Diverse and Special Needs Populations

As has been emphasized repeatedly in the professional literature and throughout this protocol, sex offenders are a diverse group of individuals with a wide range of unique needs to which treatment interventions must be responsive. Among other key factors, this diversity relates to culture and gender. For example, gender-responsive treatment programs must be developed for female sex offenders, based on an understanding of the unique risks and needs of justice-involved women and adolescent girls (see, e.g., CSOM, 2007). In addition, staff training and client programming may need to be tailored to address special needs populations such as hearing- or visually-impaired clients, individuals with low cognitive functioning, those with serious and persistent mental illness or medical disabilities, or incarcerated offenders in protective custody or segregation status. Although it is beyond the scope of this protocol to review treatment approaches or other management strategies for diverse and special needs populations, the importance of taking into account these critical issues must be emphasized for all who have a role in sex offender management. Unfortunately, this is an area that remains considerably underdeveloped within the research and practice literature (see Haaven, Little, & Petre-Miller, 1990; Laws, Hudson, & Ward, 2000; Longo & Prescott, 2006; Marshall, Fernandez, Hudson, & Ward, 1998; and O’Reilly, Marshall, Carr, & Beckett, 2004 for reviews of interventions with several special populations).

Another special population in some jurisdictions is the group of high risk sex offenders who have been civilly committed. Under this scheme, individuals determined to have a mental abnormality that predisposes them to commit sexually violent or predatory offenses, who are unable to control their behaviors, and who are determined to pose a high risk to reoffend are committed through civil proceedings at the expiration of their prison sentences. This is an area of controversy because of constitutional questions, high operational costs, limited numbers of releases, differing policies and practices, and a lack of evidence-based guidance for programs (see, e.g., Janus, 2006; LaFond, 2005; Schlank, 2001; Schlank & Cohen, 1999; Winick & LaFond, 2003). Specialized policy and practice considerations must, at a minimum, take into account the following:

- Notice to incarcerated sex offenders about the civil commitment statute and its potential relevance to their status;
- The screening and referral process;
- Approaches to forensic evaluations for commitment proceedings;
- The type of treatment(s) to be offered for those who are ultimately committed;
- Treatment planning and the assessment of treatment progress;
- Assessment of changes in risk over time;
- Release decisionmaking; and
- Transition and reentry planning.

Given the unique issues associated with this management strategy, jurisdictions considering civil commitment should carefully review the available research, practice literature, and relevant case law, and consult with states who have engaged in rigorous policy analysis and program implementation relative to this special population.
Questions: Adult Sex Offenders

Prison-Based Programs: Diverse and Special Needs Populations

135. Do policies or procedures require prison-based sex offender treatment programs to be tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?

136. In practice, are prison-based sex offender treatment programs available that are tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?

137. Do policies or procedures require prison-based sex offender treatment programs to be tailored specifically for the following special needs clients:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Youthful offenders?
- Severely/persistently mentally ill?
- Hearing impaired?
- Visually impaired?
- Medically disabled?
- Protective custody status?
- Segregation status?
- Others?

138. In practice, are prison-based sex offender treatment programs available that are tailored specifically for the following special needs clients:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Youthful offenders?
139. Do policies or procedures require that staff members in correctional facilities receive training on the following:

- Culturally competent programs and services?
- Gender responsive programs and services?
- Working with severely and persistently mentally ill offenders?
- Working with low functioning/MRDD clients?
- Others? ____________________________

140. In practice, do staff members in correctional facilities receive training on the following:

- Culturally competent programs and services?
- Gender responsive programs and services?
- Working with severely and persistently mentally ill offenders?
- Working with low functioning/MRDD clients?
- Others? ____________________________
Civil Commitment

141. If a civil commitment process exists for certain high risk sex offenders, do policies or procedures take into account the following key issues:

If not applicable, skip to the next section.

- Notice to incarcerated sex offenders about the civil commitment statute and its potential relevance to their status?
- The screening and referral process?
- Approaches to forensic evaluations and proceedings?
- The type of treatment(s) to be offered for those who are ultimately committed?
- Treatment planning and the assessment of treatment progress?
- Assessment of changes in risk over time?
- Release decisionmaking?
- Transition and reentry planning?

Community-Based Treatment Programs: Diverse and Special Needs Populations

142. Do policies or procedures require community-based sex offender treatment programs to be tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?

143. In practice, are community-based sex offender treatment programs available that are tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?
144. **Do policies or procedures** require community-based sex offender treatment programs to be tailored specifically to address the following special needs categories:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Severely/persistently mentally ill?
- Hearing impaired?
- Visually impaired?
- Others? ________________________________

145. **In practice**, are community-based sex offender treatment programs available that are tailored specifically for the following special needs clients:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Severely/persistently mentally ill?
- Hearing impaired?
- Visually impaired?
- Others? ________________________________

146. Do community-based sex offender treatment providers receive training on the following:

- Culturally competent programs and services?
- Gender responsive programs and services?
- Working with severely and persistently mentally ill offenders?
- Working with low functioning/MRDD clients?
- Others? ________________________________
# Questions: Juvenile Sex Offenders

## Residential/Juvenile Correctional Programs: Diverse and Special Needs Populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>always</th>
<th>typically</th>
<th>generally</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>not</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
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147. Do policies or procedures require residential/juvenile correctional sex offender treatment programs to be tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?__________________________________________

148. In practice, are residential/juvenile correctional sex offender treatment programs available that are tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?__________________________________________

149. Do policies or procedures require residential/juvenile correctional sex offender treatment programs to be tailored specifically for the following special needs clients:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Youth with mental health difficulties?
- Hearing impaired?
- Visually impaired?
- Others?__________________________________________

150. In practice, are residential/juvenile correctional sex offender treatment programs available that are tailored specifically for the following special needs clients:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Youth with mental health difficulties?
- Hearing impaired?
- Visually impaired?
- Others?__________________________________________
151. Do staff members in residential/juvenile correctional facilities receive training on the following:

- Culturally competent programs and services?
- Gender responsive programs and services?
- Working with youth with mental health difficulties?
- Working with low functioning/MRDD clients?
- Others? _________________________________________

Community-Based Treatment Programs: Diverse and Special Needs Populations

152. Do policies or procedures require community-based juvenile sex offender treatment services to be tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?__________________________________________

153. In practice, are community-based juvenile sex offender treatment services available that are tailored specifically to address the following key diversities:

- Culture?
- Gender?
- Others?__________________________________________

154. Do policies or procedures require community-based juvenile sex offender treatment services to be tailored specifically to address the following special needs categories:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Youth with mental health difficulties?
- Hearing impaired?
- Visually impaired?
- Others?__________________________________________
155. **In practice,** are community-based juvenile sex offender treatment services available that are tailored specifically for the following special needs clients:

- Low functioning/MRDD?
- Youth with mental health difficulties?
- Hearing impaired?
- Visually impaired?
- Others? ________________________________

156. Do community-based juvenile sex offender treatment providers receive training on the following:

- Culturally competent programs and services?
- Gender responsive programs and services?
- Working with youth with mental health difficulties?
- Working with low functioning/MRDD clients?
- Others? ________________________________