

RA4

RA4 is a comprehensive framework for assessing the potential level of harm, the circumstances in which the offending is likely to occur and the triggers. It forms the basis of a risk or case management plan and should be completed on those offenders who have committed the offences listed below and/or have been identified from RA3 as being of high risk.

- Murder, attempted murder, culpable homicide, threats to murder
- Serious violent offences including robbery
- Violent offences against vulnerable groups, women and children, all Schedule 1 offences
- Sexual offences (those covered by The Sex Offenders Act 1997)
- Serious offences of criminal damage
- Offences involving firearms, poisons/chemicals or explosives
- Other offences which give cause for concern

RA4 is also suitable for use with offenders in relation to any offence and has been designed for use as a supervision tool.

It may be completed over a period of time and should be reviewed regularly and updated. It should be updated when new information comes to hand or there are changes in circumstances. Its use may be targeted on those offenders who pose the most risk. The framework can be completed by the supervising officer alone, jointly with the offender or together with colleagues from other agencies such as police and health.

Completing the form - Many high risk offenders receive long sentences and periods on licence and may experience many changes of supervising officer. The form is a tool for the supervising officer but it should be completed in such a way as to enable any other member of staff to become quickly familiar with the essential details of the case should the need arise and for managers to be able to supervise the work appropriately.

The form takes the social worker through a process of description, analysis, assessment and making judgements. Each section should be completed. Under each heading there is a list of suggested areas for consideration. This list is not exhaustive.

In completing the form provide examples of behaviour that illustrate a point. For example under 'Assess attitude to others' you might write 'shows no empathy - says victim deserved it'. The key to assessing and managing the risk an offender poses is in the detail and supervising officers need to be reminded over time of these details in order to stay alert to the risks and warning signs.

Name:

Reference number:

Date:

Social worker:

Offence:

When assessing the risk of harm we are considering

- the **behaviour** that is of concern
- the **likelihood** of that behaviour occurring
- the **circumstances** in which the harmful behaviour might occur.
- the **degree of harm** that might be caused
- **who** might be harmed

Information required

If, at the time of the initial assessment of risk of harm (RA3), full information about the offence and previous behaviour was not available, this information should now be sought and RA4 updated. Where information is absent this should be noted together with the reasons why.

When completing RA4 **Indicate sources of information and their reliability, accuracy and validity.**

Completion

Name of person completing form/assessment

Names of other individuals and agencies involved in the assessment

Has the offender contributed to the assessment and is s/he aware of the contents?

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

***Describe** and detail current offence(s) and characteristics. Where there has been a previous serious offence, particularly of a different nature this should also be described.*

What actually occurred immediately before, during and after the event?

Where and when?

Who was present and involved?

Any weapons, poisons or chemicals used?

Any unusual/bizarre aspects?

Was it planned or impulsive, details of planning?

What triggered the offence and what were the reasons the offender gave at the time?

The offender's thoughts and feelings before, during and after the event

The offender's attitude to the offence(s) and victim(s) at time of the offence

***Analyse** current and previous offences*

Sadistic or explosive rage

Victim(s) random or targeted

Victim(s) groomed/stalked

Degree of planning and preparation

Unnecessary violence/aggravating features

Power and control factors e.g. the desire to have their own way

Victim characteristics e.g. gender, race, age or occupation

Triggers/reasons

***Analyse** offending patterns*

Similar to previous offences in terms of type of offence, victim and circumstances?

Other non-violent offences and any patterns and connections

Serial or single offender

Particular triggers or reasons?

Escalation of offending/seriousness?

***Assess** offender's attitude to offending (now)*

Denial, blaming, indifferent, justified

Offender indicates that repetition is likely

Offender's understanding of seriousness of behaviour and why it is wrong

***Assess** attitude to others*

Degree of empathy

Hatred of other groups e.g. ethnic minorities

Need for control and domination

Family relationships
Isolation
Jealousy or unrealistic attachments

Consider mental health issues. Indicate if the offender has been diagnosed as having a specific mental health problem or whether you suspect that s/he might have one.

Specified mental illness
History of psychiatric intervention
Response to medication/treatment
Low intelligence or low emotional intelligence
Stress
Delusions and fantasies
Paranoia
Depression
Obsessions - weapons, pornographic sexual/violent material

Consider substance misuse

Presence or absence
Significance in terms of offence (under the influence, offence, committed to purchase)
Previous response to treatment

Making judgements

The factors listed above can only act as a prompt for consideration and weight given to each factor will depend on the offender and the offence. In making judgements about risk of harm, social workers should consider the following;

Risk of re-offending

General risk of re-offending (RAI)
Risk of specific serious offences being repeated, based on analysis of offending patterns.
Likely frequency of serious offence being committed.

Risk of what?

What behaviour is of concern (be specific)

Who is at risk?

Specified or unspecified individuals groups

What are the consequences?

The likely degree of harm

Who would be affected

Under what circumstances?

The likely triggers

Risky situations or circumstances.

What factors (personal and environmental) could increase the risks?

What factors (personal and environmental) could decrease the risks?

What action is needed to reduce risk?

What criminogenic needs can be addressed?

What action can the offender take or the supervising officer take with the offender?

What action can others take e.g. police, health or child protection professionals?

Changing the environment e.g. moving house/area?

NEXT STEPS

Who needs to be informed of the risk?

Who will take a lead responsibility in risk management?

What will happen next?

Supervising Social Worker Date

PTM / Line Manager Date