

# PA SBIRT Newsletter

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*SAMHSA, TI026666*

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## Welcome!

Welcome to the latest issue of the Pennsylvania Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (PA SBIRT) Newsletter, a quarterly publication dedicated to the PA SBIRT initiative. In this and future issues, we will feature a progress report, quarterly recap, site spotlight, and more. We hope that you find this information helpful and encourage you to share!



## The PA SBIRT Initiative

PA SBIRT is a five-year initiative that will provide SBIRT services to over 20,000 patients throughout the Commonwealth by September 2021. ***Over the past quarter, the project team met this goal.***

SBIRT is a comprehensive and integrated public health approach to the delivery of screening, early intervention, and treatment services employing empirically-based and clinically useful practices to circumvent harmful consequences related to substance use.

### The PA SBIRT Vision:

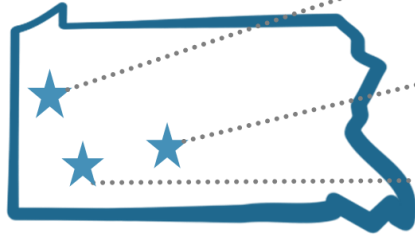
*To ensure that every patient in our primary care clinics receives the right screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) services by the right providers every time.*

The project is directed by the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) and The University of Pittsburgh School Of Pharmacy Program Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU). Funding for the project is granted through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT). All data is collected and reported in accordance with the Government and Performance Results (GPRA) Act of 2010.

***The PA SBIRT Team would like to thank the staff of participating project sites and Single County Authorities, who dedicate their time and effort to ensure that every patient receives the right SBIRT services every time.***

## Progress Report

To date, the PA SBIRT initiative has partnered with **9** healthcare sites in Pennsylvania: EMPOWER<sup>360</sup> Center for Health, Altoona Family Physicians, and UPMC Pregnancy Care Center in Blair County; Sharon Medical Group and Greenville Community Health Center in Mercer County; and Forbes Family Medicine, Crafton Medical Center, AHN Primary Care Morningside, and AHN Primary Care Downtown in Allegheny County. Together, these sites have provided SBIRT services to a total of **22,375** unduplicated patients, conducted **5,687** brief interventions, and connected **1,038** patients to community resources.



**Mercer County:** Sharon Medical Group & Greenville Community Health Center

**Blair County:** EMPOWER<sup>360</sup> Center for Health, Altoona Family Physicians & UPMC Pregnancy Care Center

**Allegheny County:** Forbes Family Medicine, Crafton Medical Center, AHN Primary Care Morningside & AHN Primary Care Downtown

## Quarterly Recap

Month	Project Highlights
<b>April 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMG <b>trained</b> new staff.</li> <li>• PERU led the <b>first SBIRT Regional Training</b>, supported by the E3 Care Coordinator.</li> <li>• PERU and AHN held a kick-off meeting for the <b>AHN SBIRT Reimbursement Project</b>.</li> <li>• AHN Morningside, Downtown, &amp; Crafton <b>implemented SBIRT</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>May 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E3 completed an external SPARK360 <b>SBIRT training series</b>.</li> <li>• PHN and PERU completed a <b>SBIRT sustainability meeting</b>.</li> <li>• E3 conducted <b>SBIRT training</b> at Cheswick Office.</li> <li>• PERU led the <b>second SBIRT Regional Training</b>, supported by the FFM Care Coordinator.</li> <li>• PA SBIRT Team <b>reached the grant intake goal of 20,778 patients served!</b></li> </ul>
<b>June 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PERU held a <b>Motivational Interviewing Training Series #1 and #2</b>.</li> <li>• PERU conducted a <b>PCC site visit</b>.</li> <li>• PERU scheduled <b>Key Informant Interviews</b> with all project sites.</li> <li>• All sites moved to <b>monthly SBIRT meetings</b> with PERU.</li> <li>• PERU led the <b>third SBIRT Regional Training</b>, supported by the Crafton Care Coordinator.</li> <li>• Sites were permitted to end <b>GPRA data collection</b> and <b>implement post-grant protocols</b>.</li> </ul>

### DID YOU KNOW?



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has a page with free guides, patient materials and even mobile apps on their website. There is literature on a variety of topics including on substance use treatment best practices.

<https://store.samhsa.gov/>

## Site Spotlight: Allegheny Health Network's Downtown and Morningside Primary Care

Allegheny Health Network (AHN) envisions a world that embraces health by working together as an integrated system within Highmark Health. All of AHN's care sites are committed to improving health and promoting wellness in their communities, one person at a time. AHN Downtown and Morningside Primary Care teams each implemented SBIRT this spring. Site Champions Hannah Maney, CRNP (Downtown) and Christopher Whitney, PA-C (Morningside) continue to spearhead innovative health workflows and identify resources to support the community.

### Meet the Care Coordinator

Sara Atherton, LCSW is the Care Coordinator (Behavioral Health Consultant) for both AHN Downtown Primary Care and AHN Morningside Primary Care. The PERU PA SBIRT team asked her a few questions to get to know Sara and her experience:

#### 1. What is your favorite part of working with the SBIRT Team?

"There have been many bright spots in working with the SBIRT team, but I would have to say my favorite part has been seeing the difference that providing this kind of screening and intervention within the primary care setting has made firsthand. It is satisfying to hear many patients say that the catalyst for changing their substance use and/or getting connected to treatment started during their visit with their PCP. I've been inspired by the change and growth I've witnessed while working with patients in this role."

#### 2. What is your area of expertise?

"I have experience treating a wide range of mental health and substance use diagnoses and was trained as a tobacco treatment specialist several years ago. My current role has provided me with the opportunity to utilize several brief intervention models including motivational interviewing and solution focused therapy. As someone who believes deeply in the inseparability of physical and mental health, I feel fortunate to support patients in making changes to improve their quality of life."

#### 3. What is one fun fact about you that others would be surprised to know?

"One fun fact about me is I used to be a vegetarian for 17 years. This changed when I spent a year teaching in South Korea as I couldn't resist trying all of the delicious food (including raw octopus which is surprisingly fun to eat!)"



Sara with her cats Louie and Cyrus

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## *In the News:*

### **Students are stressed and depressed. What will districts do when they go back to school?**

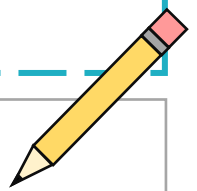
Students nationwide have experienced higher rates of depression and anxiety while attending school virtually throughout the pandemic. The CDC reports that young adults have faced worse mental health outcomes and increased substance use during the pandemic.

The New Jersey state assembly has introduced legislation to require universal screenings in high schools to identify students with mental health issues and those at risk of substance abuse. A community activist would like to see the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral (SBIR) screening tool in every New Jersey school district by 2022. A faith-based leader stated that the SBIR program identifies problems and helps students in school better than the punitive zero-tolerance drug policies. Students would be supported instead of punished in the program.

Schools have expanded resources and empowered faculty to address students' mental health. Addressing these issues is necessary for students to learn effectively. One Superintendent noted that "Student mental health is the biggest issue in high school and administrative space... If a student is not feeling well and [isn't] available for learning, they are not going to learn."



Stephanie Noda. (May 21, 2021). Students are stressed and depressed. What will districts do when they go back to school? Retrieved from <https://www.northjersey.com/story/life/2021/05/21/teens-anxiety-depression-substance-abuse-suicide-all-increasing/5097416001/>



## *A Message from PERU*

After nearly five years, the PA SBIRT initiative has met (and exceeded) the original grant targets – an accomplishment made possible by the continued dedication of our project sites. Thank you for everything you do and for being such wonderful partners to work with. The collaboration and partnerships fostered through PA SBIRT have made this project successful and we are honored to be a part of such an important initiative. We are excited for the future of SBIRT services across the Commonwealth.

***Abby Talbert, Program Manager, PERU***