

LOW RISK OFFENDERS UNDER PROBATION SUPERVISION

Risk Management and the Risk-Needs-Responsivity Framework

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Community supervision agencies commonly use resource allocation models to identify the amount of monitoring and treatment to provide individuals under supervision. The risk-needs-responsivity model guides these decisions, suggesting the level of supervision should align with one's risk level, with fewer services provided to those at a lower risk of recidivism. However, probation officers often operate under a risk management model with perceptions of risk guiding decisions. Using qualitative data, the current study examined the implementation of a telephone monitoring system for low risk offenders. This research explored (a) probation staff perceptions of telephone monitoring, (b) probation staff adaptations of telephone monitoring, and (c) individual and external influences related to telephone supervision use. Findings suggest officer perceptions of risk and liability affect use of telephone supervision for low risk probationers. Results highlight challenges associated with implementing the risk principle given tendencies to oversupervise as a means to protect public safety.

Keywords: community supervision; risk and needs assessment; risk principle; low risk offenders; qualitative methods

Within community corrections, risk management has dominated the field for nearly three decades (see Feeley & Simon, 1992). O'Leary and Clear (1984) coined the concept of risk management as part of a resource allocation scheme where higher risk probationers and parolees would receive more intensive supervision, treatment, and controls than lower risk individuals. This concept was pushed even further by research

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demonstrating that higher risk clients fare better in intensive treatment programs than lower risk individuals (see Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). In essence, a major shift has occurred within community corrections to reallocate social controls, supervision, and treatment resources to those who pose the greatest potential risk to the community. This risk management framework was echoed in the “get tough” movement of the 1970-1990s, which focused on a more punitive, control model of supervision and probation officers (POs; Taxman, 2002, 2008).

More recent efforts to reengineer probation and parole to facilitate behavior change emerged through frameworks such as the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) and use of evidence-based supervision (Pew Center on the States, 2008). The RNR model outlines the basic principles to guide supervision with the goal of reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) through the appropriate identification and response to offender risk levels. First formalized in 1990, the RNR model consists of three main principles to guide correctional practice (Andrews, Zinger, et al., 1990). The principles of the RNR model include (a) the risk principle, which emphasizes using standardized assessment tools to predict criminal behavior and then using assessment results to match the level and intensity of treatment to the offender’s level of risk; (b) the needs principle, which identifies the behavioral target(s) for treatment; and (c) the responsivity principle, which is split into specific responsivity or the tailoring of treatment to address unique client factors such as motivation, gender, cognitive development, and other factors that affect receptivity to treatment and general responsivity which supports the use of treatment interventions that are evidenced based and cognitive behavioral in nature (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). In a meta-analysis of 80 studies of adult and juvenile treatment interventions, Andrews, Zinger, and colleagues (1990) found that programs adhering to the RNR model resulted in greater reductions in recidivism, while programs with less adherence to the principles resulted in increased recidivism. These findings are confirmed in more recent meta-analyses findings (Prendergast, Pearson, Podus, Hamilton, & Greenwell, 2013). Across the field, it has generally been recognized that supervision agencies must have a standardized risk and need assessment tool to triage offender populations to different risk levels and assign appropriate treatment, treatment intensity, and controls.

APPLYING THE RISK PRINCIPLE

The risk principle has two important components: (a) use of a reliable and validated risk assessment to predict criminal behavior and (b) appropriately match level and intensity of services based on the risk level. Embedded in the risk principle is that the dosage or amount of treatment should increase in accordance with risk level as a tool to effectively reduce recidivism (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). For example, research finds high risk individuals require a greater dose (increased length) of treatment to significantly reduce recidivism compared with lower risk individuals (Bourgon & Armstrong, 2005). Intensive correctional treatment programs are more effective when delivered to higher risk offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Andrews, Zinger, et al., 1990; Andrews & Dowden, 1999; Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000; Dowden & Andrews, 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Hanley, 2006; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002). Inappropriate assignment of lower risk individuals to intense programming can actually result in an iatrogenic effect of increased reoffending.

A meta-analysis of 80 studies confirmed that when placed in programming, higher risk offenders are 5 times less likely to reoffend compared with lower risk offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Bonta et al. (2000) found that low risk offenders placed in minimal treatment programming have a recidivism rate of 15% while placing similar offenders in intensive treatment programming increases the recidivism rate to 32%.

While collectively, research finds targeting riskier offenders in correctional programming is a sound strategy, several major issues dominate the literature. The RNR framework primarily focuses on the therapeutic or rehabilitation aim of corrections. According to scholars of the RNR framework, the purpose of assessing one's risk level is not to inform control strategies, but rather to identify eligibility for treatment intervention. In practice, many correctional agencies use risk to inform the level of surveillance and controls used, which is more consistent with the compliance management and public safety aims of supervision (Viglione, Rudes, & Taxman, 2015). Increasing controls and supervision intensity for higher risk probationers (such as increased face to face contact between POs and probationers, more drug testing, etc.) has the collateral effect of having no impact on offending rates, but increases technical violations and incarceration rates (Hyatt & Barnes, 2017; Petersilia & Turner, 1993). Thus, more supervision requirements tend to place an individual at even greater risk for programmatic or technical violations (Petersilia & Turner, 1993; Taxman, 2002, 2012).

While studies confirm the iatrogenic consequences of overtreating lower risk individuals (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Andrews, Zinger, et al., 1990; Andrews & Dowden, 1999; Bonta, et al., 2000; Dowden & Andrews, 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Hanley, 2006; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002), these individuals tend to be easier to work with compared with more challenging and resistant higher risk individuals, with practitioners often preferring to interact with lower risk individuals (Bonta, 2000; Wormith & Olver, 2002). Some offenders who are classified as lower risk based on standardized assessment tools may still have criminogenic needs that should be addressed to mitigate the risk of further justice system involvement (Taxman & Caudy, 2015). For example, low risk offenders may benefit from interventions such as family integration and strengthening of social supports (Crites & Taxman, 2013; Gordon & Nicholaichuk, 1996). Such needs must be balanced with an appropriate level of service, given evidence that oversupervision can lead to disruptions in prosocial ties and networks in the community (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Dishion, McCord, & Poulin, 1999; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004, 2005) and expose individuals to antisocial behaviors and attitudes with the potential of forming new peer associates (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005; Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Holsinger, 2006; O'Leary & Clear, 1984).

Despite the evidence supporting the unintended and negative consequences of oversupervision and the importance of prioritizing riskier populations in intensive treatment services, studies are lacking on how to best supervise and/or treat lower risk offenders. While some contend that low risk offenders should be diverted to focus on employment and prosocial relationships with others or placed in programs that emphasize accountability without heavy sanctions (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005), the RNR model provides little guidance in structuring supervision strategies to better manage low risk populations in the community. Pearson, McDougall, Kanaan, Bowles, and Torgerson (2011) evaluated a probation program in the United Kingdom, based on the RNR model that structures PO supervision strategies based on assessed levels of risk and needs. POs used a reduced

level of supervision for low risk offenders emphasizing problem-solving skills and referrals to external agencies for support, when necessary. Findings revealed the problem-solving approach was not effective for the highest risk of groups but had positive results for low to medium and medium to high risk groups (Pearson et al., 2011). This suggests a potential alternative to oversupervision. As discussed below, a larger body of literature focuses on the use of technology to manage lower risk probationers.

TECHNOLOGY TO MANAGE RISK LEVELS

Application of the risk principle in practice has resulted in probation organizations making a concerted effort to limit the number of resources expended on low risk offenders, including placing individuals on administrative caseloads where there are minimal requirements. Various technologies have emerged to manage risk, particularly for low-intensity supervision. These technologies are designed to reduce the burden on the PO and allow them to devote more time and resources on higher risk offenders. The New York City Department of Probation pilot-tested an automated kiosk reporting system in the mid-1990s and then expanded to full-scale use in 2003. The kiosk allows low risk offenders to check in on a computer kiosk by answering a few questions. Officers have contact with individuals only when they are noncompliant (e.g., do not check in via kiosk at assigned time). The evaluation of the kiosk technology for low risk individuals found a reduction in 2-year arrest rates for probationers (Wilson, Naro, & Austin, 2007) and has been replicated in other jurisdictions in Utah (Ogden & Horrocks, 2000) and Texas (Belshaw, 2011). Barnes and colleagues (2010) and Barnes, Hyatt, Ahlman, and Kent (2012) also conducted a randomized trial to assign parolees to either monthly contacts or face-to-face contacts every 6 months (Barnes et al., 2010; Barnes et al., 2012). This research found no significant differences in reoffending, arrest, and incarceration rates at 12 months (Barnes et al., 2010) and at 18 months (Barnes et al., 2012).

Given the trend toward risk-based resource allocation aligned strategies and use of technology to improve practice of the risk management techniques, it is important to understand staff perceptions of this resource allocation model associated with the risk principle. Few studies have explored staff issues in understanding risk management approaches within probation supervision using different resource allocation schemes. The current study sought to fill this gap in knowledge by examining how POs apply the principles of risk management, allocate resources, and use the RNR model in their supervision of lower risk individuals. This research studied the different factors that impact implementation of risk management strategies including (a) how probation staff perceive the use of telephone monitoring for lower risk probationers as a supervision strategy; (b) how probation staff adapt and use the telephone-based technology in their supervision decisions; and (c) individual and external influences related to the adaptation and use of telephone monitoring. This study has theoretical and practical implications for understanding how risk management strategies used by PO influence the acceptance of technological tools in supervising individuals in the community. Furthermore, the current study illustrated how even a clinically driven approach like RNR is dominated by the risk management scheme that Feeley and Simon (1992) argue dominates justice (even rehabilitation) reforms.

METHOD

RESEARCH SETTING

The current study took place in a Mid-Atlantic state that has been working on the implementation of evidence-based supervision since 2005. The state started to support the use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) by providing specialized training and technical assistance to several probation offices. Over the last 12 years, the state evolved into a four-tiered implementation system, occurring in a progressive manner. Four probation offices were placed in Tier 1 and were the first offices to receive training and information regarding EBPs, including an introductory training, motivational interviewing, use of a validated risk and needs assessment, case planning, cognitive-based therapies, and problem-solving and relationship building skills (2006 trainings). Tier 1 probation offices were early adopters as they were already familiar with EBPs and were innovative in their thinking and practices. Tier 2 consisted of five offices, but had little experience with innovative practices (2009 trainings). The remaining 34 offices were placed in either Tier 3 or 4 in a nonsystematic way, with eight placed in Tier 3 (2010 trainings). In 2013, administration decided all probation offices must become evidence-based and the remaining 26 offices were placed into the final tier.

Maximum variation sampling was used to select an equal number of offices in each of the four EBP implementation tiers and three regions of the state to be included in this study. The maximum variation sampling allowed for broader coverage of the research topic by identifying common themes across the range of possible contexts (e.g., tier level, region, and office size) that may be relevant (Patton, 1990). This sampling procedure resulted in 12 sites distributed equally across the four EBP implementation tier levels and region, representing both large and small probation offices.

THE INTERVENTION: VOICE-RECOGNITION TELEPHONE MONITORING

The Department of Corrections (DOC) implemented a validated risk and needs assessment tool in 2006. The agency uses a validated, fourth-generation risk and needs assessment tool that provides probation staff with a separate scores for risk and criminogenic needs. The risk score is created from a combination of static (criminal history, juvenile delinquency) and dynamic factors (drug involvement and criminal peers) to predict two types of recidivism: general and violent. The scores are then categorized into three levels (low, medium, and high). The instrument also displays individual scores on a number of criminogenic needs including antisocial peers, antisocial thinking, antisocial personality, antisocial family, financial problems, leisure time, housing, substance use, and employment/education (for more information on the risk and needs assessment, please see Viglione et al., 2015). The state DOCs during the acquisition of the instrument used a thorough process of validating the instrument with the company that developed the tool. The validation process examined the predictive validity of the tool over several years and found the tool to be valid. Due to the confidentiality agreement related to this proprietary instrument, specific statistical documents are not publicly available but the DOCs reports to the legislature and other public entities regarding the solid findings of this and other ongoing validation efforts.

In 2007, the agency began to implement voice-recognition telephone monitoring. The agency pilot-tested the voice-recognition system in two probation offices, where probation staff utilized the tool with select cases. The agency began a slow expansion of the

voice-recognition across the state with approximately 6,500 low risk probationers enrolled by 2011 and over 10,000 in 2014. The telephone monitoring system allows probationers to call in once a week to an automated system and complete a series of short interview questions once a month during a randomly selected call (also automated). The program automatically notifies the supervising officer when their probationer does not call-in. The original intent of implementing the voice-recognition telephone monitoring was to reallocate resources by reducing the use of face-to-face contacts for lower risk probationers while enhancing reporting information through frequent updates of probationer information.

The DOC provided an orientation for telephone monitoring during the existing training on risk and needs assessment and case planning for POs. The explanation for the rationale of telephone monitoring provided in the training documentation was that “low risk [offenders] requires little supervision and benefit the most from low-intensity interventions or no interventions at all.” The agency provided several documents to probation staff including (a) an enrollment form to activate probationers in the telephone monitoring program, (b) a short one-page document outlining when probation staff should deactivate or deny placement on telephone monitoring, and (c) a “cheat sheet” with prewritten text POs use in their log notes for probationers moved to telephone supervision.

Current agency policy requires POs to place all low risk probationers on voice-recognition telephone monitoring, even probationers originally assessed at a higher level of risk, but reassessed as low risk sometime during their time on supervision. The agency relies on a risk and needs assessment instrument that calculates risk level using a combination of dynamic and static factors, with dynamic, criminogenic needs reported separately as well. However, the calculated risk level is the only information used to drive placement on the telephone monitoring system. Supervising officers are required by agency policy to submit a letter to the court when probationers fail to use the telephone system for three consecutive occasions. For minor probation violations, the officer who oversees the telephone monitoring system responds accordingly. A new criminal offense or felony charge requires the removal of the probationer from telephone monitoring with the case returned to face-to-face contacts with the officer.

DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative data collection for this study occurred from January 2012, until October 2014.¹ During this time, ethnographic observations and interviews occurred at the designated 12 probation offices. Fieldwork included ethnographic observations and interviews with probation supervisors and staff throughout their daily routine and observations of various EBP trainings provided by DOC staff.² Total time spent collecting data in the field for the current study totals 1,085 hr. During fieldwork, observations and interviews took place with 200 probation staff (front-line officers and supervisory staff), 23 executive staff members, and 31 nonprobation staff (e.g., treatment providers, administrative staff). Given the focus of the current study, only data involving probation staff were included in the analyses (see Table 1 for characteristics of probation staff who participated in the current study). Fieldwork occurred Monday through Friday, covering all operating hours including prior to office opening and evening treatment programming and drug testing. Each individual site visit lasted between 4 and 10 hr.

TABLE 1: Probation Officer Characteristics (N = 200)

Demographic variables	n (%)
Gender	
Male	80 (40)
Female	120 (60)
Race	
White	150 (75)
Black	46 (23)
Other	4 (2)
Age	
20-29	38 (19)
30-39	72 (36)
40-49	46 (23)
>50	44 (22)
Position/rank	
Probation officer	130 (65)
Supervisor	70 (35)
Specialized Caseload	62 (31)
Tenure	
1-5 years	50 (35)
5-10 years	54 (27)
11-15 years	30 (15)
16-20 years	16 (8)
>20 years	30 (15)
Education	
Bachelor's	160 (80)
Master's	40 (20)
Clinical training	10 (5)

As part of the ethnographic method, informal interviews with probation staff and supervisors occurred during the observations, which included accompanying staff throughout all work activities (e.g., court, home visits, jails, treatment programs, housing shelters, lunch, etc.). Observations focused on the behaviors and interactions between POs, supervisors, and probationers. Informal interviews with probation staff covered a variety of topics including (a) main job responsibilities, (b) perception of role and work strategy, (c) perceptions of EBPs, and (d) changes in the agency. The benefit of informal interviewing is the flexible structure, which allowed for the introduction of new questions throughout the observation and interview process. Time spent with each individual staff member ranged from 30 min to several hours, often on more than one occasion.

Following established practice in ethnographic research (Emerson, 2001; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Morrill, 1995), the researcher did not record fieldnotes while conducting observations and interviews. Rather, the researcher typed detailed fieldnotes as soon as possible after leaving each site visit to record the most accurate account of observations and interviews. This ensures study participants feel comfortable and are as honest as possible, while maintaining integrity of conversation (Emerson, 2001). The researcher did record fieldnotes during breaks in the day (e.g., lunch hour, between observations) and utilized the

“jotting” method (Emerson et al., 1995) in which quick notes for each observation and interview were recorded. Fieldnotes were typed and linked to Atlas.ti, a commonly used data management software for qualitative data (Muhr, 1991).

Several strategies were used to ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of qualitative data collected. First, data from this project were triangulated in several ways: (a) through data collection by observing staff actions, asking staff to describe their actions, and a comparison of written agency documents (e.g., case files), and (b) use of various sources to provide multiple data sources from which to develop themes and patterns (e.g., observations, interviews, agency documents, staff surveys as well as observation of trainings, and analysis of training documentation/materials). Second, data collection was structured to achieve saturation as a means to achieve “data adequacy” (Morse, 1995, p. 147). Third, the authors relied on member checks by providing study participants the opportunity to comment on development of themes/patterns and interpretation of the data as a means to establish credibility (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

CODING AND ANALYSIS

The researcher utilized the constant comparative method throughout qualitative data collection and analysis processes (Glaser & Straus, 1967), reflecting on time spent in the field and knowledge of previous research to guide future observations and interviews and coding. This allowed consideration of the full range of types and conditions under which something occurs and aids in theory development. Coding began immediately following the start of data collection and was ongoing throughout the duration of the fieldwork to examine and reevaluate the research methods and study aims. First, the researcher utilized a line-by-line coding strategy to link each line of fieldnotes to specific codes from a list that developed from initial and continual grounded theory reads of the data (Charmaz, 1995). While it was not the original intent of this study to examine low risk offender supervision strategies, after line-by-line coding was complete, it was evident probation staff engaged in a variety of decision-making processes regarding lower risk probationers and in implementing voice-recognition telephone monitoring. With this discovery and in line with the constant comparative method, data analysis continued with the expansion of initial coding categories to develop deeper, thematic codes related to low risk supervision and telephone monitoring. This included a focus on the probation staff perceptions of low risk offenders and telephone monitoring as well as the circumstances whereby probation staff used (or did not use) telephone monitoring. A final phase of coding involved componential analysis as a means to synthesize data and emergent patterns regarding use of telephone monitoring across the 12 study sites into the themes presented below. This multistep process of coding and analysis is commonly used to identify themes and analyze ethnographic data and coding (Charmaz, 1995; Emerson, 2001).

RESULTS

AGENCY ADOPTION AND USE OF TELEPHONE MONITORING

At the time of observations and interviews, all individual probation staff in the current study were familiar with telephone monitoring supervision, and commonly referred to the practice as “unsupervised probation.” In defining what telephone monitoring means and the process for use, PO Stark³ explained,

TABLE 2: Low-Moderate Use of Telephone Monitoring by Office

Site	Total low risk	Low risk on TM	%	Tier	Region	Average caseload	Administrative staff monitor
3	650	405	62	4	C	69	Yes
4	133	74	56	3	C	61	Yes
5	467	318	68	3	E	102	Yes
8	355	144	41	4	W	77	Yes
10	298	200	67	3	W	84	No
11	143	83	58	4	E	100	No

Note. TM = telephone monitoring; % = percentage of low risk probationers placed on telephone monitoring.

TABLE 3: High Use of Telephone Monitoring by Office

Site	Total low risk	Low risk on TM	%	Tier	Region	Average caseload	Administrative staff monitor
1	475	387	81	2	C	98	No
2	176	151	86	1	E	67	No
6	337	270	80	2	E	113	No
7	360	341	95	1	C	146	Yes
9	226	222	98	2	W	82	Yes
12	437	401	92	1	W	90	No

Note. TM = telephone monitoring; % = percentage of low risk probationers placed on telephone monitoring.

Level three is the lowest level of supervision. If they score low [risk], they will report to the telephone monitoring system. This allows the offender to report in by telephone and have minimal contact with the PO.

Probation staff commonly conceptualized telephone monitoring as a means of reducing the burden on both the supervising officer and the probationer. After placing probationers on telephone monitoring, POs involvement in the case was minimal and often they were not involved at all.

As shown in Tables 2 and 3, all 12 probation offices in the current study utilized telephone monitoring. According to agency administrative data, across the 12 study sites, there were 2,996 low risk probationers supervised on telephone supervision (74%) and 1,061 low risk probationers not on the telephone monitoring supervision.

Implementation varied both within and between offices. All study sites reported supervising fewer probationers on telephone monitoring than total number of low risk probationers assigned to that office. Additional data analysis reveals varying patterns of use of telephone monitoring related to PO subjective perceptions of risk of the individual. Analyses yielded factors related to misuse of the telephone monitoring system due to both internal and external factors of the organization (see Table 4 for a summary of main findings). The following section details the influence of different factors on the use and misuse of telephone monitoring technology.

POLICY ADAPTATIONS

Formal DOC policy requires POs to place all low risk probationers on voice-recognition telephone monitoring. The DOC policy was augmented with an additional formal

TABLE 4: Summary of Main Findings

Adaptation	Findings	Representative example
Use and adaptations		
DOC Formal Adaptations	Cannot use if receive a new charge	The probationer was low and on telephone supervision, but he got a new charge. PO Beckett had to do a reassessment that suggested she move him to medium supervision.
DOC Informal Adaptations	Allow administrative staff to supervision telephone monitoring probationers	
Formal Probation Office Adaptations	Cannot use if on deferred disposition (Sites 1,7,10)	The probationer is low risk, but he was a five for substance abuse. He went through treatment and he has been testing clean. He is a deferred disposition though, so I cannot place him on telephone monitoring.
Informal Probation Office Adaptations	Cannot supervise probationers with less than 6 months (Sites 1, 5, 7, 10)	
	Require PSI writer to do a lite screener and place low risk immediately to administrative caseload	One of the first changes she [PO Ray] made to their policies was to have PSI writers, the first contact probationers have with their office, do the "lite" risk assessment. Then if the probationer is low risk, they can immediately assign them to administrative staff.
	Failure to supervise telephone monitoring system, lack of relationship with probationers, inability to case plan and address criminogenic needs, difficulty contacting probationers	As we were leaving the probationers' home, the man sitting outside said hello to PO Painter, who did not recognize him. The probationer explained he was on her caseload, but he was on call-in supervision. PO Painter laughed and explained she does not keep a close eye on the good ones.
	Used as a means to lower caseloads, reward probationers, supervise "easy" probationers	I [PO Watkins] just started using telephone monitoring and have some of my low risk cases there. This helps with my caseload, so I am giving it a try. I think it will be okay as long as the guys are straight.
Individual factors		
Compliance	Do not use if not making consistent payments toward fines/restitution, have existing payments left, if they do not have steady employment, or if believe they will not be compliant	PO Wheeler told the probationer she would not reduce his supervision level and place him on telephone supervision because he does not have employment. The probationer complained he has a job cutting hair where he makes a lot of money. PO Wheeler said she does not consider this job as enough and told him he needs to continue to look for employment.
Special populations	Refrained from placing low risk probationers who had functioning/ mental health issues, were sex offenders or gang members	The probationer was a transfer from another jurisdiction in the state who was compliant on telephone supervision, but PO Mintz heard the probationer hears voices so she is not comfortable placing him on telephone supervision. She will not put anyone on the call-in caseload if they have a mental health issue.
Level of comfort	Desire to watch probationers first to see how they adjust to probation	PO Caldwell explained the probationer was low risk and he was going to try to move him to telephone supervision. He will keep him on regular supervision first to watch him and make sure he is not just trying to slip through.
External factors		
	PO belief judiciary and community will not support use of telephone supervision	PO Pane does not think the judges would approve because it is like putting them on unsupervised probation. He does not think when judges hear they are putting them on low supervision it means a probation officer never actually sees them face-to-face.

Note. DOC = Department of Corrections; PO = probation officer; PSI = presentence investigations.

policy that dictated probation staff could not place a low risk probationer on telephone monitoring if they received a new charge. This was not open to discretion by individual offices or POs. Beyond the agency-wide policies, individual probation offices had discretion to adapt the use of telephone monitoring in their office. Often, these policy and procedural adaptations restricted use of the technology rather than promoted it. Several offices further adapted the policies and procedures associated with restricting the use of the telephone monitoring system. In three offices (Sites 1, 7, 10), policies prohibited POs from supervising probationers that the court places on deferred disposition. Individuals given a deferred disposition by a judge are generally first-time offenders and tend to be low risk. Probation staff in these offices upheld this policy, refraining from using telephone monitoring, even when probationers were doing well on probation and were in full compliance. In addition, in four offices (1, 5, 7, 10), probation staff were not able to place a probationer who had less than 6 months left on their probation term on telephone monitoring. POs preferred this strategy, as it was often easier for them to continue to physically supervise the probationer rather than complete the paperwork to activate the telephone system.

Given probation staff concerns about the documentation required for telephone monitoring, the state agency suggested individual probation offices assign an administrative staff to supervise and monitor all telephone monitoring cases. As a result, half of the probation offices in the current study designated administrative staff to supervise probationers on telephone monitoring. In these offices, as soon as a PO assessed a probationer to be low risk based on the standardized risk assessment, they turned the file over to the administrative staff member who then met with the probationer, explained the rules, and activated the system. One office (Site 3) adapted this policy by requiring their POs responsible for conducting presentence investigations (PSI) also conduct a shortened version of the standardized risk and needs assessment. For probationers who were low risk at this point in the process, the PSI writers immediately assigned them to the administrative staff member for telephone monitoring which bypasses a PO altogether.

PO PERCEPTIONS AND ADAPTATIONS OF TELEPHONE MONITORING

A major challenge with telephone monitoring after initial implementation was the removal of the face-to-face interaction between probationers and POs. This resulted in several unintended consequences, including the failure to adequately supervise probationers. The following excerpt illustrates this pattern:⁴

When the Department of Corrections first implemented telephone supervision, they did not make it clear to probation staff they still had to supervise and manage the probationers. They are supposed to check in weekly with the system and see when probationers were not calling in. Probation staff got e-mails from the telephone monitoring system reporting noncompliance and they would just delete the e-mails.

This lack of adequate training and communication surrounding telephone monitoring created a need for individual probation offices to revise protocols, requiring weekly monitoring of the system. Probation staff complained these changes actually increased their workloads as they only checked in with a low risk probationer once every 3 months.

The removal of the face-to-face interaction with POs presented a challenge for many probation staff. This eliminated opportunities to build relationships with probationers, address probationer needs, or be familiar with one's probationers. Telephone monitoring contributed to a lack of relationship and familiarity between PO and probationer. Probation staff argued the lack of contact sometimes made it difficult to track down noncompliant probationers who were on telephone supervision. One PO described his experience with this challenge:

PO Byrnes was trying to find one of his probationers on telephone supervision. He e-mailed her, but she had not responded. PO Byrnes did not think he would ever see her in person again. She is a low level offender and he does not think she was at risk of being an offender again, but she will probably end up in jail for being noncompliant.

Other POs faced similar situations when probationers on telephone supervision changed their phone number or other personal information and did not report such changes in the monitoring system. While a major goal associated with implementation of telephone monitoring was the ability to easily track probationer information, officers felt it was difficult to stay informed of changes.

Besides challenges about locating and monitoring probationers on telephone supervision, POs argued they no longer had the opportunity to positively influence low risk probationers. PO Alvarez argued a negative consequence of telephone supervision is the inability to empower the probationer throughout the process as

even though the probationer scored low and I had to place him on telephone supervision, I wish I could do a case plan with him. Case planning allows me to ask probationers what they want, gives them a say in the process, and is a technique to motivate them.

With this inability to complete a case plan, POs were generally unable to address dynamic needs (e.g., substance abuse, criminal thinking) identified by the risk and needs assessment instrument. The following representative example highlights this pattern:

After PO Sully finished the risk and needs assessment, she told the probationer he scored low in risk but medium and high on several criminogenic needs, including substance abuse. Because of his low risk level, she was going to put him on telephone monitoring though.

POs were unable to address needs once an individual was placed on telephone monitoring, even when they believed a probationer could benefit from assistance in identified areas. These findings highlight an implementation conflict for POs between the simultaneous applications of the risk principle with the needs principle particularly for lower risk offenders.

POs supervised 74% of probationers scored as low risk on telephone monitoring. POs argued these probationers are the "easy" ones, often first-time offenders or individuals who are "motivated and already doing what they need to do." POs moved less risky and more compliant cases to telephone supervision more quickly. In these circumstances, POs often perceived use of telephone monitoring positively, including using telephone monitoring as an opportunity to reward probationers. The following fieldnote highlights this finding:

She likes to reassess her probationers and utilize telephone monitoring because it provides a way to reward people by reducing their level of supervision. For low risk people, we just need to check on them occasionally. We do not assess or work on needs because that can make things worse.

While rewarding probationers with telephone supervision varied between probation staff, Site 1 amended a policy to reward all probationers who successfully completed cognitive behavioral programming with placement on telephone monitoring. Alternatively, Sites 2 and 3 attempted to incentivize POs to use telephone monitoring as a tool to reduce their caseload size. In Site 3, this was a priority of the management team as they actively encouraged POs to move all low risk cases to telephone supervision, even scolding POs who did not do this. As one supervisor explained, “during the EBP implementation process, we tried to help officers by reducing their caseloads through use of telephone monitoring so they can do more [with other probationers] and feel like they have less on their plate.” This demonstrates the potential utilization of telephone monitoring to visibly reduce workload for officers as a means to promote adoption and implementation of EBPs.

FACTORS INFLUENCING ADAPTATIONS OF TM

Individual Level

Probation staff in the current study continually assessed whether or not telephone supervision was compatible with their existing supervision strategy. Three major concerns surfaced continuously: (a) probationer compliance, (b) special population status, or (c) level of comfort with probationer. Probation staff considered these compatibility concerns as they related to the perceived risk associated with utilizing telephone supervision for low risk probationers.

Compliance

Probation staff resisted use of telephone monitoring based on actual and perceived compliance with probation supervision. The most common concern of probation staff regarding moving low risk probationers to the telephone supervision caseload surrounded the amount of fines and restitution payments the individual had. Probation staff refrained from moving probationers to telephone supervision if (a) the probationer was not currently making consistent payments toward fines/restitution or (b) the probationer had any existing fine/restitution payments left. With the exception of a new criminal offense, consistent payment of fines and restitution were the primary concern of POs for those placed on telephone supervision. And, POs raised concern that the risk and need assessment tool used for reassessment did not capture compliance with probation conditions, which limited their perception of the generated risk category. This finding is highlighted below:

PO McBurnie told the probationer she was going to place him on their call-in caseload. She explained he would have to call in rather than come to the office for visits, but he would definitely have to keep up with his monthly fine payments. If he failed to make a payment, she would revoke his probation.

Besides fines and restitution payment, probation staff emphasized stable and steady employment before they placed probationers on telephone supervision. Finally, probation staff argued some probationers would not be compliant with a self-report style of supervision. In these scenarios, probation staff contended it was best to keep them on a traditional style of supervision and required reporting to the office. The excerpt provided below illustrates this strategy:

PO Delaney places most of her lows on telephone monitoring. She has a few that it is not a good idea. For example, she supervises an elderly female who is on probation for stalking her church priest. She is low risk and keeps to herself, but would not make it on phone supervision. She would not call in, so it is easier to see her in the office.

PO Delaney went on to explain she knew this was against formal agency policy, but this is how she preferred to manage her caseload to maintain adequate control and supervision of her probationers. Keeping probationers off telephone supervision due to existing financial responsibilities, lack of full-time employment, or perceived ability to comply is not part of formal agency policy nor was it a consistent informal policy within specific offices. Rather, individual probation staff developed their own strategies for assessing whether telephone supervision was appropriate.

Special Populations

Probation staff consistently refrained from placing low risk probationers in a special population status on telephone monitoring. Special populations largely included probationers with functioning and/or mental health issues, sex offenders, and gang involvement. The underlying concern across all three special populations was identical—a belief that low level supervision, especially “unsupervised” probation, was not adequate to manage the risk these populations pose to either themselves and/or the community. This is often expressed as a potential liability, especially related to those who may commit a crime associated with higher stakes (e.g., sex offense). For example, one PO refused to supervise a low risk probationer who had transferred from another office in the state who had been compliant on telephone monitoring, because she heard the probationer hears voices. This PO argued presence of a mental health condition required a more intensive level of supervision and interaction with the probationer through an emphasis on managing risks of the individual. A call-in caseload does not provide the opportunity to have face-to-face contacts to check in about the mental health issues and does not allow POs to assess how this may affect their risk to the community. In a second example, PO Holder expressed similar concerns regarding the intensity of supervision needed for sex offenders:

I have a lot of discretion and can supervise probationers according to their offense and how they are doing on probation. The lowest level I would supervise a sex offender at is medium supervision. I am old school though; the level of supervision does not mean much to me in how I will supervise someone.

This example highlights resistance toward linking calculated risk scores to the appropriate levels of supervision. This finding reveals a deeper concern from probation staff about trust in the risk and needs assessment instrument and telephone monitoring. These strategies

were often driven by probation staff making subjective assessments of risk of the individual to the community, primarily concerning the nature of their offense and issues related to victims. Officer Kanter illustrates these concerns regarding reducing the level of supervision for a sex offender based on his perspective regarding the risk that the individual presents:

After conducting a reassessment, PO Kanter wanted to move one of his sex offender probationers who was doing very well off high supervision, but when he tried to do so, PO Ruben (supervisor) denied this request because the probationer's previous victims were children. PO Ruben explained the denial was not because the probationer was more likely to reoffend, but because young children cannot process crime as well as adults can and it has a much greater impact on them.

Probation staff indicated that the "the risk and needs assessment instrument commonly identifies sex offenders as low risk" but formal agency policy required probation staff to override and supervise sex offenders at an "elevated level of supervision" making three contacts per month. With these adaptations to policy, POs raised concerns that the risk and need assessment tool and its identified risk levels were not useful for sex offenders.

Level of Comfort

Besides the special population status, probation staff relied on their level of comfort with specific probationers to determine whether to use telephone supervision. Consistent across probation offices, probation staff purposively did not move low risk probationers to telephone supervision to "watch them first", often for months. The following example highlights this pattern:

PO Pickett explained if a probationer's case has expired but he has a gut feeling they should not be off probation; he would not close their case. The same goes for probationers who come back as low on the risk and needs assessment. If he has a weird feeling about them, he will monitor them for a while before he decides to move them to call-in supervision.

While some probation staff admitted they did not immediately move low risk probationers to telephone monitoring as policy dictates, many argued they must "initially monitor probationers to assess their adjustment to change" and the risk that they present to the community. POs couched much of this resistance in a mistrust in the risk and needs assessment instrument and the idea that any probationer is actually a "low risk." A significant conflict exists between risk assessment and professional liability in the decisions that officers make. Officers tended to engage in symbolic implementation of telephone monitoring as POs continued to require low risk probationers to come to the probation office for monthly meetings. The following observed interaction between PO Browne and her probationer illustrates this pattern:

As PO Browne finished the risk and needs assessment, she told the probationer he scored low risk. She was going to put him on the telephone supervision program, but he will still need to come in once a month for follow-up meetings.

External Factors

Probation staff were cognizant of the judiciary and the expectations that judges and the community will have regarding their supervision of various types of probationers. This influenced officer attitudes toward application of the risk principle given concerns with the risk and need assessment tool and the telephone monitoring policy. Perceptions surrounding judicial support stemmed from continuous interactions with judges and other courtroom personnel, affecting the attitudes and perspectives of officers. For example, a probation supervisor discussed a meeting she held with courtroom staff, including all six judges in their jurisdiction:

The judges were very concerned that a probationer might be on low supervision and on telephone monitoring. They did not understand how it was a good thing not to supervise someone and they did not support telephone monitoring as an appropriate form of supervision.

As illustrated in the example above, judges expressed resistance toward use of the telephone monitoring technology as an appropriate supervision technique. Probation staff articulated a loosely coupled system operating between probation and the judiciary arguing “Judges and attorneys have no idea what probation staff do” and are not familiar with the levels of supervision and what they dictate in terms of probation supervision. Probation staff frequently shared concerns regarding how to best balance expectations of supervisors to move lower risk probationers to telephone monitoring and requirements of the judiciary. One PO explained this hesitancy in his office:

We struggle with telephone monitoring in this office due to the insecurity of probation staff who do not want to be “chewed out” by the Judge. Judges are not fond of telephone supervision, but this is what the Department of Corrections wants, so it has to be a give and take.

Probation staff had to manage the expectations of the community and public opinion. These concerns heightened with probationers who committed serious, violent offenses or sexual offenses. The following example highlights the way in which probation staff adapted agency policy to fulfill perceived community expectations:

Everyone was really nervous about this probationer but he actually scored low on the risk and needs assessment. The family of the victim was especially concerned and could not believe PO Stark was going to supervise him in the same area where they lived. PO Stark ended up putting him on high supervision and on GPS so they could give the family peace of mind. He ended up being a model probationer and was very motivated.

The perceived expectations and fears of community members influenced PO decision making regarding how to manage the potential risk a probationer presents. Generally, this was due to the existing tension between risk and professional liability. Not only did POs consider factors related to the compatibility of the intervention, they also considered how factors external to the organization may influence or heighten the stakes associated with supervision decisions.

DISCUSSION

The current study sought to understand the conceptualization and operationalization of risk in a probation agency actively implementing EBPs aligned with the RNR framework, particularly as it pertains to lower risk probationers. Findings suggest a risk management lens permeates practice, often serving as the guiding framework for PO decisions. While the RNR model recommends minimizing supervision with lower risk individuals, officers tend to assess risk subjectively using their individual perspectives, experiences, sense of professional liability, and assessment of responsibility for determining the level of risk an individual presents. As a result, the current study identified numerous factors influencing PO decisions regarding how to supervise low risk individuals and implement telephone monitoring technology.

As the agency began to enforce telephone monitoring, probation staff placed 74% of low risk probationers on telephone monitoring, although this rate varied across probation offices. The high utilization rate of this agency policy illustrates overall general success in implementation. A deeper analysis found the telephone monitoring system and associated policies did not uniformly alter the way officers made decisions regarding low risk offenders.

A number of unintended consequences emerged from the telephone monitoring policies. Upon initial implementation, management discovered POs were not actively monitoring the telephone monitoring system. This resulted in noncompliance that went unaddressed by the supervising officer. That is, telephone monitoring resulted in a lack of supervision of probationers, some of whom did violate their terms of probation. This ongoing issue was a challenge for the agency, which resulted in administrative staff monitoring the intervention. This transportability issue considers the processes of who can versus who will implement the intervention in everyday practice (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). If the goal of risk and needs assessment tools and telephone monitoring is on targeted resource allocation and to allow POs to focus more of their time and energy on higher risk cases, then use of administrative staff to monitor low risk probationers on telephone supervision may be a positive adaptation. But, offices who assigned administrative staff to supervise the telephone monitoring system were identified as low to moderate users of this system. This suggests POs may have been less likely to place low risk probationers on telephone supervision if they were going to be "supervised" by nonprobation staff, especially if they believed administrative staff do not have the authority to assess risky behaviors of probationers.

Individual probation offices modified and enforced varying policies regarding telephone monitoring, including policies to restrict use and remove interaction between low risk probationers and POs. By removing face-to-face contact with probationers, many POs expressed they could no longer adequately perform their job responsibilities and adequately manage the risk of these individuals once on telephone supervision. Along the same lines, POs struggled to accept they did not need to intervene with low risk offenders. Theoretically, risk and needs assessment tools and telephone supervision provide correctional agencies with a strategy to manage risk levels, resources, and workloads. Staff struggled with removing themselves completely from the supervision equation. This discomfort with relying on various technologies (risk assessment and telephone monitoring) increased when they perceived an individual to present risk to themselves, others, or the community. While

probation staff resisted the technocratic rationalization of supervision associated with risk and needs assessment and telephone monitoring, much of this resistance stemmed from perceptions that low risk probationers are still too risky to not be seen.

The field of probation is staffed by professionals who have discretion as to how to supervise offenders based on their assessment of the individual's risk to the community. This discretion often includes both the number and type of contacts with probationers based on a variety of factors (e.g., risk level, probationer behavior, compliance). The existing research does little to resolve these competing tensions. Research on reduced frequency of contacts between POs and low risk probationers (Barnes et al., 2010; Barnes et al., 2012) does not report on processual measures (e.g., whether POs addressed needs, case planning, relationship between PO and probationer). The placement of low risk probationers on telephone supervision aligns with the risk principle and suggests that low risk individuals do not present liability to the community. However, the low risk-telephone monitoring supervision policy presented conflicts for POs related to development and maintenance of a client-officer working relationship. Even more so, the policy impacts tensions between control and use of a containment model where POs serve to minimize the risk to the community that might occur for high stakes offenders such as sex offending or drunk driving. These conflicts suggest a need to better define the concept of low risk particularly for high stakes crimes.

POs were more cautious and less willing to move sex offenders, probationers with functioning/mental health conditions, and probationers who committed serious, violent offenses to telephone supervision despite being assessed low risk. Officers expressed strong risk management perspectives to justify their decisions. Not surprising, this hesitancy extended beyond use of telephone monitoring system and influenced willingness to supervise these special populations at a lower level of supervision altogether. This pattern surrounding resistance toward use of low level supervision with special populations suggests continued reliance on discretionary decision making by probation staff.

The way in which probation staff employed their discretion as highlighted throughout this study may result in biased and inconsistent decision making, and may also indicate that probation staff may be treating entire groups of probationers more punitively than others. This finding highlights the tensions among risk, liability, and the offense-type stakes associated with an individual probationer. Particularly with perceived riskier offender populations, such as sex offenders, the stakes related to the crime influence the decision to consider a probationer to be low risk. This is affected by the belief they may receive more publicity, will be viewed negatively to victim groups or the community, or pose a greater threat to public safety. To address these tensions, POs adjusted risk levels by elevating the level of supervision. This adaptation may serve to protect both the agency from outside scrutiny should a high stakes reoffense occur and the individual PO who wishes to protect the stability of their employment. Individually, POs may oversupervise certain probationers to protect themselves, as they may feel personally responsible if a reoffense occurs. The majority of POs believe there would be repercussions to themselves or their job, especially associated with a high-stake offense such as a sex offense. Any agency protection against professional liability does not address the personal sense of responsibility officers have for the probationers they supervise.

Interestingly, probation offices in Tiers 1 and 2 of EBP implementation were more likely to use telephone monitoring with low risk probationers compared with offices in Tiers 3 and 4. This suggests a potential effect of training exposure and dosage, which may affect the

trust and confidence in the risk and needs assessment tool, a foundation of the RNR framework and putting EBPs into practice. Not surprisingly, adoption and implementation may require long and sustained change efforts, and agencies may consider using coaching or other organizational strategies to increase buy-in for new policies and practices (see Taxman & Belenko, 2012, for a discussion of various organizational strategies).

Findings from the current study link to broader implementation issues surrounding risk and needs assessments in correctional agencies. Viglione and colleagues (2015) found POs rarely used risk and needs assessments as intended due to issues surrounding the functionality of the tool and believability in assessment tools. This finding was reiterated in more recent research that found challenges in probation staff viewing EBPs more generally, including risk and needs assessments, as feasible and acceptable for use in daily work (Viglione, 2017). As seen in the current study and in previous research (including many other studies regarding correctional reform such as Battalino, Beutler, & Shani, 1996; Ferguson, 2002; Rudes, 2012; Steiner, Travis, & Makarios, 2011), when staff hold negative perceptions regarding the alignment between reform and daily practices, feasibility, and acceptability of an innovation, they are likely to find ways to work around the innovation. In the current study, this surfaced in the failure to match supervision levels to assessment results, including the tendency to use overrides. This is concerning, given research findings that practitioners most commonly override assessment results to increase risk level, and that this increase in risk reduces the overall predictive validity of the assessment tool (Schmidt, Sinclair, & Thomasdottir, 2016; Wormith, Hogg, & Guzzo, 2012). Greater fidelity in the implementation of risk and needs assessment instruments remains a key policy challenge in correctional work that can influence additional reform attempts as seen in the current study.

EBP implementation falls heavily on POs, street-level workers, as they adopt/adapt and implement policy and practice changes by incorporating them into routine work and decisions. Over the last decade, a substantial body of research documents and analyzes the role of street-level bureaucrats within criminal justice organizations in policy implementation and decision-making processes. Beginning with Lipsky's (1980) foundational work, street-level bureaucracy theory describes street-level workers as policy interpreters with primary responsibility for policy implementation. Following this framework, other scholars note the prevalence of discretionary decision making present in street-level work (e.g., Feldman, 1992; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000) that affects the interpretation and implementation of new policies. At a critical time for the criminal justice system, characterized by large prison populations and mounting financial strain, EBPs have the potential to improve the system and better serve offenders and communities. These beneficial effects are dependent upon street-level workers' decisions when carrying out EBPs. Findings from this study align with prior research noting the challenge of changing practices. Correctional environments are characterized by a punitive, control-oriented culture, and the movement toward use of rehabilitative strategies, despite evidence that punitive strategies are ineffective and potentially harmful, is not always met with open arms (e.g., Battalino et al., 1996; Ferguson, 2002; Rudes, 2012).

POs face daily pressures and often have to make tough decisions, which can influence their perceptions of whether or not an EBP might fit within their world. Given the complex and multifaceted nature of most EBPs, attempts at implementing interventions without making adaptations to local context often resulted in a poor fit (Damschroder et al., 2009). While interventions have "core components" or elements that are indispensable, agencies

can adapt elements, structures, and systems associated with the intervention in the “adaptable periphery,” allowing the agency to improve fit to the local setting without undermining integrity of the intervention (Damschroder et al., 2009). Designating a practice as evidence-based is only the first step in the implementation process (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Freidman, & Wallace, 2005). In fact, EBP designation identifies that a practice can potentially improve outcomes but does not address the suitability of the practice for individual settings, often due to resource and time constraints (Schoenwald & Hoagwood, 2001). After EBP designation, steps must be taken to adapt the practice to the setting based on a variety of factors. In justice settings, this includes assessing issues related to the setting, population, client and practitioner buy-in, organizational fit, fidelity, and core outcomes as means to understand how the criminal justice environment may affect how an intervention is delivered (Taxman & Belenko, 2012). In the current study, individual-level factors related to the population, buy-in, and setting interacted with external influences (e.g., judiciary and community) to influence adaptations of agency policy.

The current study did not include any probationer data (e.g., criminal history, type of offender, age, and race), thus consideration of probationer outcomes was not possible. While research demonstrates the iatrogenic effects of oversupervising low risk offenders, further work is needed to examine the impact of supervision strategies such as telephone monitoring on offender recidivism and rate of technical violations. Future research should examine probationer perspectives on telephone monitoring to understand how use of this technology impacts their supervision experience. In addition, we did not have access to data to determine whether and how resources were reallocated as a result of telephone monitoring. Given one of the key goals of telephone monitoring in this agency was to provide probation staff with more time to focus on higher risk, this is an avenue worth exploring. Future research should seek to evaluate the relationship between telephone monitoring and supervision of high risk probationers.

The current study represents one of the first attempts to examine how POs use a technology design for lower risk probationers. Telephone monitoring represents a first step toward managing caseloads according to scientific evidence emphasizing the allocation of resources toward medium and high risk offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Findings from the current study demonstrated that risk management attitudes of officers, complicated by their trust in a risk and needs assessment tool and telephone monitoring systems, affects the implementation of the risk principle. Officers are sensitive to the complexities in the environment resulting in three main implementation challenges: (a) the real-world challenge of allowing risk levels to dictate supervision strategies, (b) the removal of the face-to-face relationship aspect of probation supervision, and (c) inconsistent application across probationer types. Perceptions of public safety and associated professional liability with specific types of probationers or situations confounded or even prevented the application of the risk and needs principles across the probation offices. Collectively, risk management overrides the RNR framework and makes it difficult to easily transport, especially when resources and pressures from external sources affect officer decisions.

While the RNR model dominates the field in guiding evidence-based supervision practices and key caseload, classification, and resource decisions, little attention has focused on lower risk populations. This is a key area to consider as agencies begin to design and implement policies to reallocate resources away from lower risk individuals to supervision of higher risk probationers. While technologies such as telephone monitoring are

well-intentioned to align with the scientific evidence and deploy limited organizational resources in the most effective way, attention must be paid to how technologies like telephone monitoring are used by POs. In the current study, POs tended to operate under a risk management model with perceptions of risk guiding supervision decisions. This led to the development of strategies to work around the technology, resulting in variances in policies and practices within and across probation offices and a reliance on informal perceptions of risk rather than actuarial assessments. The current study sought to take the first step in understanding the consequences of implementing policies and practices aligned with the RNR model. This line of research is necessary to understand how EBPs align within existing correctional environments, especially considering the prominent concerns surrounding professional liability, with an ultimate goal to better inform correctional agencies as they determine how to best manage resources, protect the community, and supervise correctional clients.

NOTES

1. Researchers independent of the Department of Corrections agency conducted this research study. Researchers received approval from both the University Human Subjects Review Board and the Department of Corrections Research Board.
2. This research was confidential. Participants were volunteers who were provided informed consent and ensured that their identity and any information that could potentially identify them would not be reported. All data collected through observations and interviews could be reported on, with any identifiable information removed.
3. We use pseudonyms throughout this article to protect participants' confidentiality.
4. Examples provided throughout "Results" section are representative of entire data.

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