

Speaker: Antti Latvala (University of Helsinki, Finland)

Presentation title: Association of intellectual disability with violent and sexual crime and victimization: A population-based cohort study

Co-authors: Magnus Tideman (Halmstad University, Sweden), Erik Søndena (St Olavs University Hospital, Norway), Henrik Larsson (Karolinska Institutet, Örebro university, Sweden), Agnieszka Butwicka (Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm Health Care Services, Region Stockholm, Sweden, Medical University of Warsaw, Medical University of Lodz, Poland), Seena Fazel (University of Oxford, UK), Paul Lichtenstein (Karolinska Institutet, Sweden)

Background: Intellectual disability (ID) is associated with violent and sexual offending and victimization, but the importance of neuropsychiatric comorbidity and severity of disability remains unclear.

Methods: In a register-based cohort study of people born in Sweden 1980–1991 (n=1,232,564), we investigated associations of mild and moderate/severe ID with any, violent and sexual crimes, and with assault victimization, stratified by comorbid autism and ADHD. We defined ID by attendance at a special school or registered diagnosis and obtained data on criminal convictions and injuries or deaths due to assaults from nationwide registers until end of 2013.

Results: Compared to people without ID, autism or ADHD, men and women with either mild or moderate/severe ID and comorbid ADHD had elevated risks of violent crimes (range of Hazard Ratios [HRs] 4.4–10.4) and assault victimization (HRs 2.0–7.7). Women with mild ID without comorbidities or with comorbid autism also had elevated risks of violent crimes and victimization (HRs 1.8–4.6) compared to women without ID, autism or ADHD. The relative risks of sexual offending and victimization were elevated in men and women with ID without comorbidities (HRs 2.6–12.7). The highest risks for sexual offending in men (HRs 9.4–11.0) and for sexual assault victimization in women (HRs 11.0–17.1) related to ID and comorbid ADHD.

Conclusions: People with ID have an elevated risk of violent offending and assault victimization, but these risks are largely explained by comorbid ADHD. In contrast, ID is independently associated with sexual crimes and victimization, even though absolute risks are low. A better understanding of why the risks of sexual offending and victimization are specifically elevated is crucial for successful risk reduction.