

# Eating Disorder Prevalence in Forensic Settings

## An underacknowledged issue in a vulnerable population

**Amy Woods<sup>1,2</sup>, Daniel Simsion<sup>2</sup>, Anita Raspovic<sup>1,2</sup>, Leah Brennan<sup>1,2</sup>**

1. Body Image, Eating & Weight Research Team (BEWT)  
2. School of Psychology and Public Health, La Trobe University, Victoria

## Background

The prevalence and severity of disordered eating and eating disorders in forensic settings, including prisons, psychiatric prisons, remand centres, correctional residential facilities, and community correction orders, remains poorly understood and under researched.

Despite this, forensic populations are known to experience multiple risk factors such as trauma, mental illness, and substance use. The stress of confinement, social isolation, and limited coping strategies further increase vulnerability.

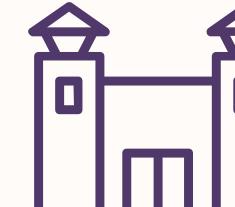
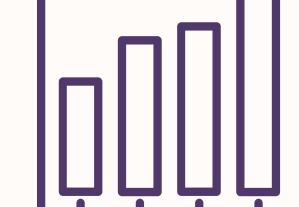
## Objectives

This scoping review examined existing research on eating disorders in forensic systems (prisons, community correctional programs, residential facilities, and post-release populations). This poster reports on prevalence rates and assessment measures.

## Methods

	<b>Step 1: Protocol</b> Registered on OSF		<b>Step 2: Database Search</b> Ovid (MEDLINE & PsycINFO) Elsevier (Scopus) EBSCO (CINAHL) ProQuest (Dissertations & Theses)
	<b>Step 3: Review Outputs</b> Studies identified Prevalence & Measures reported		

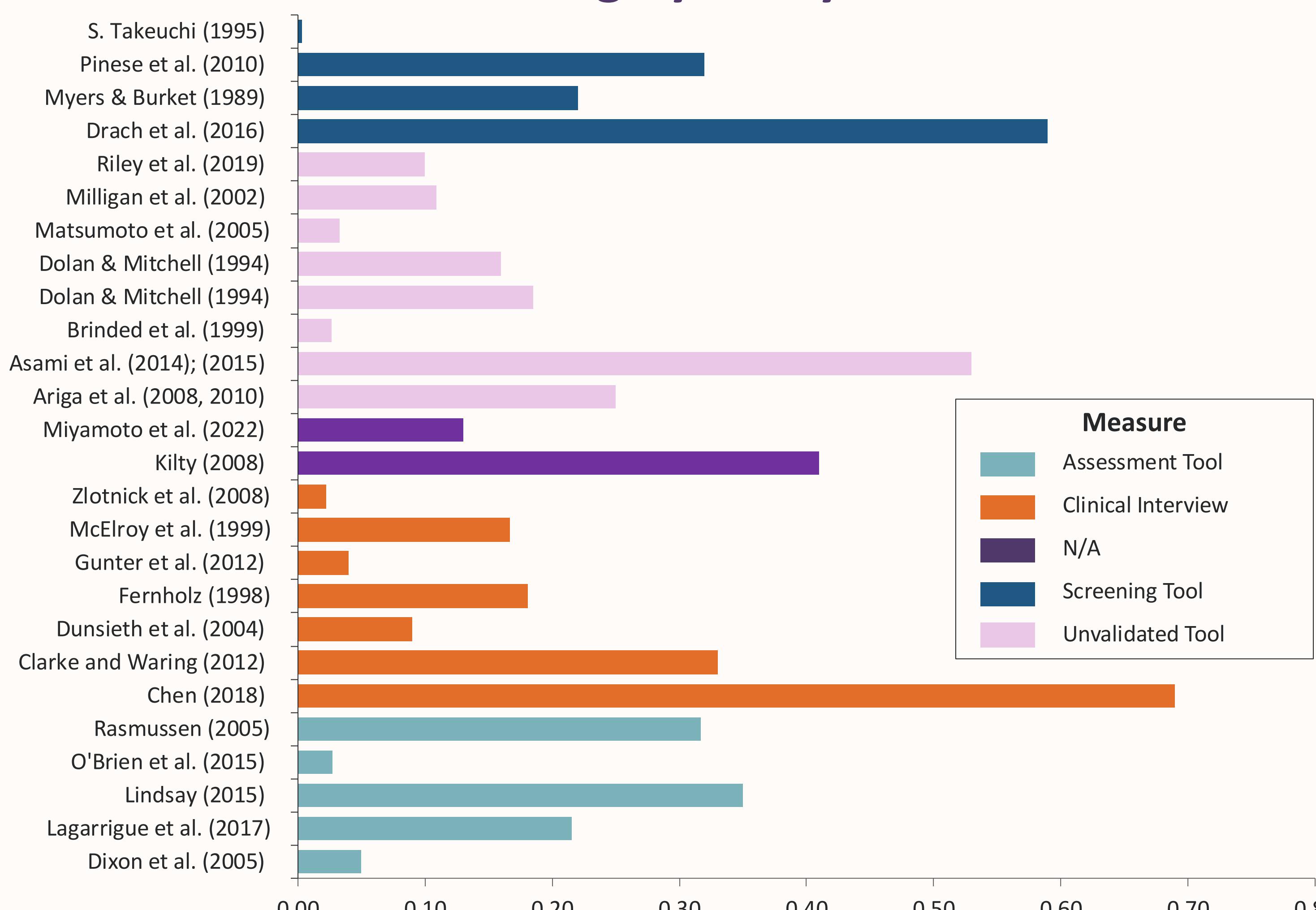
## Results

	<b>28 articles identified</b>		<b>Most studies in prisons</b>
	<b>8 countries represented</b>		<b>20 different measures used</b>

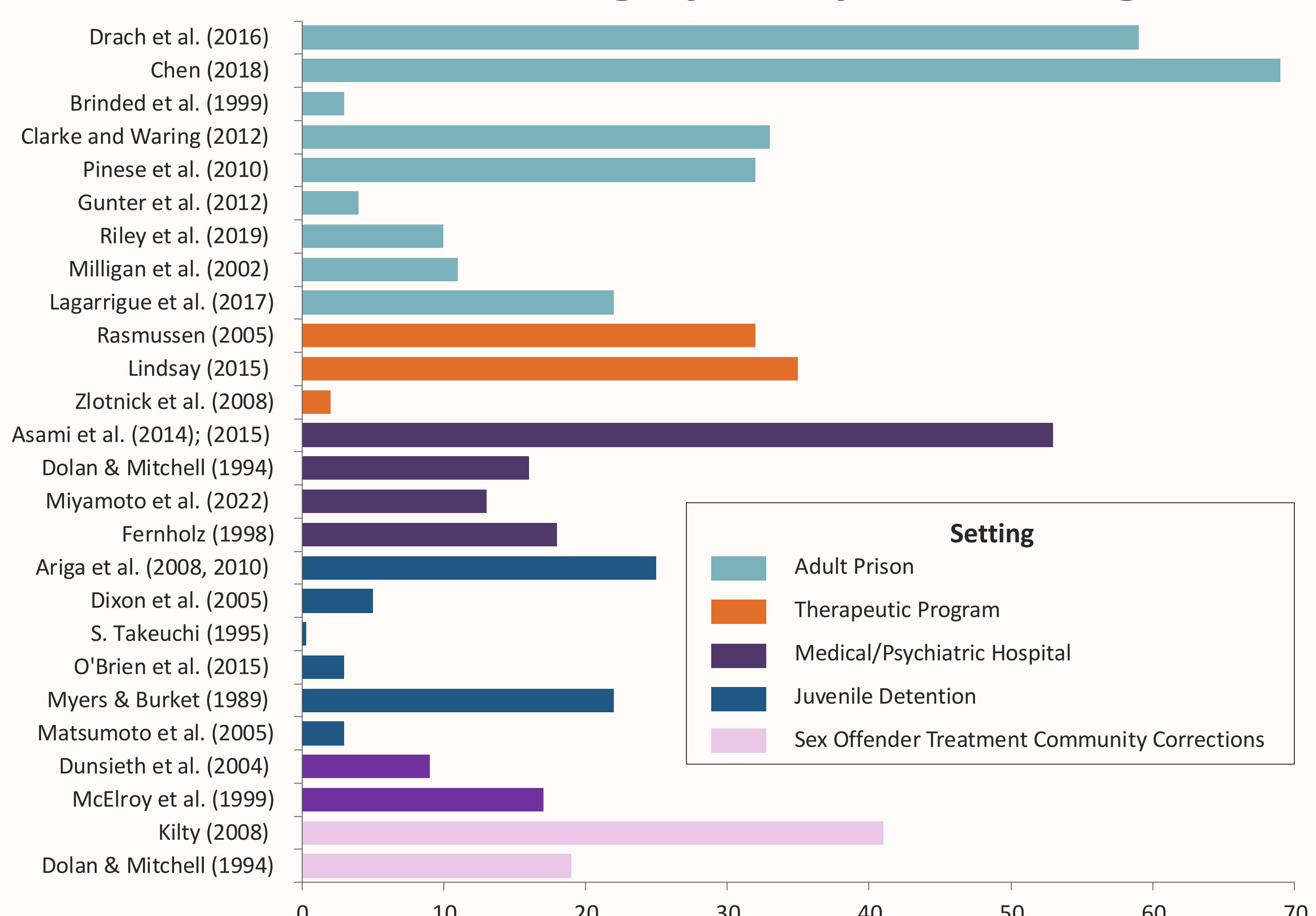
**Measures**  
Most frequently used tools were EAT-26 and Structured Clinical Interviews for DSM-IV

**Prevalence**  
25 studies reported rates of ED/DE across forensic settings

**Figure 1: Prevalence of Eating Disorders/ Disordered Eating by Study and Measure**

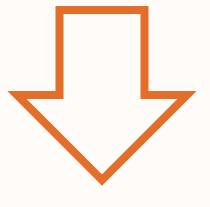


**Figure 2: Prevalence of Eating Disorders/ Disordered Eating by Study and Setting**



## Conclusions

Eating disorders in forensic settings remain under-recognised and inconsistently assessed.

 Lack of recent data in forensic populations

 Inconsistent screening and assessment practices

 High prevalence, especially in women's prisons

 Variation in rates across settings, populations, and measures

