

EXPERIENCES FROM THE SWEDISH ALCOHOL INTERLOCK PROGRAM

A comparison of drivers with and without alcohol dependency

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vti

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- Voluntary and administrated by the Swedish Transport Agency
- The duration of the program is one or two years
 - The two-year program applies to offenders that have committed a severe drink driving offence (BAC > 1 g/L) or have an earlier offence within the previous five years
- Before 1 Mars 2018: offenders with an alcohol abuse or dependency diagnosis (hereafter called alcohol dependence) were allowed in the program and were always assigned to the 2-year program
- From 1 Mars 2018: offenders with alcohol dependence can only participate after undergoing a period of abstinence of at least 6 months, confirmed by a doctor
- If you do not participate in the program, your license is withdrawn one or two years
- About 1 600-1 700 applications per year are approved

TWO EVALUATIONS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED SINCE THE PROGRAM BECAME PERMANENT IN 2012

1. An evaluation based on data from 2013/2014 and conducted by VTI
2. An evaluation conducted after the change of rules regarding offenders with alcohol dependence. Conducted by the Transport Agency

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION

- About 30% of the participants in the two-year program and 20% of all participants had an alcohol dependence
- Drivers that had an alcohol dependence were not eliminated from the interlock program more often than other drivers in the two-year program, 17% compared to 15%.
 - However, the reason for elimination differed. Drivers with alcohol dependence were more often eliminated due to failed starting attempts and less often due to other reasons linked to the interlock (did not install, not serviced, ...)

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION

- About 55% of the participants in the two-year program with alcohol dependence received a new, unconditional, drivers license after the program. For drivers without alcohol dependence, the number is about 70%
- Although, this is better comparing with drivers without interlock. Less than 30% of those committing a severe drink driving offence received a new drivers license after the withdrawal period
- Drivers with alcohol dependence improved their CDT-results during the program. When applying for a new license after the program they had the same proportion of failed tests as other participants of the two-year program

CHANGES AFTER IMPLEMENTING THE NEW RULES IN MARS 2018

- The number of denied or incomplete applications more than doubled between 2016/2017 and 2019.

Number of...	2016	2017	-	2019
Approved applications	1601	1712		1702
Denied applications	86	68		253
Incomplete applications/applicant withdraw the application	222	203		352
Sum of applications	1909	1983		2307

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SECOND EVALUATION

- The proportion of applicants with an alcohol related diagnosis decreased from 19% to 15% after the change of rules
- The most common reason for denied applications after the change was that the driver were unable to confirm lasting sobriety during the period of abstinence
- The number of participants that were eliminated from the program due to failed starting attempts decreased

FINAL CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SECOND EVALUATION

- The results of the evaluation clearly showed that the consequence of the changed rules has meant that fewer people choose to or were capable to participate in the alcohol interlock program.
- It was not possible to conclude whether the changes affected traffic safety or not.
- **A drawback with both studies is that the offenders themselves choose whether they want to apply for the program or not. They are not randomized trials. Therefore, we can not draw conclusions about causality.**

THANK YOU!

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