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TITLE: Intervention Strategies for Accident-Involved Drivers: An Experimental Evaluation of Current California Policy and Alternatives

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PROTECT OBTECTIVE:

To evaluate standard and alternative strategies for selecting and treating accident-involved drivers in California.

SUMMARY:

The DMV's standard criteria for selecting accident-involved drivers for treatment (involvement in a fatal accident or three accidents within one year) were contrasted with an expanded selection strategy which included convictions as well as accidents as criteria for selection. The standard reexamination treatment was compared to two alternative treatments, an accident-avoidance session and a mailed pamphlet/ self-administered test.

The 6,867 drivers selected by the standard criteria were randomly assigned either to the reexamination, one of the two alternative treatments, or to a no-contact control condition. The 24,156 drivers selected by the expanded criteria were randomly assigned to one of the two alternative treatments or to a no-contact control condition.

Comparisons between the standard and expanded selection criteria showed that drivers selected by the standard criteria were significantly affected by treatment, while most drivers selected by the expanded criteria were not. However, subsequent analyses on expanded criteria drivers revealed that those "most like" standard-criteria drivers (those with a minimal conviction history) were also significantly affected by treatment.

The accident-avoidance session was shown to be the most effective treatment for standard-criteria drivers. The only treatment showing a significant effect for any segment of the expanded-criteria sample was the pamphlet/ self-test. Treatment effects were statistically significant ( $p < .02$ ), with the standard-criteria accident-avoidance session group and the "minimal conviction" pamphlet/ self-test group both experiencing a 23% accident reduction during the subsequent one-year period.

The most effective treatments were extremely cost-beneficial, producing unit accident cost savings (accident cost savings minus treatment costs) ranging from \$206 \$244 per contact.

It was recommended that: (1) the accident-avoidance session replace the reexamination as the DMV's operational intervention for standard-criteria drivers, and (2) the pamphlet/ self-test treatment be implemented for expanded-criteria drivers with minimal conviction histories.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The accident-avoidance session replaced the reexamination as the DMV's operational intervention for standard-criteria drivers in November 1983. Implementation of the pamphlet/self-test treatment for "minimal conviction" expanded-criteria drivers was still under consideration as of this writing.

SUPPLEMENT ARY INFORMATION:

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