

User Guidelines Violence Risk Scale (VRS)

&

Violence Risk Scale Sexual Offense Version (VRS-SO)

These guidelines were developed to guide the administration and use of the VRS and VRS-SO. The use of the tools for research purposes only does not require formal training. However, to maximize scale reliability and validity, it is recommended. Those who use the VRS/VRS-SO for clinical purposes should receive appropriate training. Please visit <https://psynergy.ca> for information concerning future training. Alternatively, for VRS training information contact Stephen Wong (s.wong@sasktel.net) or Audrey Gordon (audrey.gordon@outlook.com) and for VRS-SO training, contact Mark Olver (mark.olver@usask.ca). Those who do not possess the academic qualifications of the first or second level usage should consult with the author(s) before purchasing the tool.

We concur with the recommendations by Hare (2003) regarding the appropriate use of assessment tools such as the Psychopathy Checklist- revised. Questions regarding who is qualified to administer and use an assessment tool “are issues more properly addressed by test publisher, professional organizations and other regulatory bodies, and by informed and competent evaluation in the courts” (Hare, 2003; p 16). Following are our recommended guidelines for the clinical use of the VRS/VRS-SO:

There are two levels of usage for the VRS/VRS-SO.

First Level Usage:

Rate the VRS/VRS-SO static and dynamic variables using interview and/or file information, sum the scores, calculate pro-rated scores (as applicable), and determine treatment targets and treatment readiness based on the VRS/VRS-SO dynamic variable scores.

First Level Usage Qualifications:

Possess a post-secondary degree or diploma in an area of social care services or health care studies, such as psychiatric nursing, or other related post-secondary education and appropriate training in the use of the VRS/VRS-SO. In the absence of such academic background or training, supervision by someone with the appropriate first or second-level qualifications, training and experience is required for first level usage.

Second Level Usage:

First level usage plus interpretation of the total VRS/VRS-SO pre- and/or post-treatment scores in terms of level of risk in relationship to normative samples, interpretation of any changes in risk, and providing treatment or other recommendations for decision making purposes incorporating VRS/VRS-SO ratings.

Second Level Usage Qualifications:

Possess an advanced academic degree in the social, medical or behavioral sciences such as M.A., M.Ed., M.S.W., Ph.D., D.Ed., or M.D., and/or have appropriate professional credentials such as registration with the local state or provincial registration body that regulates professional practice in health or mental health services, or equivalent, plus appropriate training in the use of the VRS/VRS-SO. In the absence of such credentials, supervision by someone with the appropriate second-level qualifications, training and experience is required for second level usage.

A qualified person who supervises the assessment should take responsibility for users who do not meet all the above qualifications.

Please do not hesitate to contact the authors via our emails noted above should you require any additional information concerning the VRS or VRS-SO.