

ORAS-PAT Final Report

Prepared for the Franklin County Municipal Court Probation Department

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Whether counties can reduce the jail population and reduce recidivism, and hence expenditures, by utilizing smart on crime strategies is an important question. Risk screening instruments, designed to identify the pretrial risk posed by individuals during the period between release from jail and mandatory court appearance, are illustrative of that approach. If accurate, risk scores facilitate better judicial decision making by allowing lower risk individuals to be released from jail more quickly (i.e., release on recognizance), with less risk to public safety. All else equal, better decisions translate into reduction of the jail population and its attendant costs with fewer instances of recidivism. This report summarizes the results of an analysis to assess whether individuals judged to have a low risk of pretrial recidivism (generated by the ORAS-PAT) spend fewer days in jail, are more likely to be released on recognizance, and recidivate (i.e., are re-booked) at lower levels relative to those of medium and high risk. The results are consistent with expectations, indicating that individuals with scores classified as low risk spend fewer days in jail and are more likely to be released from jail using the release on recognizance mechanism. As well, low risk individuals are less likely to be re-booked into the jail. The analysis also examines those relationships among individuals with a serious mental illness (SMI), and the findings are substantively identical.

Data Collection

This analysis utilizes data collected by the Franklin County Municipal Court Probation Department from January through August, 2016. Administration of the ORAS-PAT occurred shortly after jail admission. There are 796 individuals that completed the ORAS-PAT screening, and those cases are most central to the analysis. Of those who completed an ORAS-PAT, 128 are participants with an SMI. There is a small amount of missing data on either the jail or recidivism outcomes among the 796 participants that reduces the sample size in the analysis reported in Table 5 by about 15 (i.e., 1.8%) cases. There are a large number of non-participating individuals including those that refused to be screened and others that could not be interviewed for reasons that are undocumented in the database provided to us. We report the mean number of days spent in jail for non-participants so that readers can make comparisons with participants.

Analysis

The hypotheses driving the analysis are presented in Table 1. In cases where participants consented to participate, each individual is categorized as low, medium, or high risk based on their ORAS-PAT score. Those categories are cross-classified in contingency tables with the jail and recidivism outcomes. In theory, risk score categories should correspond with outcomes in expected ways. Lower jail usage and diminished recidivism outcomes are expected for cases assessed as low risk, and greater usage and recidivism outcomes

expected among those at high risk for pre-trial supervision failure. The medium risk category is expected to fall in between.

ORAS-PAT Risk	Jail Outcomes	Recidivism outcomes
Low	Fewer days in jail, more frequent release on recognizance	Lowest rate of re-bookings
Medium	Intermediate values relative to low and high risk	Intermediate values relative to low and high risk
High	Highest number of days in jail, more stringent pre-trial supervision	Highest rate of re-bookings

Results

Table 2 displays the mean number of jail days before release for each ORAS-PAT risk level. There are distinct differences between the three risk levels that are consistent with hypotheses. Participants assessed as low risk spend, on average, the fewest number of days in jail (2.69), while those assessed as high risk spent 8.82 days. Medium risk participants fall in between, averaging 4.66 days. The differences in days spent in jail by ORAS-PAT risk score are more pronounced among participants with an SMI. Low risk participants with an SMI averaged 1.9 days in jail, while SMI participants judged to pose a high risk spent 11.87 days in jail. Moderate risk participants with an SMI spent, on average, 6.57 days in jail.

ORAS-PAT	All ORAS	ORAS, Non-SMI	ORAS, S.M.I.	No ORAS, Non-SMI	No ORAS, SMI	No ORAS or S.M.I.
Low Risk	2.69	2.76	1.9	-	-	-
Moderate Risk	4.66	4.59	6.57	-	-	-
High Risk	8.82	8.09	11.87	-	-	-
No ORAS Score	-	-	-	3.16	1	4.97

Individuals not assessed by the ORAS-PAT do not appear to be unusual cases in terms of the length of their jail stays, and thus their non-participation does not appear to be

biasing the analysis in a fundamental way. Individuals that were not assessed with the ORAS-PAT and did not have an SMI spent 3.16 days in jail. Individuals not assessed with the ORAS-PAT with an SMI spent one day in jail, on average. Individuals not assessed by the ORAS-PAT and not screened for SMI averaged 4.97 days in jail. Ultimately, this appears to indicate that individuals who were not screened have an average length of stay comparable to a moderate risk offender. Furthermore, it should be noted that there are small numbers of cases that fall into the “No ORAS, non-SMI” and “No ORAS, SMI” cells and thus those results should not be overgeneralized.

Table 3a. Bail Recommendations by Risk Level among Non-SMI participants					
ORAS-PAT Risk	Defer to Court	ROR	ROR/PTS	ROR/PTS with Conditions	TOTAL
Low Risk	3 3.23%	120 96.77%	2 1.14%	2 0.74%	127 19.16%
Moderate Risk	18 19.35%	4 3.23%	153 86.93%	152 56.30%	327 49.32%
High Risk	72 77.42%	0 0%	21 11.93%	116 42.96%	209 31.52%
TOTAL	93 100%	124 100%	176 100%	270 100%	663 100%

Tables 3a and 3b present types of bail recommendations by ORAS risk level for non-SMI participants (3a) and for SMI participants (3b). Table 3a indicates that almost all participants assessed to be low risk received a “release on recognizance” (ROR) recommendation. Participants judged to be medium or high risk primarily received a recommendation of defer to court, release on recognizance with pre-trial supervision (ROR/PTS), and release on own recognizance with pre-trial supervision and conditions (ROR/PTS-C).

Table 3b, which focuses on participants with an SMI, presents a very similar pattern. Low risk, SMI participants with an SMI were the only risk group to be recommended for ROR. Moderate risk, SMI participants comprise a substantial proportion of ROR/PTS and ROR/PTS-C recommendations. The pretrial release decision for high risk SMI participants was more likely to be deferred to the court and have a recommendation of ROR/PTS-C.

Table 4a and 4b display the percentage of cases that were rebooked by ORAS-PAT risk level. Table 4a indicates that, of the 668 non-SMI participants¹ that had ORAS scores,

ORAS-PAT Risk	Defer to Court	ROR	ROR/PTS	ROR/PTS with Conditions	TOTAL
Low Risk	0 0%	10 100%	0 0%	0 0%	10 7.81%
Moderate Risk	9 29.03%	0 0%	22 91.67%	32 50.79%	63 49.22%
High Risk	22 70.97%	0 0%	2 8.33%	31 49.21%	55 42.97%
TOTAL	31 100%	10 100%	24 100%	63 100%	128 100%

55 (8.23%) were re-booked. Some re-booking occurred among participants judged to be low risk (i.e., about 14.55%). However, the majority of re-booking occurred among those judged to be of moderate and high risk. Of the 55 re-bookings, moderate risk participants accounted for 45.45%, while those judged high risk accounted for 40.00%. Further, it appears that high risk participants have a slightly greater relative risk of being re-booked. About 7.55% of moderate risk participants ($25/331 \times 100$) were re-booked compared to about 10.53% (i.e., $22/209 \times 100 = 10.53\%$) of the high risk offenders.

ORAS-PAT Risk	Not Re-booked	Re-booked	TOTAL
Low Risk	120 19.58%	8 14.55%	128 19.16%
Moderate Risk	306 49.92%	25 45.45%	331 49.55%
High Risk	187 30.51%	22 40.00%	209 31.29%
TOTAL	613 100%	55 100%	668 100%

¹ Several offenders were re-booked more than once.

Table 4b, which assesses participants with an SMI, indicates that none of the low risk participants were re-booked. Of those re-booked, 50% were of medium and 50% were of high risk. A slightly greater percentage of re-bookings also occurs among the high risk participants. About 7.94% of moderate risk participants ($5/63*100$) were re-booked compared to about 9.09% ($5/55*100$) of the high risk offenders.

Table 4b. Number of Re-bookings by Risk Level for SMI participants			
ORAS-PAT Risk	Not Re-booked	Re-booked	TOTAL
Low Risk	10 8.47%	0 0%	10 7.81%
Moderate Risk	58 49.15%	5 50.00%	63 49.22%
High Risk	50 42.37%	5 50.00%	55 42.97%
TOTAL	118 100%	10 100%	128 100%

Table 5 (next page) presents a logistic regression model that assesses whether medium and high risk participants (relative to low risk) have a greater likelihood of re-booking, independent of race, gender, and SMI. The model indicates that high risk offenders are 2.135 times more likely to be re-booked relative to low risk offenders, controlling for the other variables in the model. That finding is significant, although marginally ($p<.1$). Additionally, the results also indicate that African American participants are marginally (66%) more likely to be re-booked, compared to whites.

Conclusions

Risk screening instruments, such as ORAS-PAT, are designed to identify the pretrial risk posed by individuals during the period between release from jail and mandatory court appearance. Risk scores hold the potential to improve judicial decision making by reducing costs, such as by releasing lower risk individuals from jail more quickly using release on recognizance, and reducing risks to public safety. Better decisions can help to reduce the size of the jail population and reduce costs with less recidivism among those released from jail. The findings indicate that the ORAS-PAT is able to classify individuals into risk categories that are correlated in predicted ways with the likelihood of recidivism. That conclusion applies to all participants analyzed, including individuals with or without an SMI. Thus, we conclude that ORAS-PAT is a useful screening tool.

Table 5. Logistic Regression of re-booking on ORAS-PAT risk level, race, gender, and SMI status. (N= 781)

	Log-Odds (SE)	Odds Ratio
Risk Level		
Moderate	.392 (.416)	1.48
High	.759 [#] (.431)	2.135
Race		
Black	.507 [#] (.273)	1.66
Other	.124 (1.07)	1.13
Gender		
Male	.312 (.299)	1.37
S.M.I.		
Yes	-.116 (.368)	0.890

Note: # $p < .10$ (two-tailed test)