



## Substance Use **S**creening, **B**rief **I**ntervention and **R**eferral to **T**reatment

### SBIRT in Community Health Centers

- ✓ **Screening**- While in the waiting room, patients are screened to identify their level(s) of substance use using a validated instrument.
- ✓ **Brief Intervention** (BI)- Those patients whose screening indicates risky or harmful levels of use receive a BI, which is a 10-15 minute conversation to motivate positive behavior change.
- ✓ **Referral to Treatment** (RT)- For those whose screening indicates heavy/dependent use, providers make a referral for further treatment.

## SBIRT is Effective

- A meta-analysis of randomized control trials concluded that heavy drinkers receiving BI services are **twice as likely to reduce their drinking** as heavy drinkers receiving no intervention.<sup>1</sup>
- Results of SAMHSA’s SBIRT program in six states show **reductions of 39% in heavy alcohol use, 68% in drug use, and improved levels of general and mental health** at 6-month follow up.<sup>2</sup>
- In a study of low-income minority men and women, individuals receiving brief motivational intervention during routine medical visits were **more likely to be abstinent for cocaine** alone (22.3% vs. 16.9%), **heroin** alone (40.2% vs. 30.6%) and **both drugs** (17.4% vs. 12.8%).<sup>3</sup>

## SBIRT is Recommended

- The National Commission on Prevention Priorities ranked the top 25 preventive clinical services recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (U.S.P.S.T.F.) on preventable burden (PB) and return on investment (ROI). On this list **alcohol screening and intervention ranked #4**, just lower than childhood immunizations and smoking cessation, and **higher than screening for high blood pressure, cholesterol, STIs, osteoporosis, or breast, cervical or colon cancer**.<sup>4,5</sup>
- The World Health Organization, U.S.P.S.T.F, and the Committee on Trauma of the American College of Surgeons have endorsed routine SBIRT in primary health care settings and Level I Trauma Centers.

*Rankings of 25 Preventive Clinical Services Recommended by USPSTF*

| # | Service                                   | PB | ROI |
|---|---|----|-----|
| 1 | Aspirin to prevent CVS disease            | 5  | 5   |
| 2 | Childhood immunizations                   | 5  | 5   |
| 3 | Smoking Cessation                         | 5  | 5   |
| 4 | <b>Alcohol screening and intervention</b> | 4  | 5   |

*PB & ROI scoring: 1 = lowest; 5 = highest*

#### References

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3. Bernstein J, Bernstein E, Tassiopoulos K, Heeren T, Levenson S, Hingson R. Brief motivational intervention at a clinic visit reduces cocaine and heroin use. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence.* 2005;77(1):49-59.
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