



## Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Section – 2011

### I30 Forensic Evaluation and Aggression Risk Assessment in Violence Against Women to Prevent New Aggressions Through GPS Devices

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The goal of this presentation is to discuss how violence is usually approached in terms of results. Most of the studies try to establish differences among the distinct types of violence considering the injuries, circumstances around the aggressions or the procedures used to commit the attack; but, it is not enough to know the real differences among them and how forensic evaluation can help to prevent new aggressions. Violence against women (VAW) has different features compared with other forms of violence. It is a “moral violence” used by men against women, especially in the context of a relationship, and that is constructed under cultural references. It means that there is a part of this violence that is considered “normal” and this feature affects the evolution of this violence, usually increasing the risk of new and more serious aggressions and, even, homicide. These features must be known for the forensic evaluation and to develop strategies to prevent these new possible attacks.

VAW is known by its recidivism and by the difficulties to break with it and, in consequence, to protect women. Forensic risk assessment allows knowledge of the specific circumstances of the cases and helps form conclusions about the future possibilities of new aggressions. Under this assessment, new measures can be taken to protect victims of this violence, one of which is to know the relative positions between the aggressor and the woman through a GPS device that alerts if there is an approach between them. This way the police can react and arrest the perpetrator.

**Hypothesis:** If the forensic evaluation establishes an objective risk for new aggressions in the context of a relationship where men use violence against women, the measures to protect these women and prevent violence must be adapted to the circumstances. In Spain, a system has been developed with a GPS device carried by the perpetrator in a permanent way (bracelet) that allows knowledge of the location of his position and the victim's location. This system can be used under a judicial order if the risk for new aggressions is high. The correct forensic risk assessment guarantees the protection of women and the prevention of new aggressions and can reduce the number of serious aggressions.

#### **Brief Synopsis of The Content and Summary of the Results:**

The aggressor in the context of a VAW relationship develops a strategy to try to isolate the woman victim from her sources of support, usually family, friends, and work mates. He considers her as a property and he uses violence to keep the relationship under these references. Under these circumstances violence follows an evolution with increasing intensity. When the victim reports the case to the police or the court, the aggressor considers it as an offense and, in consequence, the possibility for new and more serious aggressions increases.

Spain has developed a system that allows for locating the position of the perpetrator and victim through a GPS device. After the first year, there were 1987 alarms that made it possible to arrest the aggressors when they were approaching the victims. At the end of the year the number of homicides decreased by 27.6%.

Forensic risk evaluation is the procedure used to make the decision to use this protection instrument. The presentation will explain the procedure, features of the system and results after its implementation.

**Violence Against Women, Protection of Women Through GPS Device, Forensic Risk Assessment**