



<b>Title</b>	<b>Validity of Methods for Predicting Violence in the Community by Psychiatric Patients – A Systematic Literature Review</b>
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<b>Reference</b>	SBU Report 175. Summary and conclusions in English, and full text report in Swedish, are available on www.sbu.se

## Aim

To evaluate the evidence for methods used to predict the risk of psychiatric patients committing violent acts in the community.

## Conclusions and results

(partial list)

- Moderately strong evidence shows that violence can be predicted with a validity significantly better than chance in male patients.
  - There is weak (low) evidence of validity in risk assessments of female patients, and no evidence of validity in risk assessments of patients belonging to ethnic minority groups.
  - Predictive validity was generally found to be moderate, with at best 70% to 75% accuracy in classification.
  - No evidence was found for short-term risk predictions pertaining to risk of violence in the community within days, weeks, or months.
  - No evidence was found that clinical judgment and instruments (eg, HCR-20 and VRAG) differ in terms of validity.
- Large studies allowing for analysis of the relatively few cases of violent acts, performed within hours or days after the assessment
  - Research to find assessment methods that are applicable to women.

## Methods

This was a systematic review covering literature between 1970 and February 2005. A protocol was developed to assess the studies. The primary search for literature involved electronic databases, supplemented by manual searches, reference lists, etc. Reviewers followed the protocol to rate the quality and internal validity of each study. Scientific evidence for each conclusion was based on the number of studies with high quality and internal validity.

## Further research/reviews required

(partial list)

- Well-designed studies with prospective followup, representative for Sweden