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Welcome to the final edition of the *JCRPP* for the year. The edition presents a range of papers, both in terms of content and format, also presenting the first offering of a new paper format for the journal – the brief research report. We hope the latter will stimulate interest in both readers and authors who are keen to explore a more focussed format of presentation that brings attention immediately to the core issues an author is trying to convey.

The edition commences with a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) on intrafamilial child sexual abuse, which seeks to provide not only an outline of the state of the research field, but, an indication of where gaps lie. REA as a methodological approach appears to be developing increased interest beyond disciplines. The current paper demonstrates the value of such an approach in providing an efficient outline of the gaps in knowledge and areas that perhaps require immediate focus from the research and practitioner community. Indeed, the authors report the value of the REA in providing a basis for a new inquiry, demonstrating well the true application that is possible with review-based work.

Continuing with the theme of approach and analysis is the second paper; the first brief report published in the *JCRPP*. This brief report focusses on the evaluation of cognitive skills programmes for male offenders. The paper may initially seem to have a message of “cognitive skills can be effective”, but on further examination the core message is actually one of questioning the approach to analysing treatment effectiveness in more specialist populations (i.e. offenders). There appear to be some methods of analysis that are being promoted within the field (e.g. clinical change and reliable change) that may not in fact apply that well to the population under study. Indeed, this paper argues more for a notion of positive improvement in a client as opposed to recovery, the latter of which appears to have a basis in medical interpretations and physical health. Beginning to question the application of what appears to be routinely applied methods is thus important and perhaps an activity that should be engaged in to a greater extent.

Next is a preliminary study combining methods and sources to provide an outline of violence within prisons. Combining survey data with an incident data set, the research demonstrates the lack of faith that prison officers seem to have in the post-incident system, namely the repercussions for prisoners’ assaulting staff. This is a paper of topical interest since forensic services have a number of different approaches to deal with staff assaults, which include keeping the punishment in-house to taking the matter to external Courts. The latter does not always occur and there seems to be a degree of in-house assessment of severity that takes place. The implications of this for those working in high-risk environments are significant since the message that is then given to actual and potential perpetrators is one of potential leniency. The paper points to a need for more research and a more directed management approach regarding how violence towards staff is addressed, which includes consideration of prosecution featuring higher in the process of decision making.

Continuing with a theme of management and approach to staff is the ensuing paper that presents a case study approach to document the changes in public complaints and the use of force by the police. The authors describe the range of possible influences that may have served to reduce the number of complaints in more recent years, citing the inclusion of a more rigorous complaints system, early prevention, improved means of review (both internal and external), and improvements to training and policy. Essentially what this case study approach demonstrates is the importance of procedure and ensuring that this is rigorous, revised when required, seen to be thorough, responsive, and not “secret”. The importance of transparency presents as a core message, along with ensuring a more preventative approach is taken that incorporates training. The paper not only presents a convincing argument for such approaches, but also an outline of a very good example of case study methodology that is thorough, responsive to the available data, and recognises well the limitations within this.

The penultimate paper in this edition is an invited paper, which examines the complex needs of offenders by focussing on offender treatment from the perspective of substance abuse. Exploring the relationship between recovery and rehabilitation, the authors provide a review of the literature in order to offer a rationale for a new approach to treatment for offenders who are also substance involved. The paper recognises the importance of holistic support when working with this client group, especially in the context of through-care and resettlement. Recognising the complex needs presented by substance-involved offenders, the paper concludes that more access to treatment for this group of offenders is needed.

This edition closes with an interesting application of a REA to complex offender needs through the use of music as a therapeutic approach. This paper is valuable in topic but also helpful in illustrating how an REA can both be conducted and analysed, namely the incorporation of qualitative methodology in the form of thematic analysis. It also highlights the importance of not casting the review net too wide, demonstrating this by focussing on one area of complex need, namely psychopathy. It ends with a clear message of the importance of innovation and in considering the value of music as a therapeutic tool to apply; also encouraging readers to consider the value of music to an offender population, a topic that has been clearly neglected in this area.

Thus, this edition presents a range of topics but also a range of methods and analytical approaches. This is perhaps the message that is being conveyed most by the current edition. We very much encourage reflection on the articles presented and warmly invite papers that continue the theme of showcasing not just content but also the process by which findings are acquired.