

Three Things We Have Learned about Key Indicators, Risk Assessments, and Differential Monitoring

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After 40+ years of research regarding the Key indicator, Risk Assessment and Differential Monitoring methodologies in human service regulatory administration, there are certain consistencies that have been noted over the years. I have highlighted some of these in Technical Research Notes (please see <http://RIKInstitute.com>) in the past but there are three that I feel are so significant that I wanted to review them here together.

One, in creating the data base for Key Indicators, the best model for sorting the program licensing scores is to compare the top 25% to the bottom 25% while eliminating the middle 50% of the programs that fall within this range. Some states have used the top 50% and the bottom 50% as the sorting schema. In making comparisons utilizing the various data sorting models, the 25%/25% model always performed the best.

Two, in most studies that involved both program compliance data and program quality data, Key indicator and Risk Assessment Rules correlated significantly with ERS and CLASS scores. This is an important finding because one of the reasons for doing abbreviated monitoring inspections such as Key Indicator or Risk Assessment Reviews is to establish a balance between program compliance as measured via licensing and program quality as measured via ERS or CLASS usually within a QRIS protocol.

Three, there appears to be little to no significance to the number of rules within a Key Indicator Tool. It performs well with fewer than 10 rules as well as in cases where there are more rules present in the tool. It is more important what the Key Indicator Rules are than the number. However, with that said, obviously the more rules one has the less efficient the process becomes because you are reviewing more rules than may be warranted.

I thought it important to share these three short thoughts with you regarding the trends I have noticed over the past 40+ years of doing research into Key Indicator, Risk Assessment and Differential Monitoring within human services and early care and education regulatory compliance, licensing, program quality and professional development systems.

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