



**camh** Centre for Addiction  
and Mental Health

# From Risk Assessment to Risk Formulation:

Optimizing The Utility of The DASA-IV Within  
Acute Forensic Mental Health Care.



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# Learning Outcomes

- Understand the need for early detection and prevention of violence
- Overview the current tool used to support early detection of risk
- Understand the gap in practice and how it relates to care
- Overview our QI project's methods
- Discuss Key insights and the opportunity for change
- Observe how QI methods can be employed to identify areas of social significance for Behaviour Analysis to be used.

# Clients & Care Setting

- Client's we serve
  - Individuals living with MI
  - Have come into contact with the law
  - Found NCR or require fitness testing (to stand trial)
- Clinical Settings we deliver care in
  - Inpatient Units
  - Acute, General, Secure
- Broad Range of Service
  - Crisis (ER), Stabilization, assessment, rehabilitation, community inclusion & public safety.
  - Interprofessional and Recovery oriented

# Caring *Around* Violence

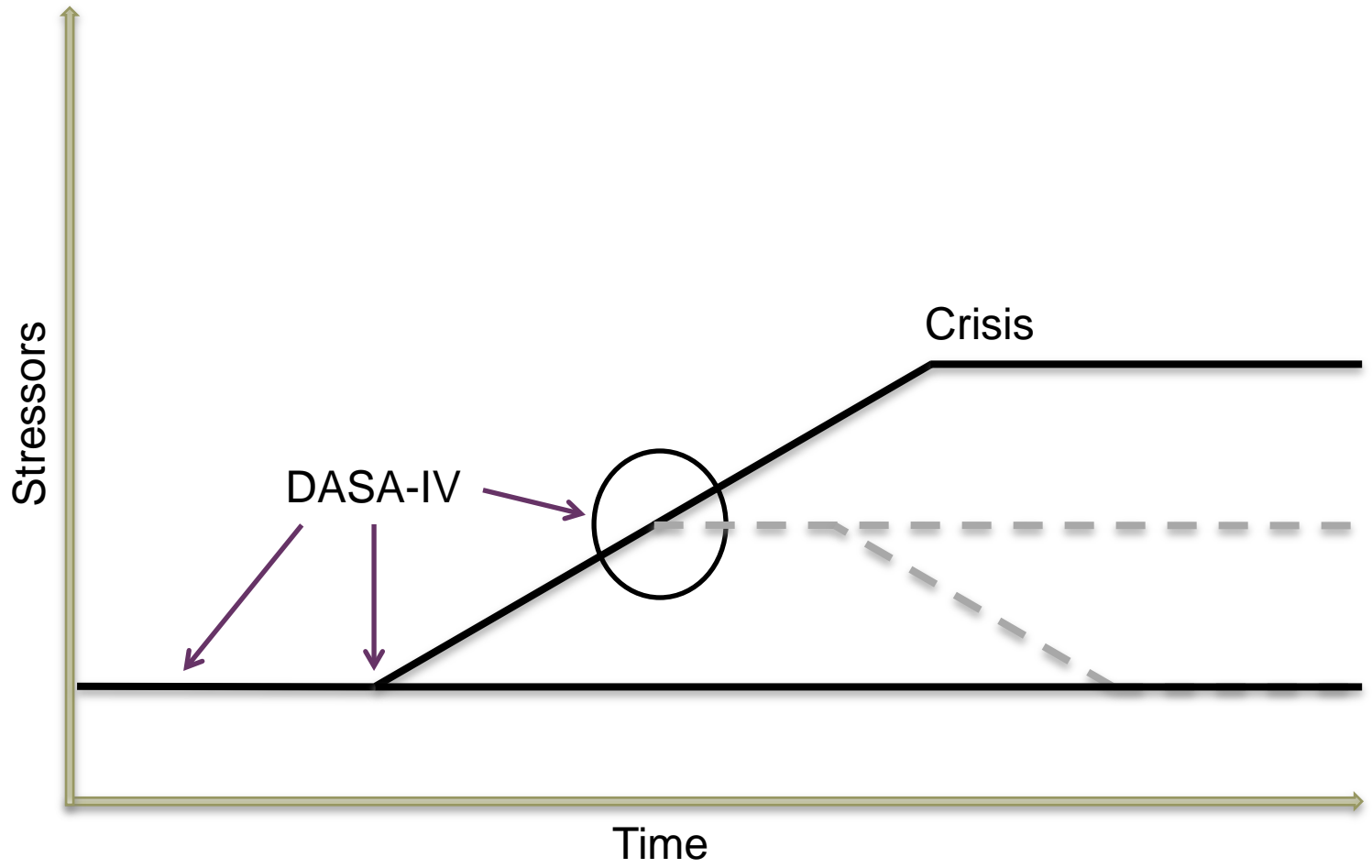
- Impact on caregivers
  - Physical, emotional, psychological damage
  - Quality of work life
  - Burnout
- Impact on clients
  - Exposure to unsafe contexts
  - Experience undue restrictions
- Incident Reporting
  - Physical aggression towards others has doubled since 2009
- Need to identify risk and to individualize early detection

# Being Vulnerable and Disabled

- Client Experience
  - Exposure to unsafe contexts
    - People, places, and things
- Without a safe and therapeutic environment
  - Experience undue restrictions
    - Restricted community and grounds passes
    - Physical, mechanical, and chemical restraint
    - Decrease in therapeutic rapport
- A need to identify risk
  - A need to individualize early detection

# What is the DASA-IV?

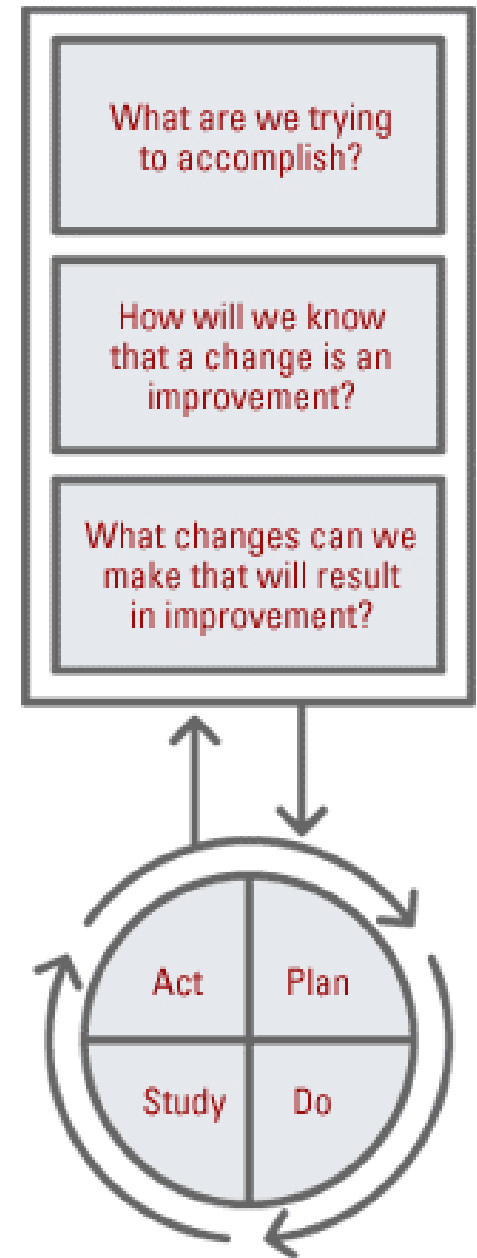
- The Dynamic Appraisal of Situational Aggression - Inpatient Version (DASA-IV) is a validated, structured assessment tool used to predict imminent aggression in a Forensic Mental Health inpatient setting.
- Uses a seven (7) items scale intended to predict aggression over a 24 hour period.
  - Irritability
  - Impulsivity
  - Unwilling to follow directions
  - Sensitivity to provocation
  - Easily angered when requests are denied,
  - Negative attitudes
  - Verbal threats





# QI Project Design

- Adopts the Model for Improvement framework
- Comprised of:
  - 3 broad realms of inquiry
    - Inform, operationalization, impact
  - Plan Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle



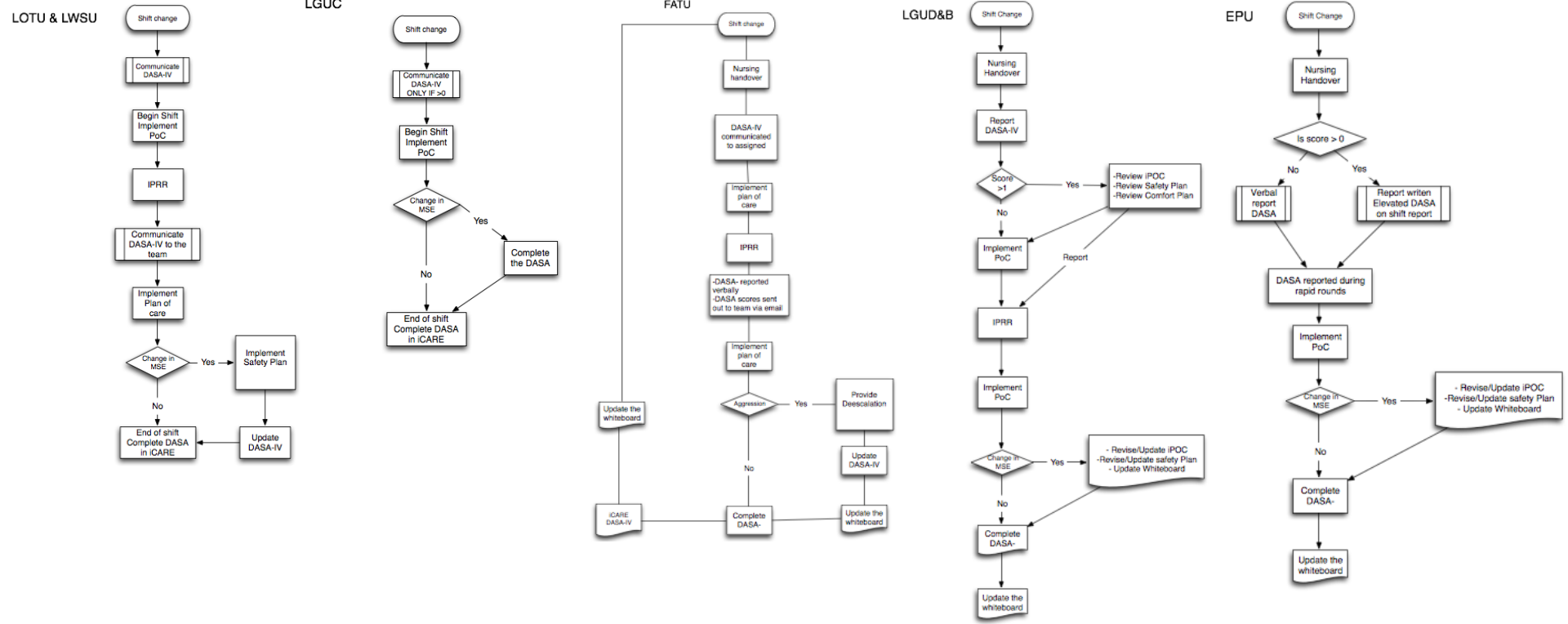
# QI Methods

- Literature review
- Current state assessment
  - Semi-structured discussions
    - Advanced Practice Staff & Nurse Educators of FMHIS
    - Developed process maps across FMHIS
  - External consults
    - Professional Practice Network of Ontario (PPNO), Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services
  - FluidSurvey of current practice
  - Windshield survey
    - Team reviews, interprofessional rapid rounds, case conferences, shift report, etc.
  - Positive Deviance identification and elevating excellent practice

# From Assessment to Formulation

"[Evidence-based assessment of violence risk, may be defined as] the process of gathering information about people in a way that is consistent with and guided by the best available scientific and professional knowledge to *(a) understand their potential for engaging in violence against others in the future and (b) determine what should be done to prevent this violence from occurring* (Hart, 2009)."

# Process Mapping



# Positive Deviance & Observation

- 100% of reports of violence contain unstructured discretionary event reviews.
- High performing staff report using event reviews as a means to get clinically relevant information to care plan for the prevention of aggression;
  - risky contexts, potential victims, early warning signs, and how to intervene early.

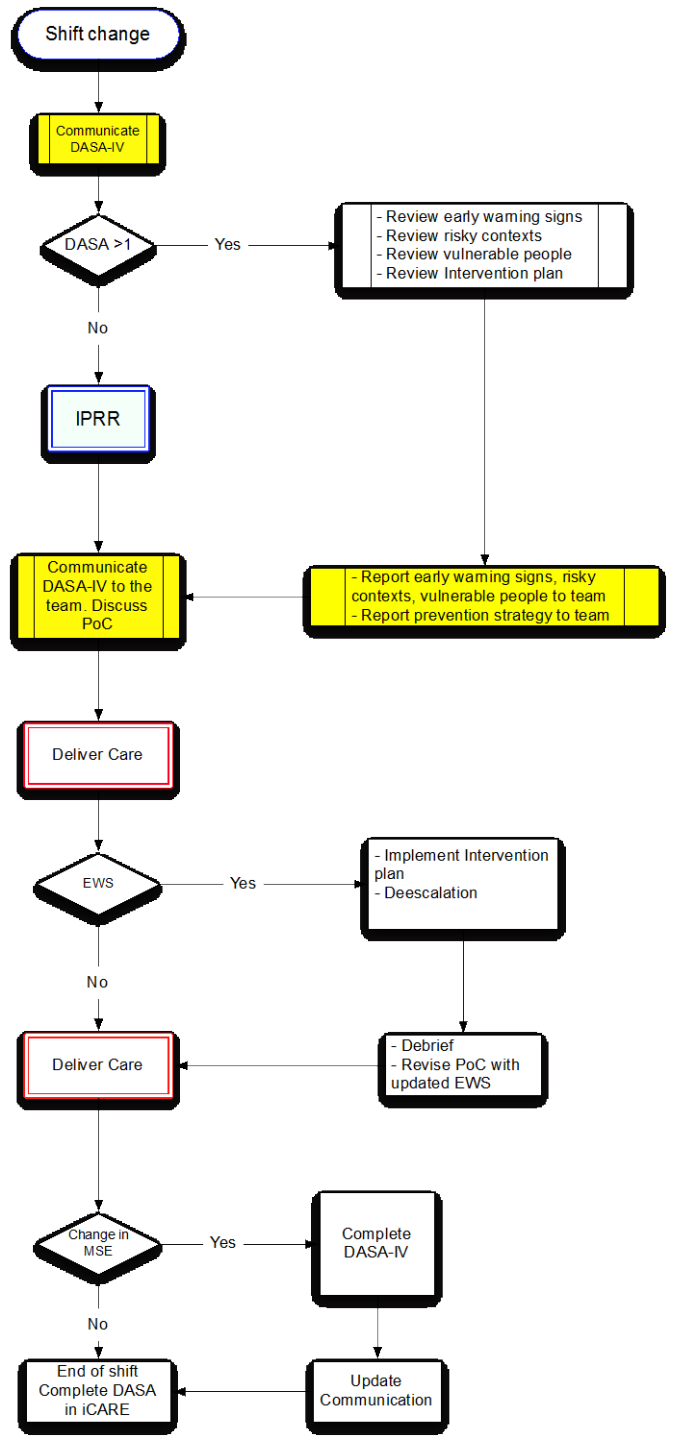
# Pinpointing the Relevant Gaps

- **DASA's Utility for Risk formulation**
  - Structured, streamlined, standardized.
    - Risky contexts, potential victims, early warning signs (emotional, psychological, behavioural precursors), early intervention (antecedent control)
  - Initiated by the DASA
- **Delivery of Antecedent Control Procedures**
  - An efficacious technology
  - Team implementation (whole environment)

# The Opportunity for Change

- Transitioning culture and old practices
  - How do we transition our culture from “predicting” violence to actively “preventing” violence?
    - Delivering Antecedent Control Procedures
    - Provide a clear process for delivery
  - How do we elevate the practice of “story time” to be an evidence based structured risk formulation?
    - Give it structure, streamline and standardize it
    - DASA (enabler)
  - How do we shift the mindset from prevention being an individual assignment to a team approach?
    - Enabling all members of the team to be active in prevention, involved, and responsible.
    - Interprofessional Rapid Rounds (enabler)

# Early Recognition and Prevention





# Our Next steps

## ■ The impact on care

### ■ Phase 2; directly impacts care

- Pilot change in practice using the PDSA cycle
- Evaluate Change in practice, culture, and impact on care
- Spread...

## ■ Proposing Change

### ■ Develop Proposal for implementation

- Another QI proposal review
- Aim to Pilot the change on our own units
- Establish process, outcome, and balancing measures to

## ■ Research

## ■ More QI

# Summary

- We used Quality Improvement methodology to explore the question
  - Why does the DASA alone impact overall incidence of violence minimally?
    - The DASA is used to anticipate violence
    - Minimal structure and standards for formulating risk and proactive interventions
  - How do we better utilize the DASA to decrease incidence of violence.
    - Enable frontline staff to observe risky contexts, and to be aware of vulnerable people, and be able to identify early warning signs
    - Employ antecedent control procedures as formal parts of the plan of care
    - Transition the team's culture of “anticipating” violence to actively preventing it

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