



Assessing Risk and Exploring Offence Paralleling Behaviours for Intimate Partner Violence

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Risk Assessment



Risk assessment can be defined as:

The systematic collection of information to determine the degree to which harm (to self and others) is likely, at some point in time.

(Fletcher et al 2022)

IPV Risk assessment can be defined as:

The process of gathering information about people to make decisions regarding their risk of perpetrating intimate partner violence.

(Kropp & Hart, 2015)

Goals of risk assessments



- Preventing risk of harm
- Understanding the nature of the risk posed
- Guiding risk management and intervention and putting processes in place to either prevent or decrease the likelihood of future offending
- Communicating risk to others

Approaches to risk assessment



Unstructured Clinical/Professional
Judgement (discretionary)



Actuarial Decision Making
(non-discretionary)

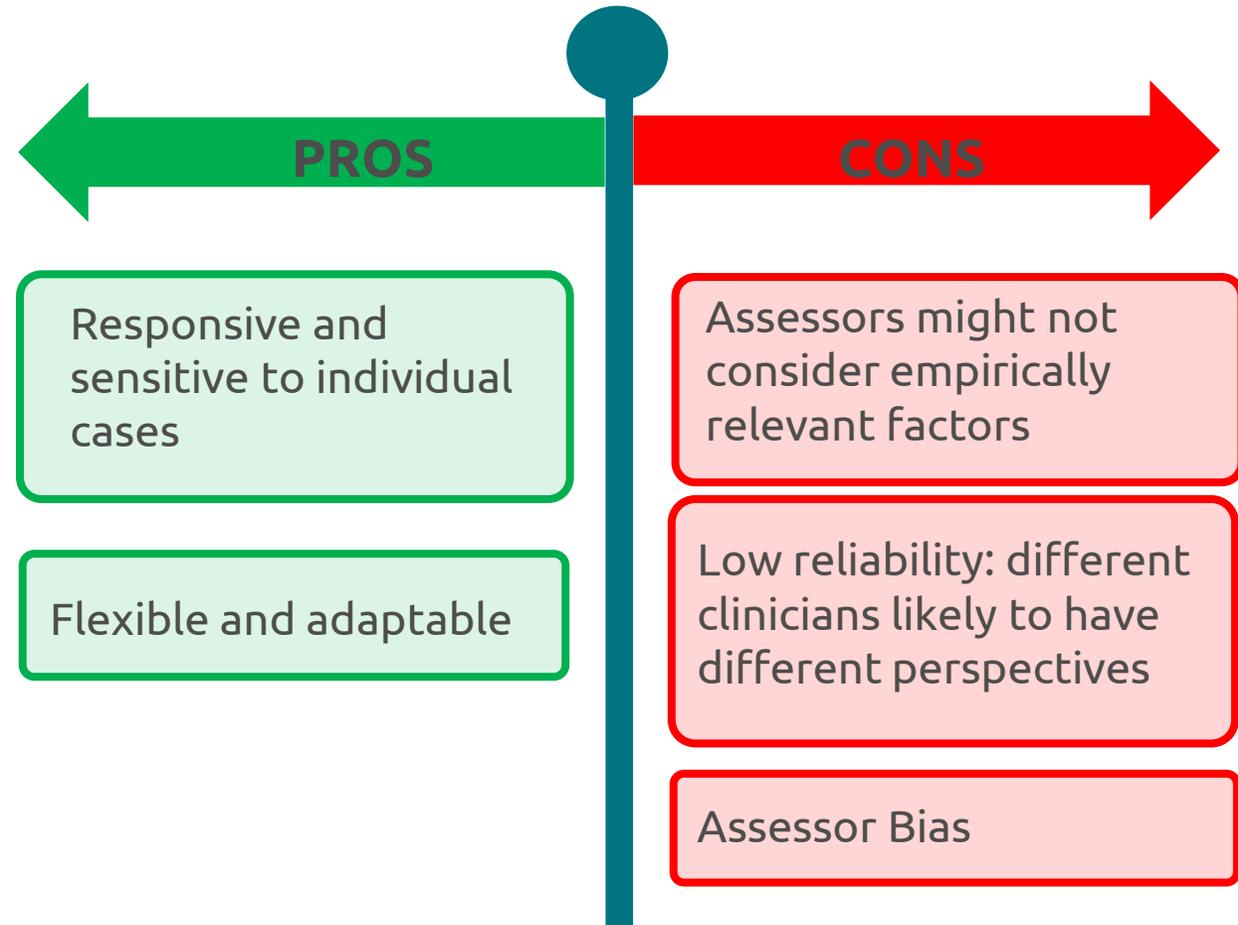


Structured Professional Judgement

Approaches to risk assessment

- Unstructured clinical/professional judgement

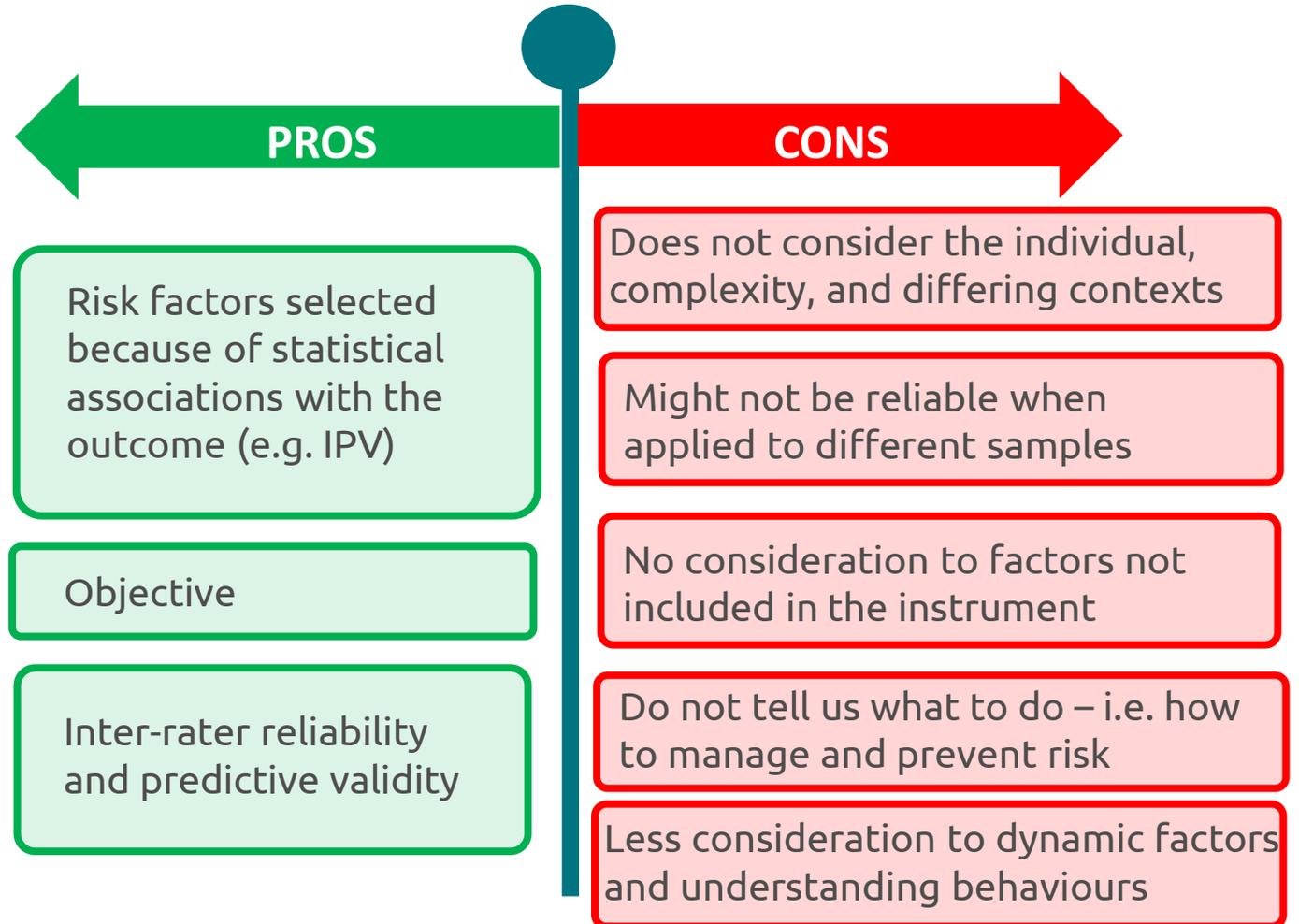
- The individual has substantial professional judgement including which information to consider and how to weigh and combine the information
- Generally unguided and relies on the clinician's experience
- 'intuitive', 'subjective', 'informal'



Approaches to risk assessment

- Actuarial decision making

- The individual reaches a decision using fixed and explicit rules
- Statistical techniques
- Items are weighted and combined according to an algorithm to reach a decision



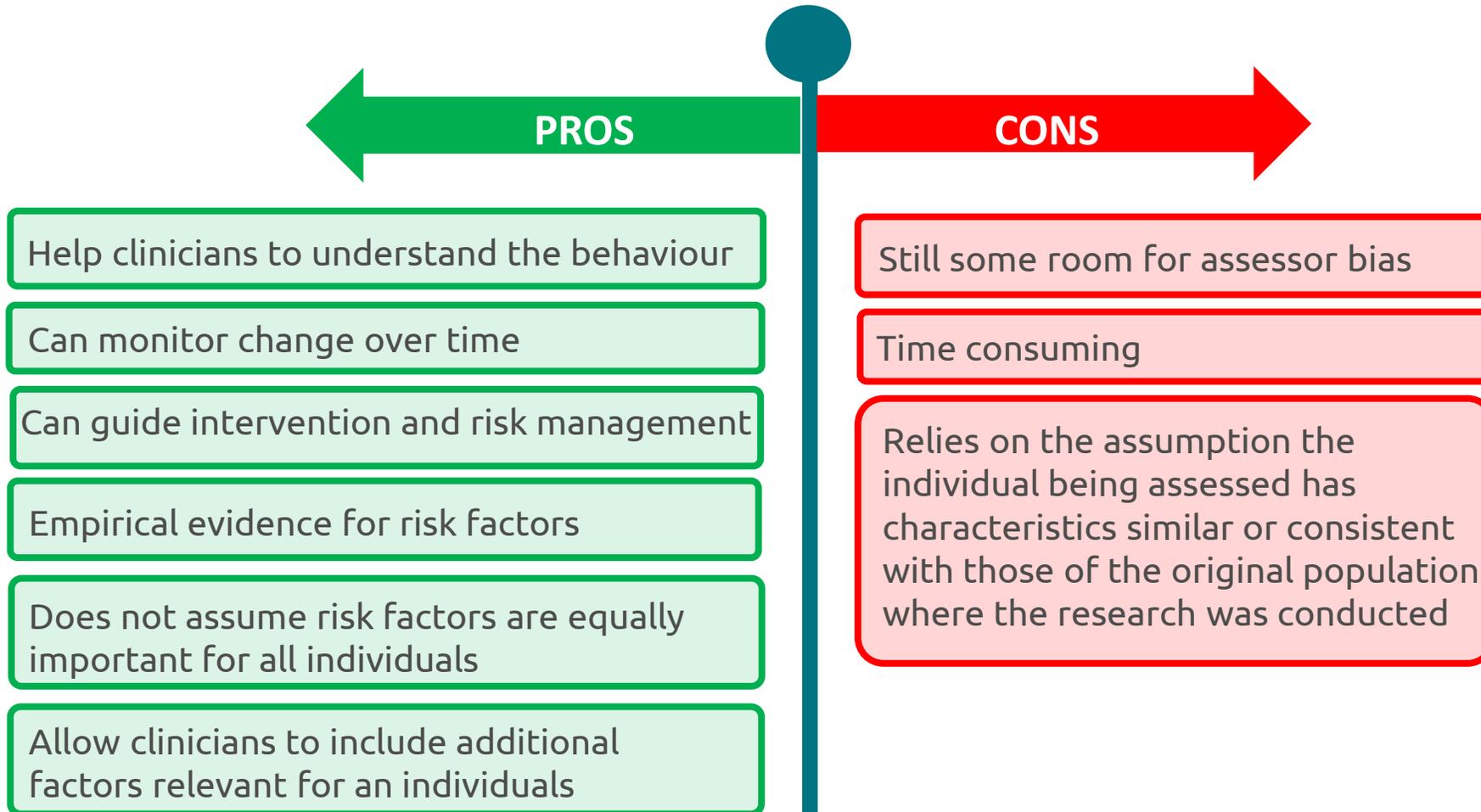
Approaches to risk assessment

- Structured professional judgement

- Combine unstructured clinical judgement and actuarial decision-making approaches
- SPJ approaches guide an assessor to consider risk factors related to the behaviour (e.g. IPV). These factors are evidence based. The tools then allow the assessor to use their professional judgement in relation to the presence and relevance of each factor.
- Allows the assessor to consider other relevant risk factors (e.g. based on more recent evidence or theories)
- Encourages the assessor to understand the offence and consider risk management to prevent future behaviour (e.g. IPV)

Approaches to risk assessment

- Structured professional judgement



SPJ Tools for intimate partner violence

B-SAFER:

Brief Spousal
Assault Form for the
Evaluation of Risk

SARA:

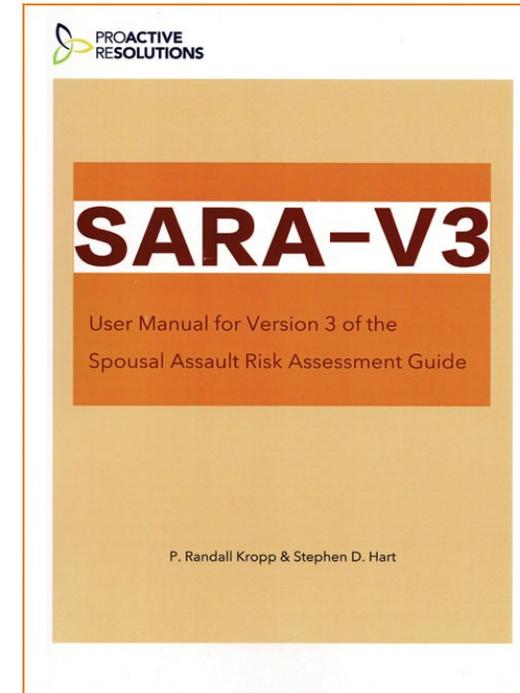
Spousal Assault
Risk Assessment
(Version 3)

SPJ approach: Spousal assault risk assessment

SPJ measure focusing specifically on IPV

A set of guidelines for the assessment and management of risk of IPV

Based on a systematic review of the existing literature/research



SPJ approach: Spousal assault risk assessment

Nature of IPV

- (related to the pattern of IPV behaviour)
- Characterizes the seriousness of the IPV

Perpetrator Risk Factors

- Reflect the psychosocial adjustment and background of the individual)
- Characteristics of the individual that may be associated with decisions to engage in IPV

Victim Vulnerability Factors

- (reflect the psychosocial adjustment and background of the victim)
- Characteristics of the victim that may be associated with decisions to engage in self protective behaviour

Process for SARA-V3

1. Case information
2. Presence of factors
3. Relevance of factors
4. Risk scenarios
5. Management strategies
6. Conclusory opinions

Protective Factors

Important to also consider protective factors

Protective factors can have a buffering or mediating impact on risk of offending

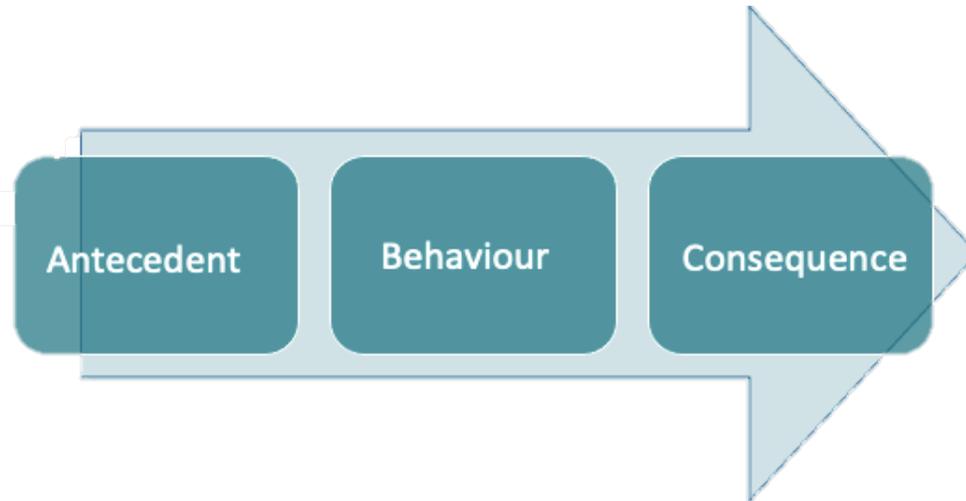
In line with a strength-based approach to rehabilitation

Provides a hopeful outlook where change is possible

Offence Paralleling Behaviour

A behavioural sequence incorporating overt behaviours (that may be muted by environmental factors), appraisals, expectations, beliefs, affects, goals and behavioural scripts, all of which may be influenced by the patient's mental disorder, that is functionally similar to behavioural sequences involved in previous criminal acts.

(Daffern et al 2007)



OPBs should be:

- Functionally comparable to the IPV
- Be problematic for the individual or others

Prosocial alternative behaviours

- Defined in a similar way to OPB, except the behaviour is pro-social rather than problematic
- Show skill acquisition or adoption of prosocial behaviours when problematic behaviour might have been expected

Summary

There are 3 approaches to risk assessment:

- Unstructured Clinical Judgement
- Actuarial Decision Making
- Structured Professional Judgement

The B-SAFER and SARA-V3 are structured professional judgement tools that can be considered when exploring risk of intimate partner violence

Consider understanding the protective factors

Consider offence paralleling and prosocial alternative behaviours when thinking about risk.

Helplines

Find help and support at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>

Chadwick Lodge & Eaglestone View medium and low secure services in Milton Keynes

The medium and low secure services provide specialist treatment programmes for patients who have been detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 (amended 2007) and have a history of offending behaviour.

- Eclectic model of care
- Personality Disorder & Mental Illness trauma pathways for male patients
- Full secure pathway



For further information about this service or to make a referral, please contact Sophia Jaques on 07387417022 or email sophia.jaques@elysiumhealthcare.co.uk.