

## SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE BASED CORRECTIONAL PROGRAM CHECKLIST

The Evidence Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) is a tool developed by University of Cincinnati for assessing correctional intervention programs.<sup>1</sup> It is used to ascertain how closely correctional programs meet the known principles of effective intervention. Several recent studies conducted by the University of Cincinnati on both adult and juvenile programs were used to develop and validate the indicators on the CPC. These studies found strong correlations with outcome between both domain areas and individual items (Holsinger, 1999; Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2003, Lowenkamp, 2003; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005a; Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2005b). We have also conducted over 400 program assessments across the country and have developed a large database on correctional intervention programs.<sup>2</sup>

The CPC is divided into two basic areas; content and capacity. The capacity area is designed to measure whether a correctional program has the capability to deliver evidence based interventions and services for offenders. There are three domains in the capacity area including: Leadership and Development, Staff, and Quality Assurance. The content area focuses on the substantive domains of Offender Assessment and Treatment, and the extent to which the program meets the principles of risk, need, responsivity and treatment. There are a total of seventy-seven indicators, worth up to 83 total points that are scored during the assessment. Each area and all domains are scored and rated as either "highly effective" (65% to 100%); "effective" (55% to 64%); "needs improvement" (46% to 54%); or "ineffective" (45% or less). The scores in all five domains are totaled and the same scale is used for the overall assessment score. It should be noted that not all of the five domains are given equal weight, and some items may be considered "not applicable," in which case they are not included in the scoring.

Data are collected through structured interviews with selected program staff and program participants, and observation of groups and services. In some instances surveys may also be used to gather additional information. Other sources of information include policy and procedure manuals, schedules, treatment materials, manuals, and curriculums, a review of a sample of case files and other selected program materials. Once the information is gathered and reviewed the program is scored, and a report is generated which highlights the strengths, areas that need improvement, and recommendations for each of the five areas. Program scores are also compared to the average from across all programs that have been assessed.

There are several advantages to the CPC. First, it is applicable to a wide range of programs (adult, juvenile, community, institutional, etc.). Second, all of the indicators

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<sup>1</sup> The CPC is modeled after the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory developed by Gendreau and Andrews; however, the CPC includes a number of items not contained in the CPAI. In addition, items were deleted that were not found to be positively correlated with recidivism.

<sup>2</sup> Several versions of the CPAI were used prior to the development of the CPC. Scores and averages have been adjusted as needed.

included in the CPC have been found to be correlated with reductions in recidivism. Third, the process provides a measure of program integrity and quality; it provides insight into the “black box” of a program, something that an outcome study alone does not provide. Fourth, the results can be obtained relatively quickly; usually the process takes a day or two and a report is generated within a few weeks. Fifth, it identifies both the strengths and weaknesses of a program and provides recommendations designed to improve the integrity of the program and to increase effectiveness.

Types of programs that we have assessed include:

- Boot Camps
- Community Correctional Facilities
- Correctional Education Programs
- Day Reporting Centers
- Diversion Programs
- Group Homes
- Halfway Houses
- Intensive Supervision Units
- Institutional Sex Offender Programs
- Institutional Treatment Programs
- Jail Based Substance Abuse Programs
- Outpatient Substance Abuse Programs
- Residential Correctional Programs for Parolees
- Residential Correctional Programs for Women
- Residential Substance Abuse Programs
- Residential Substance Abuse Programs for Habitual Drunk Drivers
- School Based Programs
- Sex Offender Programs
- Therapeutic Communities, both institutional and community based
- Work Release Facilities

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Edward J. Latessa, Ph.D.  
Professor & Director  
Center for Criminal Justice Research  
Division of Criminal Justice  
PO Box 210389  
University of Cincinnati  
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0389  
513.556.5836  
Fax: 513.556.3303  
Email: [Edward.Latessa@uc.edu](mailto:Edward.Latessa@uc.edu)  
Web site: [www.uc.edu/criminaljustice](http://www.uc.edu/criminaljustice)

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