Uniform, Differential, and Integrated Program Monitoring

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This technical research paper demonstrates the key similarities and differences amongst uniform, differential, and integrated monitoring. The similarities and differences will be depicted in the following table. The table depicts how each monitoring approach addresses the specific key element presented. Explanations are provided after the summary table. It builds off several other papers* that dealt with regulatory compliance paradigms and the relationship between regulatory compliance and program quality; but this paper deals more specifically with program monitoring systems that are being utilized within the human services.

Program Monitoring System's Key Elements Comparison

Key Element	Uniform	Differential	Integrated
1Risk	Absolute	Relative	Relative
2Rules	Equal	Not equal	Not the focus
3Quality Standards	Not the focus	Not the focus	Focus
4Measurement	Nominal	Nominal	Ordinal
5Approach	Everyone gets same	Based on need	Open ended
6Weights	None	Equal or Relative	Balance
7Philosophy	Do no harm	Do no harm	Do things well
8Data distribution	Linear	Non-linear	Linear
9Risk/Performance	Risk	Risk	Performance
10Scaling	100 or 0	100 or 0	100 - 0
11Function	Gatekeeper	Gatekeeper	Enabler
12Quality	Structural	Structural	Process
13Compliance	Full	Substantial	Full/Substantial

1. Risk is defined in a uniform monitoring system with all rules at an equal risk level. In differential monitoring, risk changes to be more relative in that certain rules are more of a concern than others. In an integrated monitoring system with the influx of quality elements, risk is relative also because of this added dimension.
2. Rules are either created equally, which is the case with uniform monitoring systems, or they are not equal in differential monitoring systems where weights are employed to demonstrate the relative risk of specific rules. In integrated monitoring systems, rules are replaced with standards and specific health and safety rules are not the focus.
3. Quality standards are the focal point of integrated monitoring systems but not so with uniform and differential monitoring systems which emphasize health and safety rules.

4. Measurement at both the uniform and differential monitoring systems levels are nominal in which either a rule is in or out of compliance. Integrated monitoring systems which deal with program quality are generally at an ordinal, Likert level of measurement.
5. The approach of each of the monitoring systems varies from everyone gets-the- same for uniform monitoring systems to based-on-need for differential monitoring systems, and more open ended for integrated monitoring systems where both compliance and quality are equally important.
6. Weights are not an issue with uniform monitoring systems because all rules are dealt with equally and therefore are dealt with as strictly violation data with an equal weight. With differential monitoring systems that is not the case and is the focal point in this approach where weights can be either equally applied with a Likert Scale with an equal interval or relatively applied with the Fibonacci Sequence. Integrated monitoring systems have a more balanced approach dependent upon the balance of compliance and quality.
7. Philosophy for the uniform and differential monitoring systems deals more with rules and "do no harm" while integrated monitoring systems focus on quality and "doing good" or best practices.
8. Data distributions are linear when dealing with uniform and integrated monitoring systems, but differential monitoring systems have clearly demonstrated a non-linear data distribution based upon the theory of regulatory compliance**.
9. Risk/Performance plays out with risk being predominant with uniform and differential monitoring systems but performance being predominant with integrated monitoring systems where quality is central.
10. Scaling is at a nominal level in both uniform and differential monitoring systems where measurement is based upon either being in or out of compliance with rules (100 or 0). Integrated monitoring systems are at an ordinal level where various levels of quality are being assessed (100 – 0).
11. Function of the approach is either as gatekeeper at both the uniform and differential monitoring systems levels and as an enabler at the integrated monitoring systems where it is more of an open system rather than a closed system which is based upon licensing. Open systems are represented by voluntary systems dealing with quality standards.
12. Quality at the uniform and differential monitoring systems is more structural than process-oriented, as with integrated monitoring systems. In legal terms, it is the difference between soft data in the case of process-oriented quality as versus hard data in the case of structural quality.
13. Compliance needs to be fully or 100% compliant in uniform monitoring systems, which is not the case in differential monitoring systems where substantial regulatory compliance is sufficient based upon the results of the theory of regulatory compliance**. With integrated monitoring systems there is more of a balancing act between full and substantial compliance levels.

Hopefully, this clarifies how the various program monitoring systems used within the human services are similar and different. This paper should be read with the other technical research papers dealing with regulatory compliance and program quality paradigms which enhance upon these above stated elements.

References:

***Regulatory Compliance Monitoring Paradigms and the Relationship of Regulatory Compliance/Licensing with Program Quality: A Policy Commentary, Fiene, 2023.** (https://doi.org/10.21423/JRS-V10A239).

****Treatise on Regulatory Compliance, Fiene, 2019. Journal of Regulatory Science https://doi.org/10.21423/jrs-v07fiene**