Publicized Sobriety Checkpoints to Reduce Alcohol-Related Driving Fatalities in Powell, Wyoming

Rozanna Fang • University of Washington School of Medicine 2015 • RUOP iii-3

Purpose
To decrease the number of alcohol-impaired drivers on Powell streets through a form of high visibility enforcement

Background
• Powell is a rural, agricultural town of <6,500 located in Park County
• Park County has the 3rd highest rate of alcohol-related driving deaths among all 23 Wyoming counties

Methods
• Demographic analysis indicated that Park County had high rates of alcohol-related driving fatalities
• Conversations with community members, public health professionals, college counselors, and law enforcement confirmed that alcohol abuse is a local concern
• A literature review identified strategies to reduce alcohol abuse and alcohol-related driving incidents

Results
• A literature review and recommendations tailored to community needs were shared with local partners
• Potential benefits of sobriety checkpoints were acknowledged but concerns about legal hurdles were raised

Discussion
• Publicized sobriety checkpoints are effective and can be feasible in a rural setting to reduce alcohol-impaired driving
• Under the current interpretation of Wyoming law, sobriety checkpoints are not authorized
• If sufficient community support was garnered, state law could be modified to include an exception for sobriety checkpoints