

Course ID: CMEC04

Risk assessment and prediction of criminal recidivism in psychiatric patients

Course director: Norbert Nedopil

Educational Objectives: Enable clinicians to make risk assessments of patient violence and criminal recidivism of forensic patients more professionally.

Course description: Risk assessment is one of the most problematic issues in forensic psychiatry, but it is also a constant duty for all clinicians, since patient aggression and/or auto aggression are continuous challenges, when taking the responsibility of psychiatric patients. This course will offer an overview of the current state of the art in risk assessment. The course will address the theoretical and methodological basis of predictions, base rates of recidivism, clinical and actuarial risk assessments, instruments useful for forensic risk assessments (eg.HCR-20, PCL-R), static and dynamic risk factors, balance of protective factors and risk factors. It will provide some of the important empirical data on the correlation between mental disorder and violence and it will give advice how to transport that empirical knowledge into the legal framework of forensic psychiatry.

The course will address the following topics:

1. Risk assessment and prediction;
2. Theory of predictions;
3. Mathematical and statistical models of predictions;
4. Prediction for samples or individuals;
5. Errors, sensitivity, and specificity;
6. Prediction instruments;
7. Prediction methods;
8. Static and dynamic risk factors;
9. Risk factors and protective factors;
10. Predictors at different stages (commitment, loosening stage, release);
11. Practical exercises.

Educational methods and course material: Overhead and handouts.

Target audience: Psychiatrists and psychiatrists in training specializing in forensic psychiatry or occupying themselves with aggression, violence or harmful behavior of psychiatric patients.

Course level: Some training in psychiatry, psychopathology and some acquaintance with forensic questions is required.