

Getting in front of substance use with **Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment**

What is Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)?

SBIRT is a comprehensive, integrated, public health approach to the delivery of early intervention and screening for individuals with risky alcohol and drug use. SBIRT also helps get patients to more intensive substance use treatment quickly if they're at high risk for developing a substance use disorder or are already dependent upon substances.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines SBIRT as:

- Brief (typically about 5 to 10 minutes for brief intervention and 5 to 12 minutes for brief treatment).
- Universal.
- Targeting one or more behaviors regarding risky alcohol and drug use.
- Delivered in a public health, nonsubstance use treatment setting.
- Comprehensive – comprising screening and referral.
- Involving research, evaluation and collection of experiential evidence to assess the model's effectiveness.

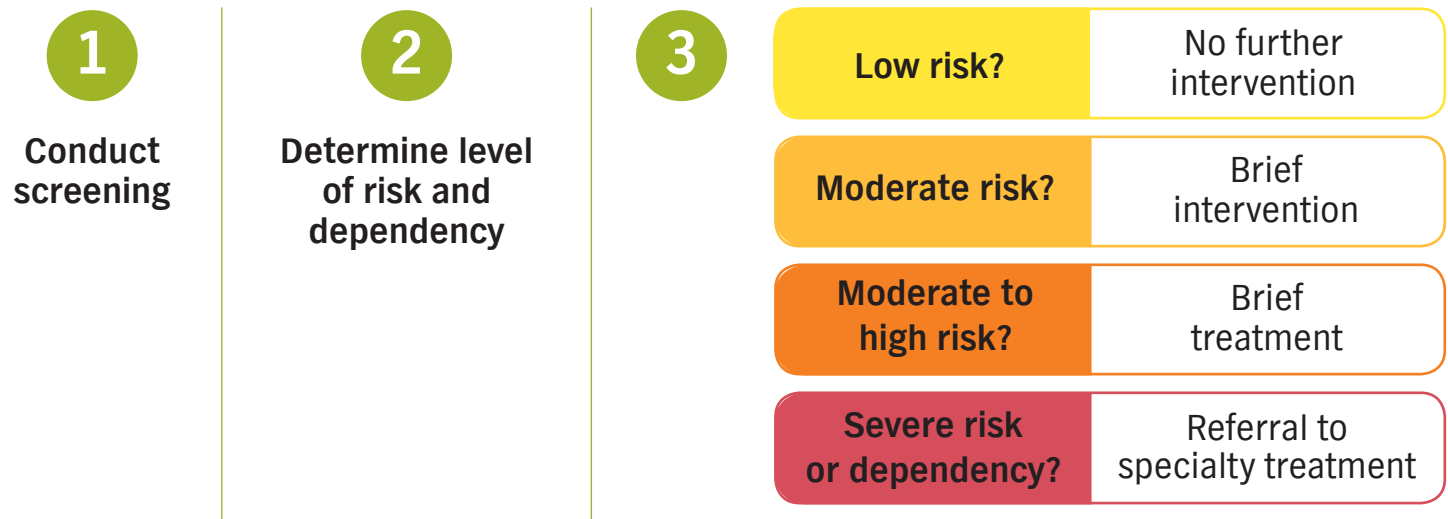
When we say:	We mean:
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Provide a short, structured consultation to identify the right amount of treatment. ◦ Use common screening tools such as AUDIT, CAGE and ASSIST.
Brief intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Educate patients and increase motivation to reduce risky behavior. ◦ Brief education intervention increases motivation to reduce risky behavior.
Brief treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Fulfill goals of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Changing the immediate behavior or thoughts about a risky behavior. – Addressing longstanding problems with harmful drinking and drug misuse. – Helping patients with higher levels of disorder obtain more long-term care.
Referral to treatment	<p>If a patient meets the diagnostic criteria for substance dependence or other mental illnesses as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, we recommend you refer him or her to a specialty provider. Referrals can be complex and involve coordination across different types of services – We can help! Call us at 1-800-450-8753.</p>

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Who delivers SBIRT services?

Primary care centers, hospital emergency rooms, trauma centers and community health settings have the best chance to intervene early with at-risk substance users and prevent more severe consequences. PCPs are the primary source of SBIRT services; however, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and behavioral health providers play an important role as well. SBIRT services are intended to be delivered in primary care medical settings as the first line of substance use harm reduction, identification and referral to specialized services.

SBIRT process flow



Implementing SBIRT into care management

- **Choose a screening tool.** We recommend the AUDIT, CAGE Questionnaire, TWEAK scale, 4P's Plus® Screening Tool or CRAFFT Screening Tool.
- **Decide who will conduct the screening and intervention and when it will occur.** It can be as simple as a nurse performing a brief screening while taking a patient's blood pressure.
- **If needed, refer patients to additional treatment.**



Need help with a referral to a behavioral health specialist?

Call your local health plan if you have questions or need assistance. We're glad to help you get our members this important kind of care.

Sources

1. Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) in Behavioral Healthcare, 4/1/2019, www.SAMHSA.gov.
2. *Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention: A Guide for Public Health Practitioners*, American Public Health Association, page 8.



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