



Alcohol and Other Drug Dependence: Initiation and Engagement in Treatment

You play an essential role in the recovery of patients who suffer from alcohol and drug addiction. These patients may need a strong support system and timely intervention to help them get over their dependency. By giving them extra support and guiding them to additional resources, you can help them overcome their obstacles to sobriety.

Recommendations

The Mental Health Services Administration supports following the Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) guideline¹ at [samsha.gov/sbirt](https://www.samhsa.gov/sbirt).

How You Can Help

If your patient has a substance use disorder (SUD), we recommend they attend treatment with a substance abuse care provider within 14 days of their diagnosis. You also can support them by:

- Encouraging them to accept their treatment plan
- Anticipating resistance and having ideas to overcome it
- Helping them identify challenges to receiving care
- Asking them to engage their family for support
- Following up regularly to make sure they're staying on track

Referring to a Substance Abuse Professional

If you need to refer your patient to a behavioral health specialist or need to request coordination of care, please call the number on the back of the patient's health plan ID card or search liveandworkwell.com.

Resources

- **Alcohol and Drug Use Screening Tools:** [Providerexpress.com](https://www.providerexpress.com) > Clinical Resources > Alcohol or Other Drug Disorders
- **Behavioral Health Tools and Information:** [Providerexpress.com](https://www.providerexpress.com) > Clinical Resources > Behavioral Health Toolkit for Medical Providers.
- **Patient Education Information:** [Liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com) – use access code “clinician.” See “Mind & Body” at the top, scroll down to find the links to topics.

Questions

If you have questions, please call the number on the patient's health plan ID card.

¹ <https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/sbirt/referral-to-treatment>

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