

Attachment 7
Semi-Structured Interview Guide to be used with
Court Case Managers

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Introduction

The RAND Corporation is conducting a study for the Centers for Disease Control on the costs and cost savings of motor vehicle injury prevention. As part of this study, we are estimating the costs of implementing several different policies and programs designed to prevent such injuries. As the email regarding the request for an interview indicated, much of the cost information we need can be gathered from reviews of the literature; however, we are finding gaps in literature that we hope to fill through interviews. Feel free to pass on any topics you don't know well but I will ask you for a recommendation for a suitable person to interview about that topic.

We will not attribute any specific response to you personally. You will only be identified in the final report as someone that we spoke with in the course of the study. The entire interview should take about an hour.

The first set of questions pertains to Limits on Diversion and Plea Agreements. We know that plea bargaining and other diversion programs (deferring sentence while a DWI offender participates in some form of alcohol education or treatment) came into practice as a way of reducing the burden on the state and local court systems. However, many states such as yours have restrictions on these programs.

1. In your experience, prior to restrictions on plea agreements and diversion program how many days/hours on average were involved in court for the typical DWI/ DUI offense?
2. Does that average length of time change between first and repeat offenders?
3. How does the time burden change with the application of limits of plea agreements/ diversion programs for the court system and the offender?
4. Before and after diversion/ plea agreements were limited in your state, how did the amount of time in jail/ prison change for the offender?
5. Before and after limits on plea agreements or diversion programs were enacted in your state, how much time did the average offender spend on parole?
6. For a typical situation, what are the fees for an offender that has a diversion programs or plea agreements vs. an offender that faces limits on diversion and plea agreements?

7. We plan to include the following in our estimation of costs of implementing diversion program or plea agreement restrictions: creating policy/ legislation, police time, court system costs, parole costs, jail/prison costs, and fees. What if anything are we missing?

Next I want to ask you about state policies that have Lowered BAC Limits for Repeat Offenders. Currently about five states, including yours, have lowered the BAC limit for people convicted of DWI to emphasize that they should not be driving after drinking even moderate amounts.

8. How much time did repeat offenders spend in court prior to the rule change? Did it change with implementation of a lower BAC limit?
9. What is the average number of days in jail/ prison for repeat offenders?
10. How much if at all did the average number of days change with the lower BAC limit?
11. We plan to include the following in our estimation of costs of implementing lower BAC limits for repeat offenders: policy development by legislature, jail, court system (at potentially higher frequency). What if anything is missing?

Next I have a few general questions.

12. We have some basic court costs for DWIs, these range from 2000 to 20,000 in our current quotes. Would a range of 5-6000 per case seem reasonable?
13. What types of activities are you including in that cost (facilities, judge's time, court staff time, etc.)?
14. What other DUI/DWI related activities of the court that may not have clear costs that you did not list above, should we need to consider?