

Federal Probation

Performing Pretrial Services: A Challenge in the Federal Criminal Justice System *James R. Marsh*

A Sanction Program for Noncompliant Offenders in the District of Nevada *John Allan Gonska*

Recruitment and Retention in Community Corrections: Report From a National Institute of Corrections *National Institute of Corrections*

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This Issue in Brief

Performing Pretrial Services: A Challenge in the Federal Criminal Justice System.—Contending that “the Federal release and detention process is far from routine and mundane,” author James R. Marsh explains in depth the challenges Federal pretrial services officers face daily. He discusses the responsibilities inherent in pretrial services—to assess the risks defendants pose, to complete investigations and prepare reports for the court, and to supervise defendants released pending disposition of their cases—and the challenges that accompany such responsibilities.

A Sanction Program for Noncompliant Offenders in the District of Nevada.—When probationers do not comply with the terms and conditions of supervision, probation officers must report the noncompliant behavior and take steps to correct it. Author John Allan Gonska describes how the U.S. probation office in the District of Nevada addressed the issue of noncompliance by creating a sanction program. The author explains how the program was developed and how it works, giving examples of violations and appropriate sanctions for them under the program.

Recruitment and Retention in Community Corrections: Report From a National Institute of Corrections Conference.—With a changing workforce and a changing work environment, how do community corrections agencies recruit and retain qualified employees? The National Institute of Corrections sponsored a conference to explore this issue with a group of community corrections managers from around the country. This article reports on the group’s discussion—which focused on probation and parole image, the recruiting market, qualifications, training, and motivation—and offers the group’s recommendations.

Pretrial Diversion: A Solution to California’s Drunk-Driving Problem.—Author Lea L. Fields explains how California currently has an array of pretrial diversion programs to address offenses ranging from drug abuse to domestic violence to sexual molestation but has no such program for drunk driving. The author examines drunk-driving diversion programs in

Oregon and Monroe County, New York, explains the benefits of these types of programs, and tells how a diversion program for drunk drivers could be set up in California.

The Continuum of Force in Community Supervision.—In these times of increased emphasis on offender control, some community corrections agencies may be providing their officers with lethal weapons such as revolvers and less-than-lethal weapons such as stun guns and personal defense sprays with little or no guidance as to when their use is appropriate. Author Paul W. Brown stresses the importance of proper training and describes the “continuum of force,” the primary tool for providing guidance to officers in the use of force. He explains how the continuum of force works, focusing

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Older Offenders on Probation

By THOMAS ELLSWORTH, PH.D., AND KARIN A. HELLE*

THERE IS little doubt that the population in the United States is getting older. During the last decade, for example, the population over age 65 increased by 23 percent. It is expected to grow by at least 10 percent during the 1990's. Estimates indicate that as we enter the 21st century, 13 percent, of the population, or more than 35 million people, will be age 65 and older. While the growth in the older population is expected to be significantly less in the 1990's than it was in the 1980's, experts believe that the slowing of growth is only temporary (Kart, 1990).

According to Kart (1990), a large segment of the working population is expected to retire and exit the work force around the year 2020. This group, frequently referred to as the "baby boomers," will be 51 million strong and represent 17 percent of the population (Kart, 1990). Estimates are that by the year 2030, this population will swell to 66 million (Traxler, 1991).

The concern as to whether significant social and medical services will be available to provide for the impending retirement of such a large segment of the population has been voiced in Washington, DC, and echoed in every state. While the financial picture in many states has appeared to have improved over the last 2-3 years, policymakers, politicians, and agency administrators continue to seek new sources of revenue to meet the growing demands placed on the public sector without significantly increasing taxes. The need for services for the growing population of older citizens has significant policy implications for all public agencies, including those which are part of the criminal justice system.

The Older Population, Crime, and Justice

It should be of no surprise that changes in the demographics of the American population have had a noticeable impact on the criminal justice system. A simple explanation for the increase in crime among the older population is that there now are more older people who can become criminal. Increases in the older population, coupled with a return to retributive and deterrent goals in the criminal justice system, have resulted in more citizens being brought into the criminal justice system and receiving longer—and, in some instances, mandatory—sentences or sentences without the possibility of parole. Though older offenders represent the fastest growing age group in prison, the percent of them in

state prisons has remained unchanged in recent years, a figure which is somewhat misleading in view of the doubling of the Nation's prison population during the 1980's (U.S. Department of Justice, 1994).

The growing number of older offenders has become a source of concern among researchers and policymakers who have attempted to isolate the causes of elderly criminality. Many have struggled to develop appropriate sanctions and treatment for older offenders, a problem exacerbated by a growing number of older offenders involved in violent serious offending, particularly murder and sexual assault.

The question of how the criminal justice system should deal with the older offender becomes even more complex when one considers that researchers and policymakers have not agreed as to which age constitutes "older" or "elderly" (Newman, Newman, & Gerwitz, 1984). Many denote elderly persons as those having some type of restriction, infirmity, or limitation due to the aging process. Others would argue that the older population is healthier than ever before; hence, "older" is viewed as a more generally acceptable term than "elderly." The most commonly accepted age of 65 is associated with the age of retirement and eligibility for full social security benefits. The Uniform Crime Report identifies age 65 and older as the top age category. The Federal prison system and some states report ages 45 and over as constituting an older population. The Bureau of Justice Statistics Offender-Based Transaction Statistics (OBTS) program reports data for a "40 and over" age category. The criminal justice system often uses ages 55 and over as being "elderly" but may draw the line even higher if a sufficient number of cases exist in those groups for analysis (Newman, Newman, & Gerwitz, 1984).

Regardless of where the age line is drawn, a growing debate has focused on the presence, or absence, of an elderly crime wave. Most disturbing was a dramatic increase in the rate of violent crime among the age 55 and older population. Shichor and Kobrin (1978) report that aggravated assault accounted for 80 percent of all violent index crime among age 55 and older arrestees. In his later work, Shichor reports that elderly arrests for index crimes increased by 256 percent between 1964-79, while the rate of increase for all other age groups was 177 percent. Vito and Wilson (1985) concluded that arrest rates increased faster among the 55 and older population than among any other age group. This disproportion was confirmed by

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Covey and Menard (1987) in an analysis of Uniform Crime Report statistics in which they reported that older offenders were more likely than younger offenders to be arrested for homicide, aggravated assault, and larceny and less likely to be arrested for other index offenses.

On the other hand, arguments challenge the existence of an elderly crime wave. Cullen, Wozniak, and Frank (1984) argue that the raw figures on elderly crime are quite low and remind us that when small increases in absolute numbers take place, the result is a rather large percentage increase. These authors state that the elderly tend to engage in larceny-theft, rather than violent acts. In a comprehensive examination of crime trends between 1964-84, Steffensmeier (1987), using Uniform Crime Report data, states that elderly crime rates have been remarkably stable over time, reflecting how the shift in elderly arrest rates seems to parallel those in other age groups. In addition, Steffensmeier's findings fail to provide evidence supporting a disproportionate increase among the elderly for violent crimes.

Issues associated with the elderly offender in prison are frequently discussed in the literature. While the number of such prisoners remains small, the primary concern focuses on the extent to which incarceration trends for older offenders will some day parallel the demographics of older people in society. Correctional administrators report that the needs of older offenders in prison differ from those of younger inmates, but few jurisdictions operate programs and services specifically designed for the older inmate. In most states, for example, when older inmates are separated from the general population, it is usually because of medical and security reasons rather than the age of the inmate. Older inmates who are separated from the general population often find themselves in geriatric/medical units where counseling, vocational, and educational opportunities are limited. The cost of medical services has been identified as a significant concern for correctional administrators, and estimates of costs of \$69,000 per year per older inmate are not uncommon (Ellsworth, 1993).

Even though older inmates have age as a common denominator, they have significant differences as well. For example, Goetting (1984) describes four types of offenders who enter prison. The "old offenders," constituting 41 percent of those studied, were serving their first prison term, having committed their crimes after reaching the age of 55. Forty-five percent of the respondents identified themselves as career criminals, or recidivists. A small percent (2 percent) labeled as "oldtimers" served at least 20 years in prison, thus growing old while incarcerated. The remaining group, "young short-term offenders," constituting 10 percent

of Goetting's sample, had been incarcerated before reaching the age of 55.

Alternatives to Incarceration

The percentage of older offenders in state correctional facilities has remained stable in recent years, giving rise to the argument that their numbers remain small. But as we have seen, as a whole, the numbers have increased significantly. The field of community corrections, particularly probation, has not been immune to the change. McCarthy and Langworthy (1987) estimate that the number of older offenders under probation supervision may be four times the number of elderly in prison. Further estimates report the presence of approximately 100,000 persons age 50+ on probation and parole supervision, with an expected increase of 60,000 new offenders added to the count each year. McCarthy and Langworthy (1987) view this population as the "single largest group of adjudicated older offenders" (p. 9). The growth in the number of older probationers may be due to several factors, including prison overcrowding, where judges may be reluctant to send older offenders to prison for nonviolent, nonserious offenses. Leniency by the courts may also be attributable to the belief that older offenders can receive better medical care, training, and education in the community than in prison.

Studies have also identified significant differences between younger and older probationers. For example, both Shichor (1988) and McCarthy and Langworthy (1987) reported statistically significant differences between the two groups in educational attainment, with Shichor's study identifying 72 percent of the older probationers as never having completed high school or a GED, as compared to 43 percent of the younger offenders on probation. Younger offenders were as likely as older probationers to abuse alcohol, though younger probationers were more frequently identified as drug abusers than were their senior counterparts. As expected, older offenders were more frequently troubled with medical problems than were younger probationers, a problem compounded by the fact that one-third (34 percent) of Shichor's sample reported being in a "very low family income" status.

Both Shichor (1988) and McCarthy and Langworthy (1987) determined that the longer careers and lifespan of the elderly increase their likelihood of arrest by a margin of two to one. The increased rate of arrest also increases the likelihood of the older probationers and parolees having served a prior prison term, with 27 percent of the older versus 10 percent of the younger probationers having served one or more prior prison sentences. Focusing only on older probationers, Shichor (1988) reported that older probationers were more likely than their younger counterparts to have

committed a violent offense, with approximately one-third of the male sample having been convicted of a sex offense. On the other hand, older female probationers were more frequently placed on probation for welfare fraud and theft offenses.

What may appear to be a group of offenders with special needs under community supervision is, in fact, a group which may receive lenient treatment by the system. Almost two-thirds of Shichor's (1988) sample of older probationers were being supervised at the medium and minimum levels. In addition, when examining several presentence investigation reports, the writer specifically stated that a more severe punishment would be justified if the offender had been younger. Factors such as poor health are frequently taken into account in the sentencing recommendation and are again a significant factor in determining the offender's level of supervision, or how frequently the probation officer must maintain contact with the offender.

To date, there have been few studies published which focus on the older offender under community supervision. In these studies the authors, plagued by incomplete information and small sample size, admit weaknesses in their findings. The present study is a further contribution to knowledge about older offenders on probation.

Research Design

The purpose of the present research was to provide a description of the older offender on probation in a midwestern state. In this state, the probation system functions on the local/county level. Because of that, the researchers feared that data would not be maintained in a uniform format or stored in easily accessible data retrieval systems. While the counties differed in the manner in which they conduct probation work, the researchers found that the format for the presentence investigation report was similar from one county to another, as was the risk-needs classification system which is mandated for use for all offenders placed on adult probation.

Of the 87 probation departments within the state, six were chosen by stratified random sample based on the number of staff employed within the office. For example, small departments employed between 1 and 9 officers, medium departments had from 10 to 22, and large departments employed 23 or more probation officers. Within this state, and using these definitions, 68 departments were identified as small, 14 as medium, and 5 as large. Because of the inaccessibility of some departments due to geographic location and an unwillingness to participate in the research, the researchers instituted an alternate purposive sampling procedure which took into

account geographic location and department size so that those counties which agreed to participate were substantially, if not probabilistically, representative of all counties in the state. Following the creation of three geographic zones (northern, central, and southern), the researchers selected nine counties, two from the southern region (representing three counties because of their rural location and lack of population density), four from the central region, and three from the northern region. The three small departments, five medium departments, and one large department reflected the distribution of departments by size within the state. Each department, when approached, was asked first to identify the number of age 55+ offenders on probation. Lacking specific information at the time of first contact about the numbers of older offenders, the majority of departments greatly underestimated the size of this group.

At the time of sampling, there were 4,281 older offenders on probation within the state. The final sample of 214 cases across nine departments represented 5 percent of the age 55+ offenders under probation supervision and is considered an adequate sample for the purposes of generalizing the findings to the population of older probationers in the state. While qualitative interviews were conducted during the course of this investigation, the results of the present research report demographic and descriptive data obtained from the presentence investigation reports and the adult probation classification system (risk and needs classification).

Results

Table 1 reports the geographic distribution of older offenders in the sample by geographic location and department size. Offense information was available from the presentence report on 214 cases, though incomplete risk and/or needs information made it necessary for the researchers to remove 31 cases from the sample. The table reports that approximately one-half of the subjects in the sample reside in the northern region. Coincidentally, this figure reflects the geographic distribution of all probation cases in the state. The central region contributed 35 percent of the sample, with the remainder from the southern region. Over half of the sample was identified in counties with medium size probation departments. Approximately one-third (34.6 percent) of the sample of older probationers came from large departments.

Table 2 identifies the conviction offense and the frequency of that offense for the sample of 214 older probationers. The crime of driving while intoxicated was the current offense of 32.2 percent of the sample. Forty-five "sex offenses," including aggravated criminal sexual assault, public indecency, indecent solicitation

TABLE 1. GEOGRAPHIC AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE AND PROBATION DEPARTMENT SIZE

	55-64 Years	65-74 Years	75-84 Years	85 Years and Older	Row %
Geographic Location of Probation Department					
South	19	7			12.1
Central	43	26	5	1	35.0
North	80	30	3		52.8
Probation Department Size					
Small	21	7			12.1
Medium	65	40	6	1	52.3
Large	56	16	2		34.6
Total (N=214)	142	63	8	1	
Column Percent	66.4	29.4	3.7	.5	100.0

TABLE 2. CURRENT OFFENSE OF OLDER OFFENDERS ON PROBATION

Current Offense	(N)	(%)	Cum (%)
Murder/ Manslaughter	4	1.9	1.9
Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse/Assault	40	18.7	20.6
Robbery	1	.5	21.0
Aggravated Assault	2	.9	22.0
Burglary	2	.9	22.9
Larceny Over \$300	10	4.7	27.6
Arson	1	.5	28.0
Larceny Under \$300	13	6.1	34.1
Driving Under the Influence	69	32.2	66.4
Drug Possession	5	2.3	68.7
Disorderly Conduct	3	1.4	70.1
Driving With License Revoked	14	6.5	76.6
Forgery	6	2.8	79.4
Weapons	8	3.7	83.2
Public Indecency	3	1.4	84.6
Unlawful Delivery of Controlled Substance	6	2.8	87.4
Failure to Keep Records	1	.5	87.9
Battery	8	3.7	91.6
Deceptive Practices	3	1.4	93.0
Indecent Solicitation of a Child	1	.5	93.5
Criminal Damage to Property	3	1.4	94.9
Illegal Sale of Deer	1	.5	95.3
Fleeing and Eluding	2	.9	96.3
Gambling	1	.5	96.7
Reckless Driving	2	.9	97.7
Lascivious Act With A Child	1	.5	98.1
Violation of Order of Protection	1	.5	98.6
Phone Harassment	1	.5	99.1
Fraudulent Tax Return	1	.5	99.5
Perjury	1	.5	100.0
Total	214	100.0	100.0

of a child, and lascivious acts with a child, were listed as the primary conviction offenses for 21 percent of the sample. Of the offenses in this group, aggravated criminal sexual assault and aggravated criminal sexual abuse were offenses in 40 of the cases in this category. Driving with a revoked license was the second most frequent conviction offense (6.5 percent) in the sample.

Table 3 reports the risk assessment data for the 183 cases for which data were available. Seventy percent of the older probationers had maintained a stable place of residence in the preceding 12 months. Eighty-four percent of the sample are believed to have maintained employment at least 60 percent or more of the time in the previous 12 months. More than half (55.2 percent) were identified as occasional or frequent abusers of alcohol, though most (96.2 percent) reported no drug use or interference with functioning. As for the overall attitude of the offender, approximately one-third (31.1 percent) denied responsibility for their present legal status. An additional 16.4 percent were reported as not motivated to change.

Data focusing on the criminal history and prior periods of probation and parole supervision are compiled as part of the process of assessing the offender's risk and are reported in table 4. One quarter (25.1 percent) of the sample had a prior period of probation or parole supervision. Most of the offenders in this study had no prior felony convictions (84.7 percent). Approximately one-quarter (26.8 percent) had a conviction for an aggressive assaultive offense within the previous 5 years, including the present offense. Data on misdemeanor arrests and convictions are not considered when completing the risk assessment.

Table 5 reports the data derived from the needs assessment. Offenders with high school or above educational level comprised 40.4 percent of the sample. In 41.5 percent of the cases older probationers were identified as having adequate academic and vocational skills and abilities. In only one-fifth of the cases (20.2 percent) were older offenders employed 1 year or longer. In 60 percent of the cases the respondents maintained secure employment, were homemakers or students, or were retired. Modest financial difficulties were reported in 47 percent of the cases. In 80 percent of the cases, older probationers were reported to have no adverse relationships with companions, and two-thirds (65 percent) were identified as well adjusted emotionally. Problems with alcohol use surface in that 23 percent of the sample reported occasional abuse, and 31 percent demonstrated frequent abuse and a need for treatment. Most of the older probationers (86.9 percent) possessed the mental ability to function independently. Recurring handicaps or illnesses were reported in 23.5 percent of the sample.

Table 6 reports the combined risk and needs data for each case among the three groups of older probationers. Approximately half of the 183 cases were placed at the minimum supervision level. The reader is reminded that a conviction for an aggressive offense within the previous 5 years, including the offense for which the offender is placed on probation, requires placement in the maximum supervision category. When comparing risk and needs data, this may explain the placement of one-third (33 percent) of the offenders on maximum supervision using the risk assessment and only 4.4 percent using needs data.

Discussion

The present results report that the greatest number of offenders on probation are experiencing their first period of community supervision for a felony offense. As mentioned, the risk and needs assessment from which the data were taken did not record misdemeanor arrests and convictions. One can only assume that an unknown number of older offenders have misdemeanor arrests and convictions.

Given the cited literature which portrays the criminal justice system as being "easier" on older offenders, this population may be more problematic than once thought. We can refer to the risk and needs data presented to better understand that older offenders have significant problems in their lives, problems which most probation officers recognize but few are capable of addressing. Three-digit caseloads in many jurisdictions, including the state in which the present research took place, will inevitably force the probation officer to address the most immediate problem or the situation which, if left unresolved, will contribute to the older probationer committing a subsequent crime.

Given that many older probationers are under supervision for both sex crimes and offenses associated with the operation of a motor vehicle (DUI and suspended license), the likelihood exists that a new victim will emerge from a probation system which is unable to provide the close supervision and treatment many older offenders need. In spite of the serious offenses committed by the subjects in this study, almost half were supervised at the minimum level. Only one-third of the sample was being supervised at the maximum level.

Securing employment posed a significant problem for the age 55-64 probationer, where almost one-quarter were employable but unemployed. The lack of a suitable income may contribute to both the financial difficulties and stress in marital/family relationships reported in the needs data. While drug use appears minimal among older probationers, alcohol is the drug most frequently abused. One-third of the sample was identified as frequently abusing alcohol. Again, probation

TABLE 3. RISK ASSESSMENT DATA FOR OLDER PROBATIONERS

	55-64 Years (N=119)	65-74 Years (N=57)	75-84 Years (N=7)	All Offenders (N=183)
Number of Address Changes in Last 12 Months				
None	67.2	78.9	71.4	71.0
One	22.7	15.8	28.6	20.8
Two or more	10.1	5.3		8.2
Percentage of Time Employed in Last 12 Months				
60% or more	79.8	93.0	100.0	84.7
40%-59%	7.6	1.8		5.5
Under 40%	12.6	5.3		9.8
Alcohol Use Problems				
No interference with function	37.8	52.6	100.0	44.8
Occasional abuse	23.5	19.3		21.3
Frequent abuse	38.7	28.1		33.9
Drug Use Problems				
No interference with function	96.6	94.7	100.0	96.2
Occasional abuse	.8	3.5		1.6
Frequent abuse	2.5	1.8		2.2
Attitude				
Motivated to change	51.3	52.6	71.4	52.5
Denies responsibility	29.4	35.1	28.6	31.1
Not motivated to change	19.3	12.3		16.4
Number of missing cases:	31			

TABLE 4. CRIMINAL HISTORIES OF OLDER PROBATIONERS

	55-64 Years (N=119)	65-74 Years (N=57)	75-84 Years (N=7)	All Offenders (N=183)
Age at first conviction				
24 or older	89.9	94.7	100.0	91.8
20 - 23	4.2	1.8		3.3
19 or younger	5.9	3.5		4.9
Number of Prior Periods of Probation/Parole Supervision				
None	73.1	75.4	100.0	74.9
One or more	4.2			2.7
Number of Prior Felony Convictions				
None	83.2	86.0	100.0	84.7
One	7.6	8.8		7.7
Two or more	9.2	5.3		7.7
Convictions or Juvenile Adjudications for				
None	78.1	80.7	85.7	79.2
Burglary/theft/auto theft/robbery	8.4	17.5	14.3	11.5
Worthless checks/forgery/deceptive practice	7.6	1.8		5.5
One or more	5.9			3.8
Convictions for Assaultive Offense Within Last 5 Years				
No	77.3	70.2	28.6	73.2
Yes	22.7	29.8	71.4	26.8
Number of missing cases:	31			

OLDER OFFENDERS

TABLE 5. NEEDS ASSESSMENT DATA ON OLDER PROBATIONERS

	55-64 Years (N=119)	65-74 Years (N=57)	75-84 Years (N=7)	All Offenders (N=183)
Academy Vocational Skills				
High school or above skill level	44.5	35.1	14.3	40.4
Adequate skills	40.3	42.1	57.1	41.5
Low skill level	11.8	21.1	28.6	15.3
Minimal skill level	3.4	1.8		2.7
Employment				
Employed >1 year	24.4	14.0		20.2
Secure employment	48.7	78.9	100.0	60.1
Unemployed but employable	23.5	5.3		16.9
Unemployed and unemployable	3.4	1.8		2.7
Financial Management				
Self-sufficient	7.6	8.8		7.7
No current difficulties	35.3	36.8	85.7	37.7
Situational difficulties	47.1	50.9	14.3	47.0
Severe difficulties	10.1	3.5		7.7
Marital/Family Relationships				
Exceptionally strong	1.7			1.1
Relatively stable	47.9	49.1	42.9	48.1
Some stress but can improve	34.5	36.8	28.6	35.0
Major distress or disorganization	16.0	14.0	28.6	15.8
Companions				
Good support/influence	2.5			1.6
No adverse relationships	79.0	80.7	100.0	80.3
Associations occasionally negative	17.6	15.8		16.4
Almost completely negative	.8	3.5		1.6
Emotional Stability				
Well adjusted	66.4	59.6	85.7	65.0
Adequate function; some instability	30.3	36.8		31.1
Symptoms prohibit adequate functioning	3.4	3.5	14.3	3.8
Alcohol Use				
No interference with functioning	37.8	52.6	100.0	44.8
Occasional abuse	26.1	21.1		23.5
Frequent abuse	36.1	26.3		31.7
Other Drug Use				
No interference with functioning	97.5	98.2	100.0	97.8
Occasional abuse	.8	1.8		1.1
Frequent abuse	1.7			1.1
Mental Ability				
Able to function independently	89.1	80.7	100.0	86.9
Some need for assistance	10.1	15.8		11.5
Severe limitation of independent functioning	.8	3.5		1.6
Health				
Sound physical health	38.7	47.4	57.1	42.1
Recurring handicap or illness	22.7	24.6	28.6	23.5
Serious handicap or chronic illness	38.7	28.1	14.3	34.4
Sexual Behavior				
No apparent dysfunction	79.0	70.2	28.6	74.3
Situational problems	9.2	5.3		7.7
Chronic or severe problems	11.8	24.6	71.4	18.0
Number of missing cases:	31			

TABLE 6. RISK/NEEDS PLACEMENT FOR OLDER PROBATIONERS

	55-64 Years (N=119)	65-74 Years (N=57)	75-84 Years (N=7)	All Offenders (N=183)
Total Risk Score				
Minimum Supervision	47.1	45.6	28.6	45.9
Medium Supervision	20.2	22.8		20.2
Maximum Supervision	32.8	31.6	71.4	33.9
Probation Officer Impression of Probationer's Needs				
Minimum	23.5	22.8	14.3	23.0
Medium	53.8	50.9	28.6	51.9
Maximum	22.7	26.3	57.1	25.1
Total Needs Score				
Minimum Supervision	57.1	56.1	57.1	56.8
Medium Supervision	38.7	38.6	42.9	38.8
Maximum Supervision	4.2	5.3		4.4
Number of missing cases:	31			

staff members must decide who among their many cases will receive their attention. Unfortunately, it appears that the older probationer, the one who is often troubled with physical and health problems which limit his or her ability to report, is neglected in favor of the younger offender.

The present study reports that older probationers frequently rationalize their behavior and are reluctant to change. As a result, they are labeled as negative and unwilling to accept responsibility. Since attitude is an important factor in assessing amenability for treatment, and thus in reducing criminal behavior, criminal justice personnel, particularly probation officers, should rethink their position on older offenders, particularly in monitoring alcohol use. In addition, officers should make concerted efforts to encourage (or require) the "younger" older offender to secure employment or to seek vocational assistance and training.

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