support and guidance, while holding them accountable for their actions and to their commitment not to re-offend.

- Established in UK 2002
- Circles UK established 2007
- DRR created 2009
- To measure significant attitudes and behaviours exhibited by CM during life of circle
- Based on Structured Assessment of Risk and Need (Thornton, 2002)
- 4 domains identified as key in sex offender risk assessment:
- Offence-related sexual interests, Pro-offending attitudes, Problems in social functioning and Self-management issues.

Dynamic Risk Review

- SARN domains one and two are addressed in two DRR questions each while five DRR questions apply to Domain three and six in domain four.
- Additional questions are about self-esteem and protective factors (appropriate hobbies, accommodation and employment).
- Each question is scored on a six-point Likert scale achieving a total risk score for the Core Member. Explanatory qualitative information is requested.
- DRR completed every 3 months by Circle Co-ordinator and the Circle (without CM)

Example

Question 4. Has the CM expressed hostile or negative views towards women?

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

Peter recently went for a job interview at a supermarket where he was not successful. The interviewer was a women and Peter said that he believes this is the reason why he did not get the job. He said that women aren't very good judges of character. He said he that this has put him off applying for other jobs as he thinks the odds are stack against him.

Challenges

- Completing DRR after Circle meeting – often 9pm, cold church hall!
- Not all volunteers have same opinion – Coordinator has to collate response as in a focus group
- Scores are not absolute but mainly relative e.g. consider previous answer, improvement or worsening

December 2015 Study

- Circles UK had data on 447 CMs since 2002
- 56 (12%) had some kind of 'adverse outcome' recorded on their case record N.B. This was not definitive data only what Circles groups had provided.
- However it was a broader concept than formal reconviction.
 - Arrest (no charge and/or conviction) 41 (9%)
 - Recall to prison 41 (9%)
 - Breach of licence/ community order 39 (8.7%)
 - Reconviction (for any offence) 13 (3%)

(Some CMs fell into more than one category)

Sexual reconvictions

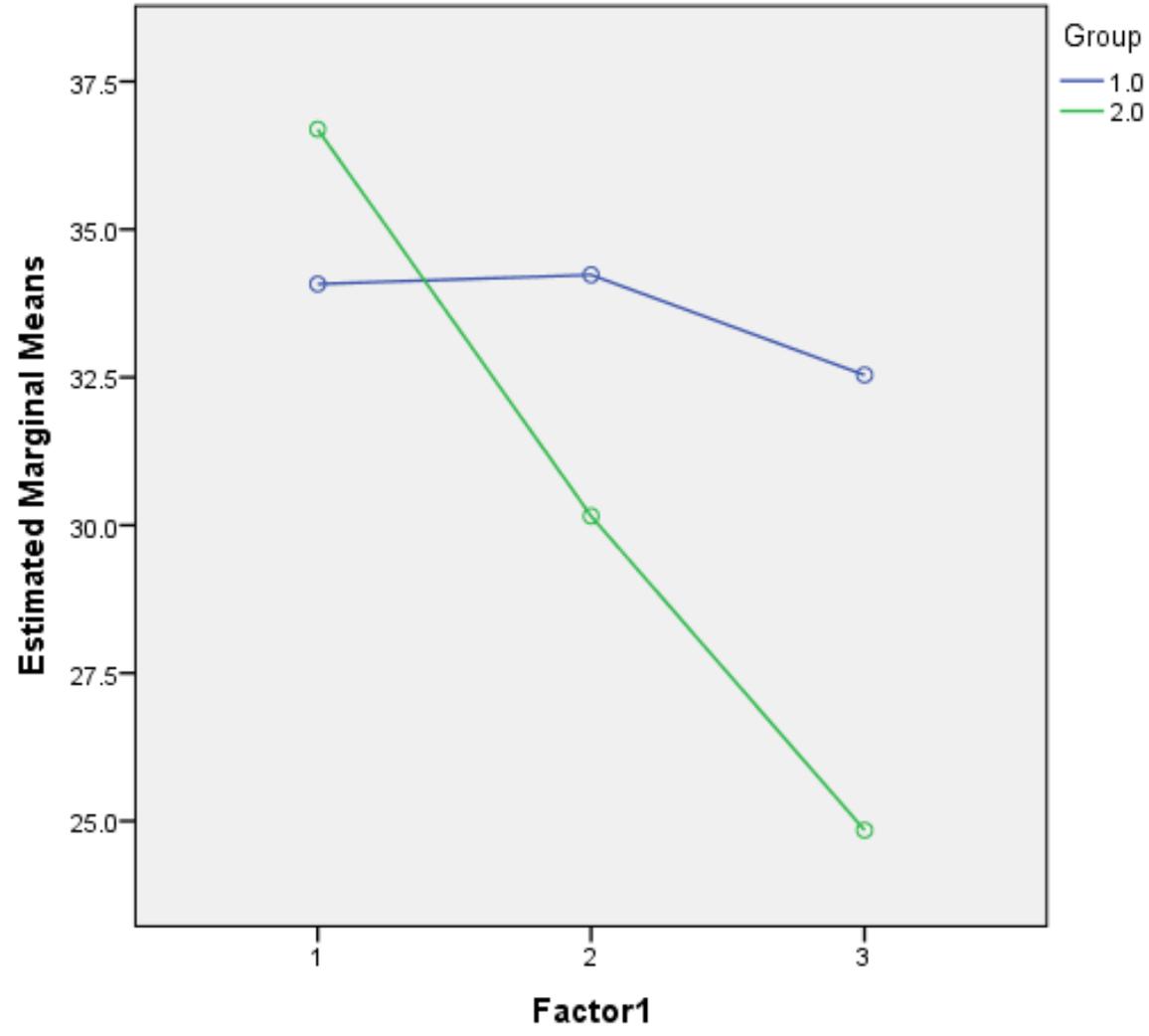
Caution	1
Breach of Sex Offence Prevention Order	9
Sexual assault	2
Historical sexual assault	1
Total	13

- Of the 56 CMs with AOs, 31 had at least one DRR recorded (others mainly predated DRR)
- 13 had 3+ DRRs recorded.
- A matched CM with no recorded adverse outcome was selected for each AOCM.
- Criteria for matching was that the CM had to be from the same Circles project and have the same number of DRRs recorded.

Results

	Mean DRR1	Mean DRR2	Mean DRR3
Group1 : Adverse Outcomes (n = 13)	34.08 (sd = 8.51) CI (95%) 28.9 – 39.2	34.23 (sd = 1.88) CI (95%) 27.06-41.41	32.54 (sd = 8.76) CI (95%) 27.24 – 37.83
Group 2: Matched Control (n = 13)	36.69 (sd = 8.16) CI (95%) 31.76 – 41.62	30.15 (sd = 9.27) CI (95%) 24.55- 35.75	24.85 (sd=12.69) CI (95%) 17.18 – 32.52

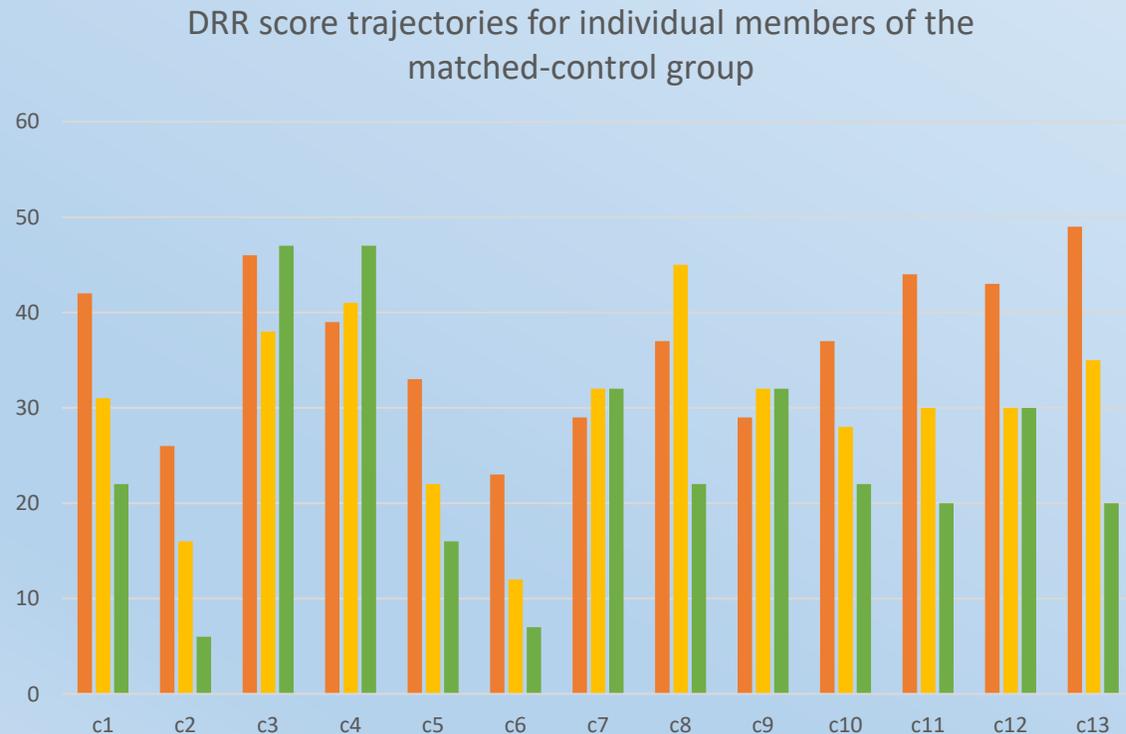
Estimated Marginal Means of DRR



- A mixed between (groups)-within (assessment point) analysis of variance was computed on the data. The analysis indicated a main effect of the DRR scores across the three different time points and there is a statistically significant effect ($F = 5.7131(2, 48)$, $p = .006$). The difference in scores across the three time periods demonstrates a large effect size.
- The interaction effect between the DRR scores across the three time periods for the two groups is also statistically significant ($F = 3.498(2, 48)$, $p = .038$, $h^2 = .127$). The interaction effect demonstrates a moderate effect size.

Control group – adverse outcome?

Within the matched control group there are three group members who demonstrated profiles that might indicate risk for an adverse outcome in the near future (c3, c4, & c7)



Future research

- One problem here is that the negative DRR trajectory for Adverse Outcome cases may only become apparent at the latter part of the Circle's life e.g. when it is too late to take evasive action
- At what point should evasive action in a Circle be taken following negative DRR evaluation?
- Which DRR questions are most responded to? Which least?
- Which DRR questions most link with 'adverse outcome' recording
- Reduce DRR to less questions but with greater predictive significance
- Possibly run (briefer) DRR more regularly