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## Restricted Licensing among Older Drivers in Iowa

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Lifesavers

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Ivan Cheung

**Restricted Licensing among  
Older Drivers in Iowa**

Keli A. Braitman  
Neil K. Chaudhary\*  
Anne T. McCartt

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*\*Preusser Research Group  
Trumbull, CT*

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**INSURANCE INSTITUTE  
FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY**

1005 NORTH GLEBE ROAD ARLINGTON, VA 22201

PHONE 703/247-1500 FAX 703/247-1678

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# Licensing provisions for older drivers only

April 2010

	number of states
shortened renewal period	18
vision test required	9
road test required	2
mail or electronic renewal prohibited	7

# Effects of license renewal policies for older drivers

Grabowski et al (2004)

- States requiring in-person driver's license renewal had a 17 percent lower fatality rate per licensed driver among drivers 85 and over, compared with states without such laws
- For drivers 65 and older, there was no difference in fatality rates for states with and without vision testing, road tests, or shortened renewal periods

# Iowa is a leader in older driver licensing policies

- Drivers 70 and older must renew in person every 2 years
- Potentially unfit drivers must take road test
  - Referrals from staff who observe drivers during license renewal
  - Referrals by family, physician, or law enforcement
  - Police reports on crashes of drivers 80 and older suggest need for road test
- Road test may result in full, restricted, or suspended license
- Restrictions may prohibit driving
  - When headlights are required
  - On interstates or roads with specified speed limits
  - Outside geographic boundary

# Survey of older drivers in Iowa

- 522 drivers 70 and older renewing licenses during 2006-08
- Telephone interviews shortly after renewal and again 6 months later

# Renewal outcome

	percent (n = 522)
no test, full license	44
test, full license	37
test, restricted license	18
test, license suspended	1

# Number of different restrictions among drivers with restricted licenses

	percent (n = 93)
1	46
2	27
3	22
4	5

# Restriction types among drivers with restricted licenses

	percent with each restriction (n = 93)
head light	71
geographic area	53
speed	44
interstates	18

# Initial survey: Driver characteristics and driving patterns

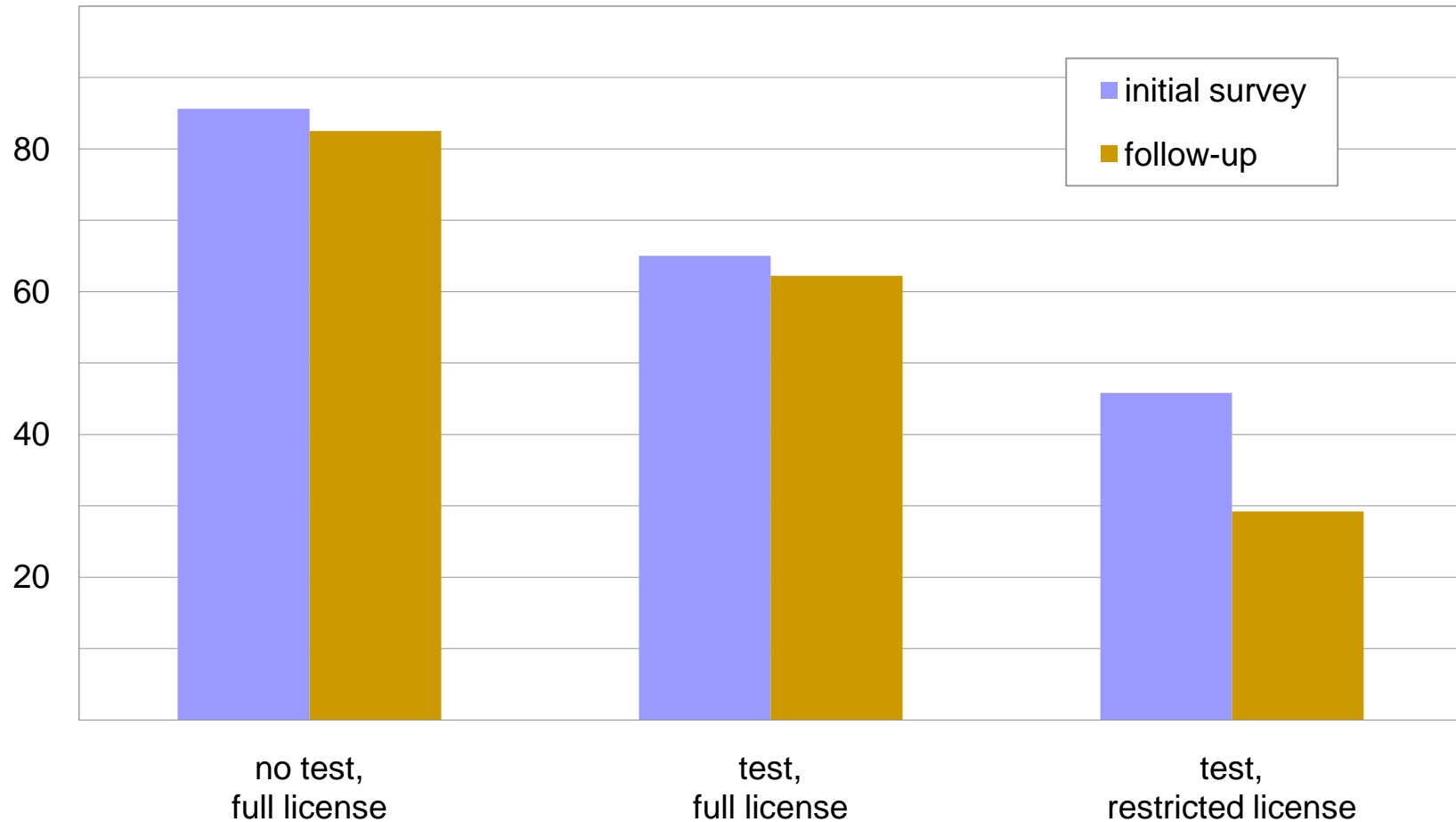
	no test, full license	test, full license	test, restricted license
average driver age	80	81	83
average weekly miles	81	60	46
percent who drove at night	85	67	38
percent who drove on high-speed roads	88	81	68

# Initial survey: Percent who reported visual impairments and physical mobility limitations

	no test, full license	test, full license	test, restricted license
diagnosed with			
glaucoma	8	7	13
macular degeneration	7	7	34
cataract	58	56	72
difficulty with			
climbing stairs	49	65	66
walking one-half mile	44	72	67
doing heavy housework	39	62	56

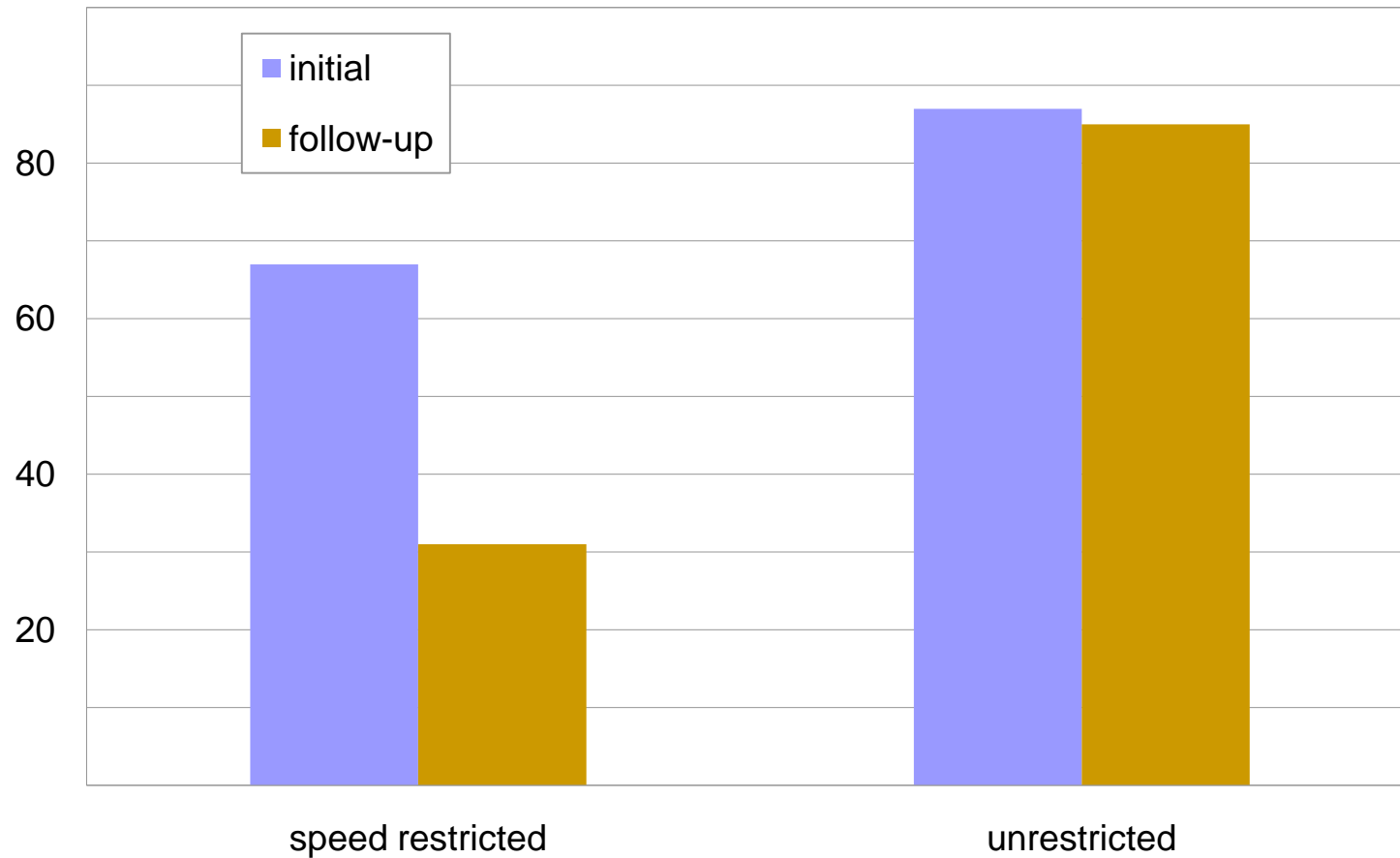
# Average weekly miles driven

Initial survey vs. follow-up 6 months later



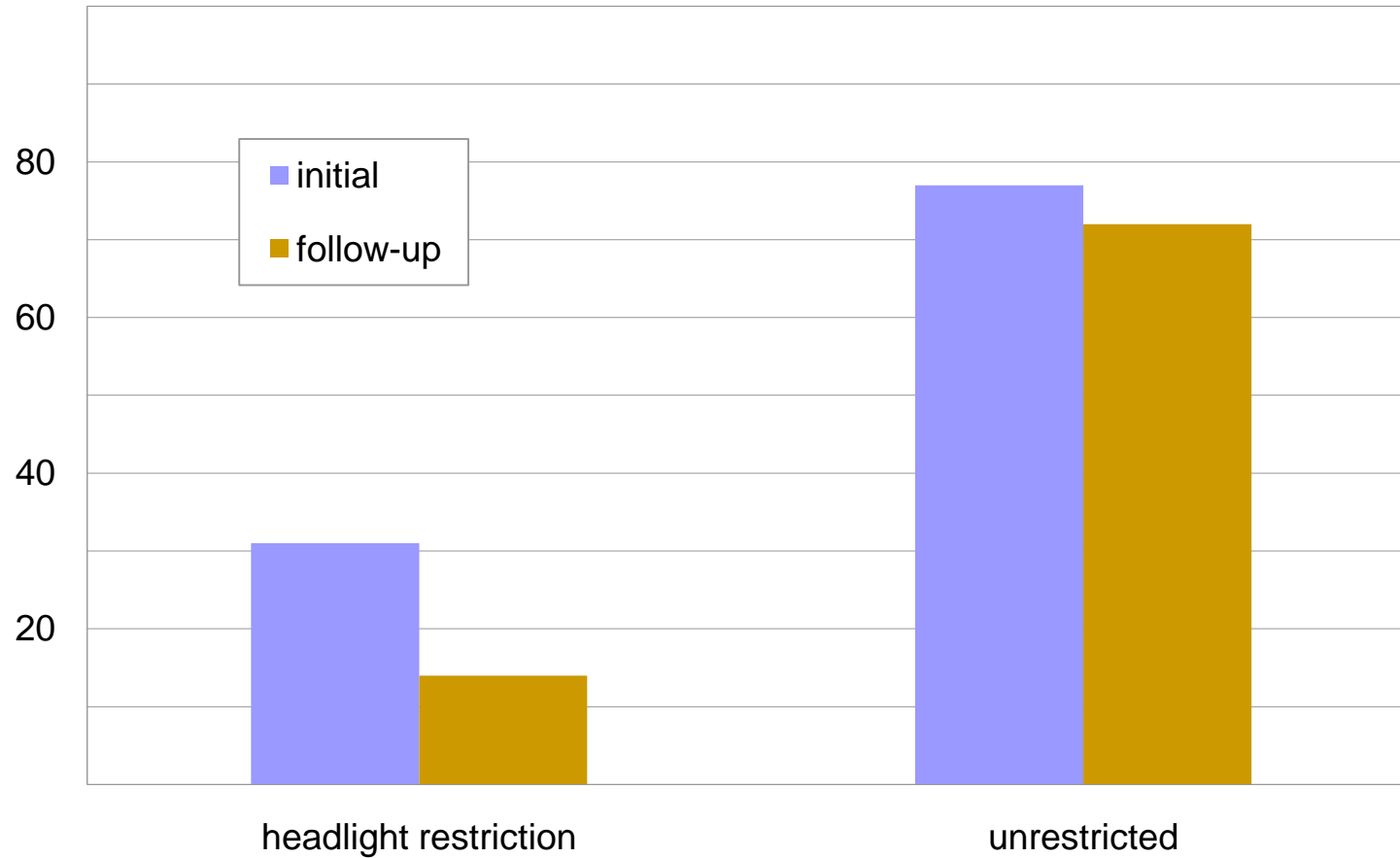
# Percent who drive on high-speed roads

Initial survey vs. follow-up 6 months later



# Percent who drive at night

Initial survey vs. follow-up 6 months later



# Conclusions

- Iowa drivers identified for testing reported more visual impairments, and physical mobility limitations
- Most comply with license restrictions
- Official restrictions apparently reinforce some drivers' own decisions
- Very few self-reported crashes and violations
- Effects on crashes unknown

## Research & statistics

### [Selected research bibliography](#)

Highlights from the Institute's research since 1969

### [Booster seat ratings](#)

The Institute takes the guesswork out of selecting boosters most likely to provide good lap and shoulder belt fit for your child in a range of vehicles.

### [Choosing the right child restraint](#)

Information and videos designed to help choose the right type of restraint for your child's age and size; general information on installation and use is also provided.



### [Fatality Facts](#)

**37,261 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2008.** The Institute publishes statistical facts about the motor vehicle safety picture in 2008, the most recent year for which fatality data are available. Fatality Facts are updated once a year, when the US Department of Transportation releases data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).



### [Q&As](#)

Q&As, which address frequently asked questions about highway safety, are updated continuously, as relevant information is acquired.

### [Auto insurance loss information from the Highway Loss Data Institute \(HLDI\)](#)

#### [Insurance losses by make and model](#)

These pages show losses for hundreds of passenger vehicles grouped by body style and size under six insurance coverages: collision, property damage liability, comprehensive personal injury protection, medical payment, and bodily injury.

#### [Insurance loss fact sheets](#)

HLDI results are based on analysis of the losses of more than 150 million vehicles under 6 insurance coverages. These losses vary widely not only among vehicle size/type groups but also among vehicle models that are similar in size and type.

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## Q&As: Older people

January 2010

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- 1 | [How many older drivers are there?](#)
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- 3 | [How much do seniors drive?](#)
- 4 | [How do crash rates for older drivers compare with those for drivers of other ages?](#)
- 5 | [To what extent does fragility contribute to older drivers' fatal crash rates?](#)
- 6 | [How do crashes involving older drivers differ from the crashes of other drivers?](#)
- 7 | [Do age-related changes affect driving ability?](#)
- 8 | [Do older drivers constitute a substantial hazard to other road users?](#)
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- 11 | [Do special regulations for driver's license renewal among older drivers affect crash rates?](#)
- 12 | [Do states place driving restrictions on older drivers?](#)
- 13 | [Is driver education beneficial for older drivers?](#)
- 14 | [How can new vehicle features improve safety for older drivers?](#)
- 15 | [What changes in the driving environment could improve safety for older drivers?](#)
- 16 | [Are alternatives to driving available for older people?](#)
- 17 | [Are older pedestrians at higher risk of fatality than younger pedestrians?](#)
- 18 | [What can be done to reduce injuries and fatalities among older pedestrians?](#)

### References

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