

Title:

Intellectual disability in forensic mental health: from identification to services integration

Investigators:

Crocker, A. G., Côté, G., Mercier, Y., & Morin, D.

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Summary

The difficulties that pose individuals with an intellectual disability (ID) in the forensic mental health system are complex and remain unexplored. Although these individuals are subject to the same legal dispositions than those suffering from a mental disorder, their unique situation create certain challenges for the criminal justice system as well as for the mental health system, given their cognitive, functional, sometimes physical difficulties as well as their vulnerabilities: 1) difficulties understanding their decisional options, the stages and consequences of the judicial process ; 2) risk of victimization (physical, emotional, sexual and financial) in hospitals and prisons; 3) institutional adjustment difficulties; 4) difficulties in integrating regular mental health services. This situation is all the more preoccupying that epidemiological studies have shown an overrepresentation of individuals with an ID in the criminal justice system. Furthermore, the prevalence of mental health problems among offenders and among individuals with ID is higher than in the general population.

OBJECTIVE: The goal of the present study is to better understand what it as stake and the difficulties that individuals with ID and their clinicians in a forensic mental health context:

1) establish the prevalence of ID in a forensic mental health institution an it's affiliated outpatient clinics; 2) assess the concordance between ID assessed by the research team and the presence of ID in the files; 3) describe the psychosocial psychopathological and criminal characteristics of individuals with an ID in a forensic mental health milieu; 4) determine the circumstances that lead to their contact with this milieu; 5) circumscribe the obstacles towards the identification of ID in the forensic mental health services; 6) define the obstacles and facilitators in the continuity of services between the criminal justice system, the mental health system and the network of rehabilitation for individuals with ID.