

Evaluating focused deterrence: A randomized control trial in three jurisdictions

Operation RASOR

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Overview

- Focused Deterrence defined
- Previous Research
- RASOR in Massachusetts
- The Intervention
- Methods
- Findings

Focused Deterrence

- AKA “lever pulling”
- Deter future violent behavior of chronic offenders by ***communicating*** directly with them
- Tell offenders about the impact on the community and new efforts in response
- Use ‘all available legal sanctions (levers)’ when violence occurred

Results of Previous Programs

- Boston – successful -- violent offenses slowed; youth homicides declined but program ended after five years
- Indianapolis, Stockton (CA), High Point (NC) showed success too
- Other agencies did not fare as well -- Baltimore and San Francisco had implementation problems
- Braga and Weisburd's systematic review found that 10 of 11 studies showed some crime reduction

Results of Previous Programs

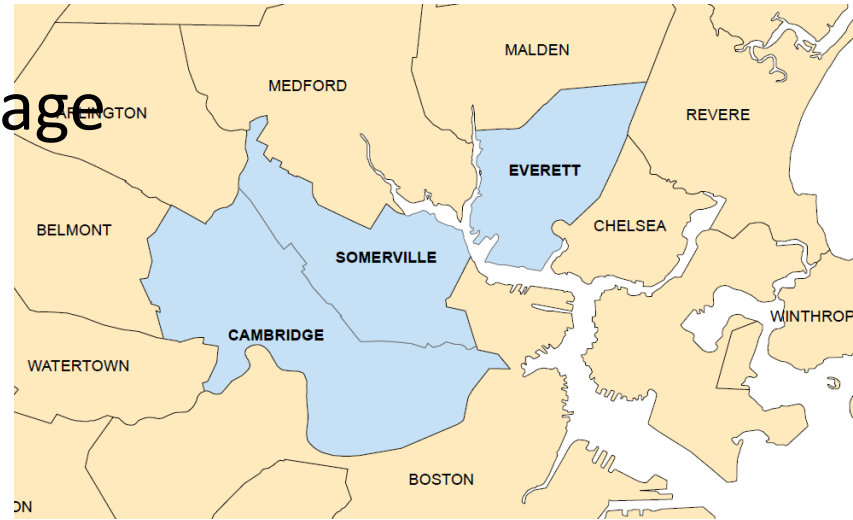
- Indianapolis – only study that looked at recidivism and individual behavior of probationers (2002-2005)
- Two treatments – law enforcement and community leader meetings
- Found no differences between treatment and control groups that received either a law enforcement meeting or community leader meeting
- Recidivism was the same across treatment and control groups – arrested

Results of Previous Programs

- **Why did Indianapolis probationers fail?**
 - Treatments were not intense
 - Post-meeting follow up was ‘seriously limited’
 - No evidence of levers being pulled after the meeting
 - Call-in meetings were the primary mechanism used to alter the behavior of probationers

RASOR: Focused Deterrence

- Three jurisdictions: Cambridge, Everett, and Somerville
- Intervene with persons who engage in social harm
- Law enforcement = police, DA's, probation
- Community/service = mental health, treatment, job possibilities, homeless, clergy, community orgs.



Primary goals of Operation RASOR

- 1) Prevent future victimization and social harm of the offenders
- 2) Reduce recidivism of those who create social harm
- 3) Determine whether the modified focused deterrence approach is a successful strategy.



Focused Deterrence

Operation RASOR

- Cross-Jurisdictional
- 3 District Courts
- Data Driven
- Social Harm
- Limited leverage
- Complete partnership with services providers
- Police assist with service delivery & case management

Pulling Levers

- Single Jurisdiction
- 1 District Court
- Officer identified
- Violent crimes
- Complete leverage
- Separate messages from providers and LE
- Police typically focus on traditional enforcement efforts only

Five phases of intervention

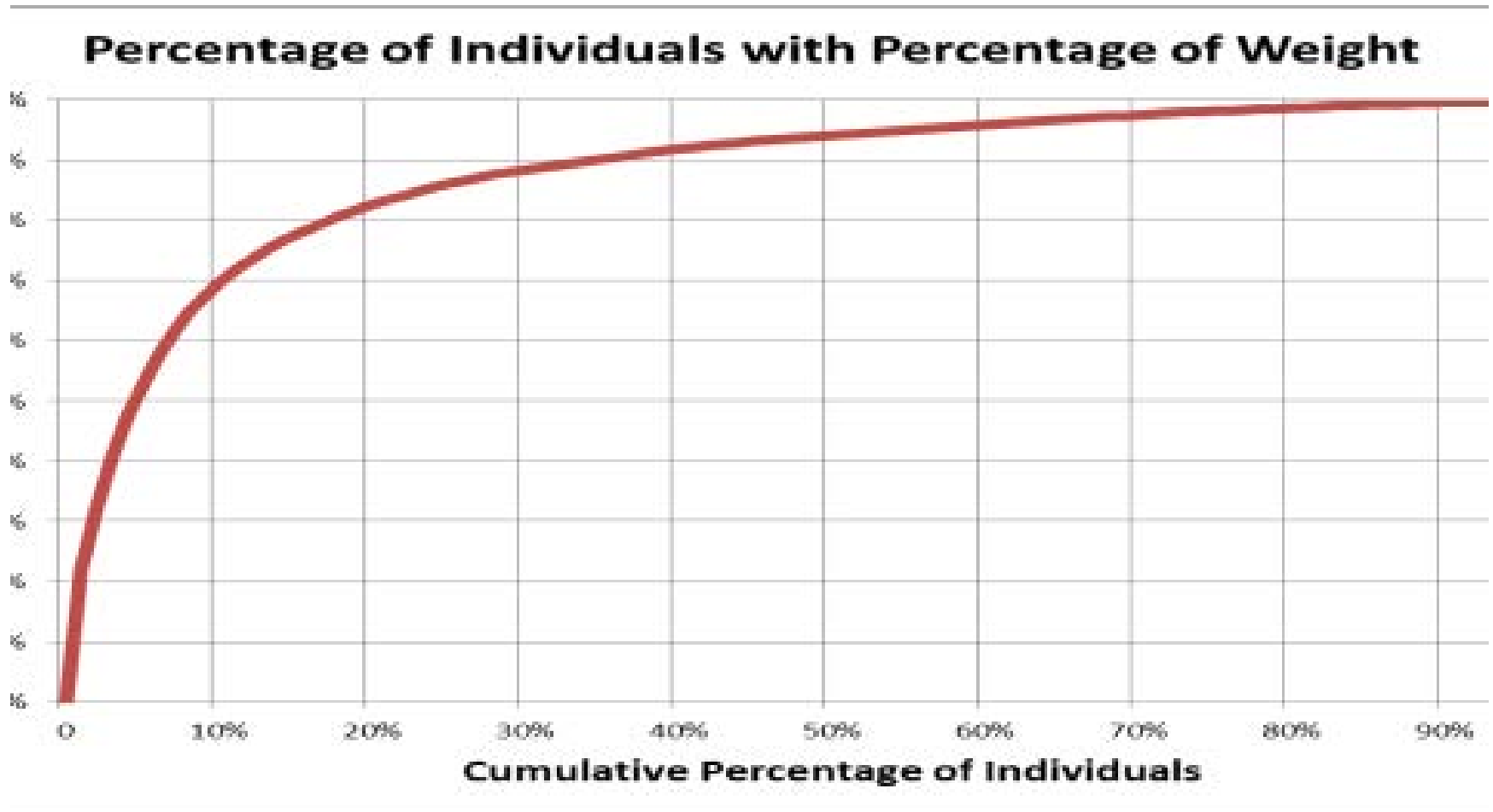
- 1) Identification
- 2) Outreach
- 3) Notification Meeting
- 4) Resource Delivery
- 5) Relentless follow up



Identification phase

- Regional database combined RMS for CPD, SPD, EPD
- Over 300,000 unique individuals
- Over 5,000 are a defendant/suspect and cross jurisdictional
- Algorithm used to determine social harm score
 - offense weight, role of individual, gang involvement, use of firearm, drugs, and the time lapse between the incident and the present

Social harm



Outreach phase

- Crime analysts, police officers, and detectives developed detailed case profiles
- Each candidate was assigned a police case manager who notifies candidate of status as an impact player
- Candidates invited to the notification meeting
- Case manager attempted to engage the family or friends of candidate

Notification meeting phase

- Candidates informed of the harm they are causing to communities
- Services available to assist in changing behavior
 - Substance abuse programs, employment opportunities, housing options, and other available services
- Continued criminal behavior will result in a combined effort to hold candidate accountable
 - Arrests, prosecutions, and enhanced sanctions
 - Risk of punishment is higher because they are being

Notification Meetings

Treatment candidates self-selected into two groups:

- Participants – those who chose to participate
 - Completed intake assessment & develop treatment/ action plans
 - Met regularly with their case management team
- Non-participants – those who chose not to participate (or are removed)
 - Received more intensive enforcement efforts through a plan developed for each offender by case management team

Resource Delivery Phase

- Participants met with the social service provider coordinator for an assessment.
- Developed goals and an action plan
- Social service coordinator and police case manager provided follow up with participant
- Relentless follow-up by case managers

THE EXPERIMENT

Methodology

- A randomized controlled trial (RCT)
- Randomized block design and stratified allocation for top 150 offenders on list
- Top 1-50 in database randomly assigned to Treatment & Control groups
 - allows for equal numbers of treatment and control groups for each notification meeting



Methodology

- Three Cohorts and three call-in meetings:
 - April 2014
 - August 2014
 - November 2014
- Interventions by case managers from April 2014 to June 2015
- Measured recidivism in the treatment and control groups
- Used 'survival' analysis for the outcome evaluation

Implementation Measures

- Was the treatment and control implemented as planned?
- Observations of call-ins
- Interviews with officers, community/service providers to determine how they followed protocols
- Contacts with offenders – keep records or logs

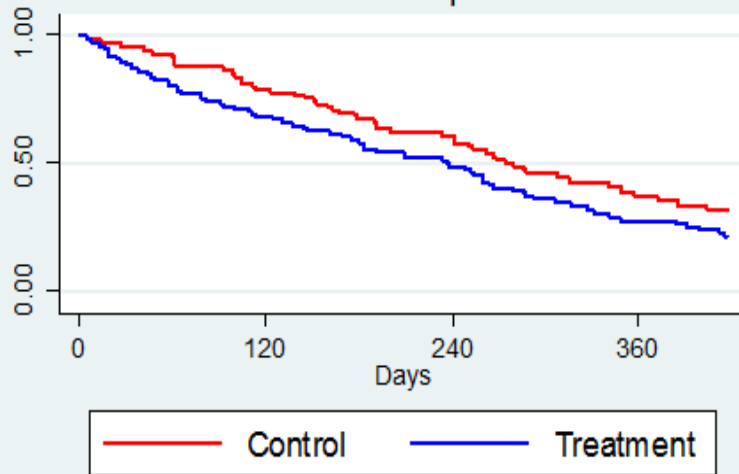


Findings

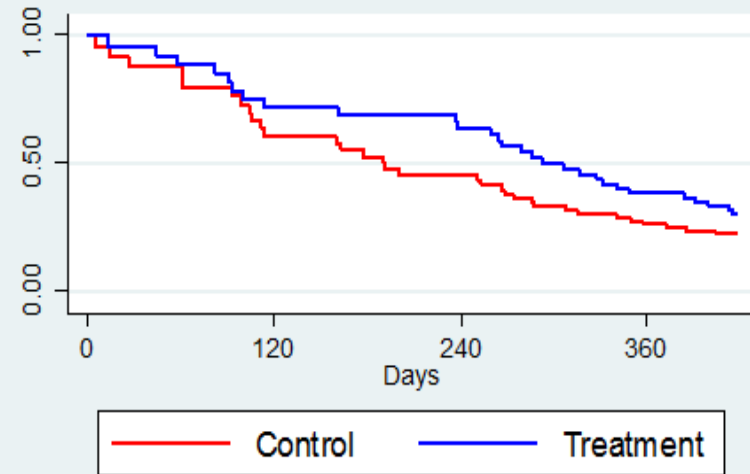
- No statistically significant differences in time to arraignment between treatment and control subjects for the full sample.
- For cohort 1: treatment group had a longer time to arraignment compared to control subjects, but this difference was not statistically significant
- For cohort 2, the control subjects had a longer time to arraignment compared to RASOR subjects and this difference was statistically significant.
- For cohort 3, the control subjects had a longer time to arraignment compared to RASOR subjects, but this difference was not statistically significant.

Kaplan Meier Survival Estimate

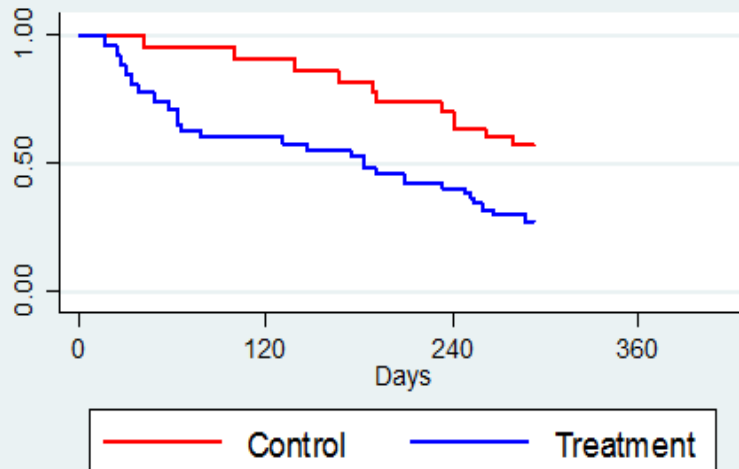
All Groups



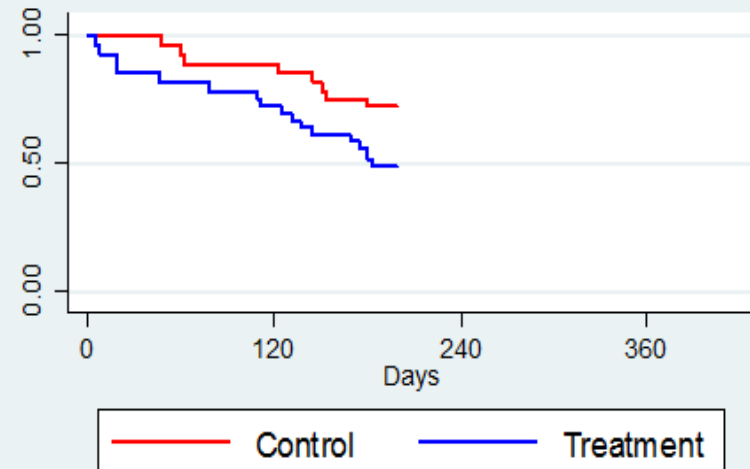
Cohort 1



Cohort 2



Cohort 3

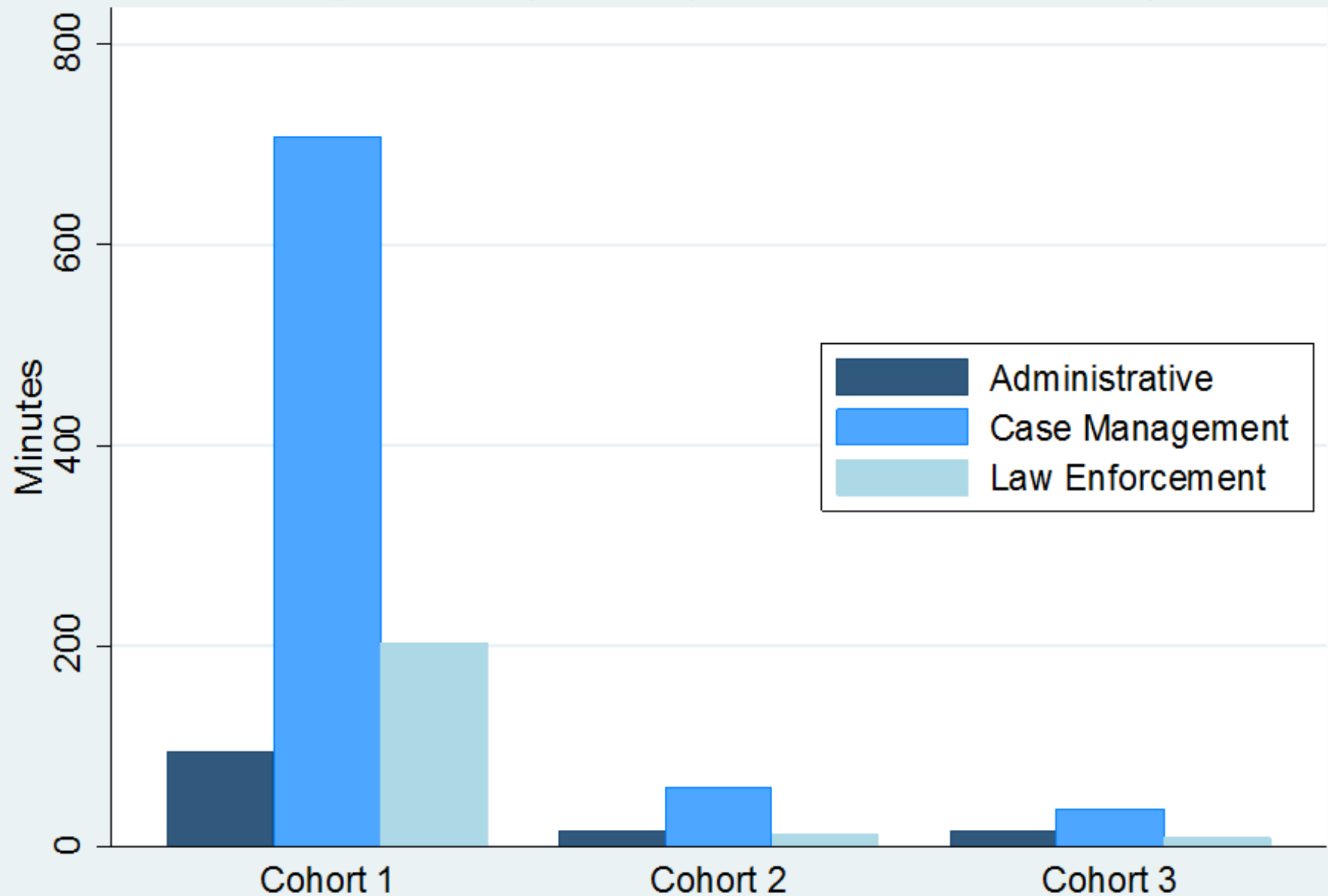


Findings

Considerable differences in the amount of time spent per case between the cohorts. This may explain why the results from cohort 1 were more consistent with the hypothesized relationships.

- Cohort 1 received on average 706.8 officer-minutes of case management time
- Cohort 2 received on average 58.4 officer-minutes of case management time
- Cohort 3 received on average 37.6 officer- minutes of case management time

Average Activity Time per Treatment Participant



Conclusion

Future studies:

Examine the relationship between dosage (case management time) and impact

This study suggests that the effectiveness of focused deterrence may be related to the amount of time spent by officers in case management activities.

Questions?



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