



# Treatment for Sexual Offending

Treatment for people who have committed (or are at risk of committing) a sexual offence, explicitly targets risk factors empirically associated with sexual offending and with recidivism, such that risk of re-offending may be reduced.

We use cognitive-behavioural treatment focussing on changing behaviour, a person's ways of thinking and their associated feelings, using a skills-based approach, with the aim of preventing relapse.

Our approach to treatment for sexual offending follows the **Risk, Needs, Responsivity Model** of offender assessment and rehabilitation.

This model has three core principles:

1. **Risk principle:** Match the level of service to the offender's assessed level of risk for re-offending (ie typically communicated as low, medium, high)
2. **Need principle:** Assess criminogenic needs (ie risk factors) and target them in treatment
3. **Responsivity principle:** Maximize the offender's ability to learn from a rehabilitative intervention by providing cognitive behavioural treatment and tailoring the intervention to the learning style, motivation, abilities and strengths of the offender

In order to deliver the correct treatment, the psychologist first needs to complete an initial assessment.

This is designed to assist them understand how much treatment to provide, exactly what we should be focussing on in treatment and how best to deliver the treatment to the person.

The initial assessment is done via clinical interview and psychometric (ie paper & pen) tests, and typically completed within the first couple of sessions.

We conduct assessments by:

1. **Evaluating the person's risk or reoffending using appropriate risk assessment methods**

The higher the risk identified, the more sessions of treatment the person will require, and the more frequently the sessions should occur.

If someone is evaluated as high risk, sessions typically start out weekly or fortnightly, and then become more spaced out after a period of progress.

2. **Identifying criminogenic needs**

This is where we figure out which factors are relevant to your offending and will be targeted in treatment (ie the things which are considered causal to the offending behaviour).



Core sexual criminogenic needs include:

- Sexual deviancy (interest in children, sexualised violence, paraphilia)
- Sexual regulation problems
- Sexual preoccupation
- Attitudes that condone or support sexual offending
- Using sex as a coping mechanism
- Emotional congruence with children
- Hostility towards women

### 3. Identifying contextual risk factors

We draw from the criminological evidence-base to identify key contextual risk factors for reoffending and incorporate them into the treatment and management plan.

Core contextual / situational risks relevant to sexual offending include:

- Managing access to potential victims
- Managing use of technology
- Management of routine activities

### 4. Identifying responsivity risk factors

This is where we figure out what specific things there might be about an individual, which are likely to impact their ability to engage in treatment and therefore the outcome or success of the treatment

For example:

- Learning style
- Disability
- Literacy

- Personality
- Mental health issues

### 5. Structure:

- ⇒ After the psychologist has completed the assessment, she / he will explain the findings and develop the treatment plan in collaboration with you
- ⇒ This involves gaining an understanding of your specific risk profile, and the criminogenic needs relevant to your particular offending.
- ⇒ The psychologist will be able to give you a general idea of the number of sessions likely to be required (ie the dose of treatment) so you can agree upon a schedule of sessions
- ⇒ We recommend forward booking sessions to ensure the structure is maintained and also to ensure availability of sessions
- ⇒ In-between session reading / worksheets are an integral part of treatment.

We usually allocate a certain number of sessions to a particular identified need eg: sexual preoccupation.

The psychologist will provide you with some reading about each issue. The exercises that go along with it are designed for you to apply the concept to your own offending situation.

People who complete the in-between session worksheets tend to progress more quickly.