

**So Which Is Better: Differential Monitoring & Abbreviated Inspections or Comprehensive Inspections?
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During 2019 and 2020, several validation studies have been or are being completed in the states of Washington, Indiana, and in the Province of Saskatchewan. These validation studies are determining if the key indicator and risk assessment methodologies are valid approaches to conducting abbreviated inspections in comparison to more comprehensive inspections in which all rules are assessed. These abbreviated inspections are a form of differential or targeted monitoring. This technical research note focuses on the empirical evidence to determine the efficacy of these approaches, are they better than doing comprehensive reviews when it comes to health and safety outcomes.

When the key indicator and risk assessment methods were originally proposed in the 1980's, an outcome validation study was completed in Pennsylvania during 1985 – 1987 by Kontos and Fiene to determine what impact those methods had on children's development. In that original study, it was determined that the Child Development Program Evaluation Indicator Checklist (CDPEIC) was more effective and efficient in predicting child development outcomes than the more comprehensive Child Development Program Evaluation. In fact, the CDPEIC and the accompanying Caregiver Observation Scale (COFAS) were as effective and more efficient than the ECERS – Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale in that study.

Fast forward to 2019 – 2020, in the province of Saskatchewan, Canada, and a similar study was undertaken but in this case the outcomes were more based upon health and safety rather than child development developmental outcomes. In this case, again the key indicator and risk assessment tool was both a more effective and efficient model over the more comprehensive inspection approach giving credence to utilizing differential monitoring with abbreviated inspections.

In both of the above validation studies involving either child development assessment outcomes or health & safety outcomes, a 16 to 28% increase in effectiveness was observed in the outcome data. In the abbreviated or targeted inspections, 33% of the total rules or less are used to make the determination of regulatory compliance. It is like having the best of both worlds when it comes to effectiveness (16 – 28% increase in outcomes) and in efficiency (66% fewer rules being used). These studies help to validate the use of differential monitoring as a viable alternative to the more comprehensive one-size-fits-all monitoring reviews.