

Alcohol and drug use is a medical issue.

It's time we treated it like one.

From asking comes answers

Alcohol and
drug use has
been called
America's
number one
public health
concern.

Drugs and alcohol directly impact the lives of millions of Americans and affect the delivery of health care on many levels. They confound diagnoses by masking or exacerbating symptoms. They interfere with effective treatment of injury and illness by causing dangerous drug interactions, and they directly contribute to over 70 conditions that require hospitalization. Despite these compelling concerns, the medical community has not developed universal practices to address alcohol and drug use consistently within the scope of routine medical care.



InSight aims to help health care providers understand the impact of alcohol and drugs on patient health and acquire the skills to address substance use and misuse more effectively. InSight incorporates strategies that give providers the tools to help patients make wise choices about their alcohol and drug use and learn how their substance use affects their health.

Startling facts about the impact of alcohol and drugs on public health:

Alcohol and drugs account for **25%** of the 2 million deaths that occur in the United States every year, more than any other preventable health problem.

Between **40 and 50%** of all traffic deaths are attributable to alcohol.



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In trauma centers around the country, about **half** of all trauma patients screen positive for alcohol or drugs.

Substance use costs each person in Texas an average of **\$1500** per year in taxes and increased health care costs.

Alcohol and drug use is directly or indirectly responsible for **1/3** of all emergency room visits.



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Kenneth L. Mattox, M.D.
Chief of Staff,
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InSight represents a tremendous opportunity to make real progress against the impact drugs and alcohol have on our already overburdened system. We can reduce operating costs and help people live better lives, and that's what medicine is about.

InSight™ will improve health care for everyone.

InSight is on the leading edge of a national movement that acknowledges the medical community's responsibility to address substance use and misuse. People trust health care providers. Patients are responsive to medical advice about substance use because treating substance use disorders as a medical problem does not convey judgment, shame, or rebuke. Health care providers have the opportunity to counsel patients who are using drugs or drinking at risky levels before they become dependent (addicted) and need specialized outpatient or inpatient treatment services. Finally, research clearly demonstrates that even brief advice from a health care professional reduces unhealthy behaviors and negative health consequences, which reduces health care utilization and associated costs.

What exactly IS InSight?

InSight is a part of a federal initiative designed to integrate screening, brief intervention, and referral and treatment (SBIRT) services for substance use problems into the routine delivery of medical care and create a bridge between the general medical system and the substance use disorders service delivery system. With funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the State of Texas has joined forces with local and statewide partners to create a model program that is moving us closer to the goal of integrating physical and behavioral health care services, bringing an emerging service model out of the laboratory and into the public health care system in Houston.

The Texas Department of State Health Services administers the project, and management and direct patient care services are provided through Harris County Hospital District (HCHD) and The Council on Alcohol and Drugs Houston (The Council). Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, and the Addiction Research Institute at the University of Texas at Austin provide clinical consultation, training and provider support, and reporting and evaluation services. Working alone, none of these entities could implement such a project. Together, they are building a program that serves as a blueprint for the delivery of health care services across Texas.

InSight™ is good medicine.

There are a number of perceptual barriers in the medical community that discourage health care systems and health care providers from including SBIRT services for alcohol and drug misuse in routine health care. Like the general public, many health care professionals consider alcohol and drug problems to be character flaws or moral failings. Many providers also consider managing substance misuse to be outside the realm of practicing medicine, or they feel unprepared to address these issues. Some providers are skeptical and believe treatment for substance abuse and dependence is not effective. They may also believe patients are not honest about their substance use; in fact research clearly indicates this is not the case. Some practitioners are concerned that talking about such sensitive issues invades patients' privacy and alienates them. And, of course, there are always concerns about insurance reimbursement and liability.

InSight helps address these important concerns. The American Medical Association, along with many other leading medical organizations, recognizes alcohol and drug abuse and dependence as distinct disease processes. This perspective represents a significant step in reducing the stigma commonly associated with substance misuse. In addition, organizations such as The United States Preventative Services Task Force, the United State Veteran's Administration and the American Society of Addiction Medicine recommend screening for alcohol as part of routine patient care. There is a growing body of evidence that SBIRT is a powerful and cost-effective way to change behavior, reducing the damage caused by misuse of alcohol and drugs and preventing addiction.

Establishing a best practice approach for alcohol and drug screening, intervention, and referral and treatment is critical and overdue. While nearly all health care providers are aware of the impact of drugs and alcohol on patient care and public health, and most already use some type of screening process, there is no uniformly applied protocol for implementing SBIRT services into routine medical care. InSight's primary goal is to make addressing alcohol and drug concerns a major element in health care delivery systems by incorporating standardized services for all patients.

What does InSight provide to patients?

InSight provides a full range of SBIRT services to patients in HCHD community and school-based health clinics and hospitals, including the Ben Taub General Hospital Emergency Center (Level I Trauma Center) and the Lyndon Baines Johnson General Hospital Emergency Center (Level III Trauma Center). Primary care practitioners are trained to screen and refer patients who screen positive to InSight for services provided by a dedicated staff of InSight Specialists.

The program places special emphasis on individuals who are misusing or abusing substances but are not yet dependent. Those who engage in risky or harmful use of alcohol or other drugs receive brief intervention (BI) in conjunction with their other health care services. Patients who are abusing substances receive, or are referred to The Council for, brief treatment (BT). The staffs of HCHD and The Council work together to ensure that patients who are dependent are linked with appropriate outpatient or inpatient treatment services in the community.

InSight in practice:

InSight has developed a simple, evidence-based screening interview designed to elicit accurate feedback quickly. The three InSight screening questions were carefully selected and worded so they are difficult to dodge or answer in a vague manner. The screening process is taught to doctors, nurses and other providers through short in-service presentations. Trained staff members receive a badge card printed with the interview questions, which serves as a ready reference tool, ensuring brief, consistent screening from one provider to another. In addition, health care providers learn simple procedures for documenting screening results on existing forms and charts in order to make appropriate referrals and arrange needed follow-up services. Staff are taught to dispense brief advice to patients based on their self-reported screening. All patients, whether or not they drink or use drugs, receive a prevention message or, if needed, a brief referral message from their health care provider expressing concern and recommending the patient receive InSight services.

Every patient who screens positive is referred to an InSight Specialist, who conducts a 15-minute, individualized counseling session (BI). These low-key interventions are based on Motivational Interviewing, a technique that encourages patients to openly discuss their substance use. In addition, HCHD offers a weekly medical clinic where patients receive follow-up counseling as well as primary medical care. For patients who need a higher level of service, The Council provides intensive individualized counseling services (BT), and coordinates referral to a range of services including long-term outpatient and inpatient treatment. The InSight team at The Council also conducts follow-up assessments, collecting valuable outcome data and providing the opportunity for additional intervention when needed. All InSight services are aimed at helping patients make positive and healthy choices, modify problematic behavior, and improve their health and overall wellbeing.

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InSight™ Outcomes

InSight has provided services to thousands of patients in Harris County. Our compelling results demonstrate that InSight helps patients decrease their alcohol and drug use, and reduces emergency room visits related to alcohol and drugs. Here are just some of the outcomes achieved to date:

Over 50,000 patients have been screened for alcohol and drug use through the InSight program. Of these, more than 8500 (17%) screened positive and received an intervention. Patients who received InSight services during 2005 report the following at their six month follow-up:

71%

of the alcohol drinkers reduced the number of days they drank alcohol.

85%

of binge drinkers reduced the number of heavy drinking days (5+ drinks in one sitting) and 68% reported no heavy drinking days in the past 30 days.

89%

of drug users reduced the number of days they used drugs, and 80% reported no usage in the past 30 days.

76%

of patients assessed as needing BT or referral to specialty treatment perceived their general health had improved.

A cost analysis of 853 patients revealed a significant reduction in utilization of emergency and inpatient services, resulting in a total cost reduction of more than \$4 million for the Harris County Hospital District in the year following receipt of InSight services (not including the costs of related physician services).

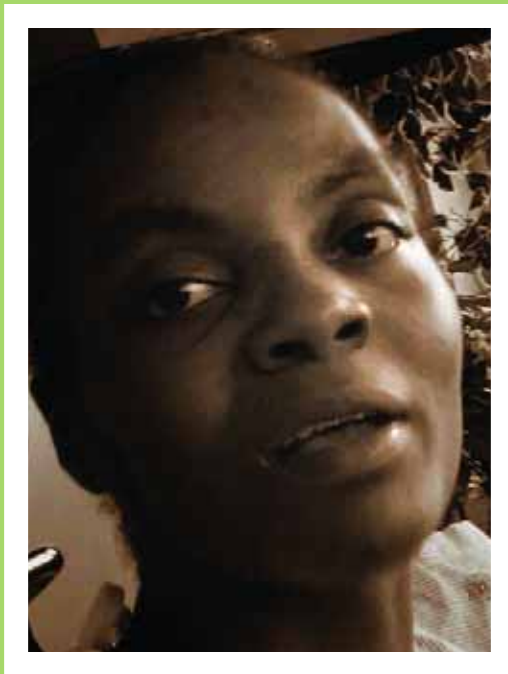
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Charlene Dewey,
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What I notice is that people are more receptive when they hear it from a doctor or nurse. There's less stigma, less judgment. People are more willing to accept help when they see it as a health issue, rather than a character issue. We've helped a lot of people.

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Chontell,
InSight Patient

I knew heroin was bad for me, but I never understood my addiction as a disease. The people at the hospital didn't judge me; they treated me like a person. They helped me understand what it was doing to my body. I feel safe now. I'm going to get well.

What You Can Do to Help



Because alcohol and drug use affects public health, it affects us all. It drives up health care costs, reduces productivity, and devastates the lives of friends and family members. Alcohol and drug misuse is everyone's problem; we can all help solve it.

Health care providers can help by incorporating InSight services into routine primary medical care and by teaching peers and colleagues about SBIRT and its benefits.

Civic leaders, public figures, business leaders, community leaders, and ordinary citizens can share information with others about the impact drug and alcohol use has on public health and help to reduce the stigma surrounding identification and treatment. They can educate elected officials and government agencies, urging them to consider legislative and regulatory action to reduce barriers and provide support for widespread implementation of SBIRT.

For more information about InSight, visit us on the Internet at www.insightforhealth.com.



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Toll-Free Hotline: 1.877.668.6627

www.insightforhealth.com