Riddles Wrapped in Mysteries Inside Enigmas: Issues with Getting and Using Administrative Data for Impact Evaluations

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Findings First: Issues We Encountered

- Micro-level issues
  - Missing data for some months
  - Data formats that impeded aggregation
  - Data repositories designed for purposes conflicting with ours

- Macro-level issues
  - Data gate-keepers
  - HIPAA Privacy concerns for aggregate data
  - Length of time required to access retrospective administrative data
  - Reconciling data from different sources
Assumptions Dashed

- Much of the retrospective data would be relatively easy to collect
  - Data was already being collected as part of administrative processes
  - Law enforcement data would be especially easy because reports are always being generated for local stats and state and national repositories (e.g. Uniform Crime Reports)
  - Security Forces at the Air Force Bases would already be working with local police departments
- Distinguishing the data for underage (< 21) and of-age would be straightforward
- Data would be directly usable to assess impact
What Follows

- Description of the EUDL Demonstration Program
- Air Force bases and their surrounding communities
- Description of evaluation metrics and data sources
- Data acquisition issues by site and data source
- Administrative challenges and ways to address them
- Lessons learned
Logic Model

Program Goals
(Baseline)

Goal: Reduction in Underage Drinking

Incidence & Prevalence of Substance Abuse

Community Risk and Protective Factors

Program Activities

EUDL Initiatives
INITIATIVE TO REDUCE UNDERAGE DRINKING

- Develop community coalitions
- Coordinate with other underage drinking programs
- Strengthen coalitions with law enforcement, judicial system, military, local health agencies, and local schools
- Provide training and TA

Community Initiatives

- Awareness
- Screening
- Education
- 0-0-1-3
- “Work Hard, Play Smart”

Activities

EUDL Initiatives

Reduced Risk Factors and Increased Protective Factors

Reduced Underage Drinking

Improved Knowledge of the Dangers of Underage Drinking

Increased Enforcement of Underage Drinking

Outcomes

Impacts

Contextual/Environmental Factors
Stressors (e.g., Deployment, OPSTEMPO, Military Work Requirements, Child Care)
Evaluation Plan: Data collection

Evaluation Timeline

Grantee Funding Timeline

Retrospective Data Collection
- 2 Years Before Grant
- 1 Year Before Grant

Prospective Data Collection
- First Year
- Second Year
- Third Year
- Fourth Year

Intervention Sites
- Historical/Baseline Data
- Prospective Data

Comparison Sites
- Historical/Baseline Data
- Prospective Data
## Air Force Bases and Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Air Force Base</th>
<th>Urban or Rural</th>
<th>Mission</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AZ Phoenix</td>
<td>Luke AFB</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Combat Operations &amp; Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZ Tucson</td>
<td>Davis-Monthan AFB</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Combat &amp; Support Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA Yuba County</td>
<td>Beale AFB</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Combat Support Operations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HI Honolulu</td>
<td>Hickam AFB</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Combat Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT Great Falls</td>
<td>Malmstrom AFB</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Operational Missile Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WY Cheyenne</td>
<td>F.E. Warren AFB</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Operational Missile Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO Warrensburg/Knob Noster</td>
<td>Whiteman AFB</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Air Combat Command / Bomber Wing</td>
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</table>
Data Sources and Metrics

■ Local law enforcement
  • Compliance checks
  • Arrest and citation records (DUIs, alcohol related crimes of violence, minor in possession, etc)

■ Hospitals and Clinics
  • Alcohol related ER visits

■ Air Force Personnel Command
  • Demographics of each AFB

■ Air Force Security Forces
  • Arrest and infraction records (DUIs, other infractions)

■ Air Force ADAPT Substance Abuse Program (SUAT)
  • Reasons for referral to program (DUIs, other reasons)
## Gaps in the Data We Expected To Collect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td><strong>Project Year</strong></td>
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<td><strong>DUI/DWI</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Traffic Accidents</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Compliance Checks</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Crimes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUAT DUI</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other referral Reasons</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Underage referrals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SUAT Traffic Accidents</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Binge Drinking</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons for drinking</strong></td>
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*Note: The table indicates the presence or absence of data collection for various metrics across different locations and years.*
## Data Challenges: Local Law Enforcement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Challenges</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Number of jurisdictions involved</td>
<td>● Get buy-in from all law-enforcement jurisdictions in evaluation &quot;catchment area&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Number of different data systems</td>
<td>● Do mapping of current data captured, and data desired to identify gaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Target formats of the data</td>
<td>● Change data collection forms (e.g., traffic citations) to accommodate administrative data</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Information not ordinarily maintained</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Data Challenges: Local Hospitals and Clinics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Challenges</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• HIPAA Privacy Concerns</td>
<td>• Build relationships with hospital/clinic administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information not ordinarily reported to outsiders</td>
<td>• Ask for data in aggregate form with no PII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Accommodate/alleviate lingering HIPAA concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If ER visits are too low to be good metrics, consider eliminating this metric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Data Challenges: ADAPT (SUAT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Timeliness</td>
<td>- Obtain SUAT data semi-annually or annually, but with monthly totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Congruency with data from other sources</td>
<td>- Do not expect congruence with local law enforcement data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Missing data for some metrics, such as binge drinking</td>
<td>- Focus on DUI, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, and open container violations only.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Data Challenges: Security Forces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Judge Advocate General (JAG) concerns</td>
<td>• Meet and negotiate with JAG officers to ameliorate concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Congruence with local law enforcement data</td>
<td>• Assess the working relationship between Security Forces and local law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration with local law enforcement</td>
<td>enforcement and foster collaboration and daily communication between the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned I

- Validate all assumptions before starting data collection.

- When identifying impact metrics, perform a rigorous gap analysis between the data required to assess impact, and the type and format of administrative data available. In some cases, the gaps may be filled, either by slight or modest changes in procedures or in record-keeping.

- Do not under-estimate the amount of time or resources required to obtain retrospective administrative data. Several sites took almost one year to obtain two years' worth of such data; other sites never succeeded.
Lessons Learned II

- Those metrics that represent low-base rate phenomena may not be worth collecting at all, because the frequency of occurrence is too low to be useful.

- There may be objections from data-source providers, based on legal interpretations. Be ready for them.

- Over time, you **will** identify the most complete and robust administrative measures to use in evaluating the impact of a program.
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