

## Addressing Substance Use for Better Patient Care

Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is an evidence-based approach to identifying patients who use alcohol and other drugs at risky levels with the goal of reducing and preventing related health consequences, disease, accidents and injuries. Risky substance use is a health issue and often goes undetected.



**1-877-8-HOPENY**  
**1-877-846-7369**

Find help for alcoholism, drug abuse and problem gambling

New York State HOPEline  
Toll-Free, Anonymous and  
Confidential 24 hours a day,  
365 days a year

New York State Office of Alcoholism  
and Substance Abuse Services  
1450 Western Avenue  
Albany, NY 12203-3526  
518.473.3460 | [www.oasas.ny.gov](http://www.oasas.ny.gov)

### Governor

Andrew M. Cuomo

### Commissioner

Arlene González-Sánchez, MS, LMSW

# New York State Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment

A Standard of Practice  
Resulting in Better Health Care

## Why is SBIRT important?

**22.6 million people suffer from a substance use disorder and six times as many people are using alcohol and/or drugs at risky levels.**<sup>1</sup>

Hundreds of thousands of ED visits each year involve substance misuse: 20,000 people enter EDs each day for alcohol related injuries;<sup>2</sup> 40% of ED trauma cases are alcohol related;<sup>3</sup> and 20% of patients being tested in STD clinics screen positive for substance use disorders.<sup>4</sup>

Individuals with chronic medical conditions who have a comorbid SUD incur health care costs **2-3 times higher** compared with individuals who don't have a comorbid SUD.<sup>5</sup>

## SBIRT is Cost-Saving and Cost-Effective

People who received SBI from their physician experienced **20% fewer ED visits**, **33% fewer nonfatal injuries**, **37% fewer hospitalizations**, **46% fewer arrests** and **50% fewer motor vehicle crashes**.

Additionally, economic analyses showed that screening and brief counseling of nondependent, risky alcohol users allowed for a cost savings of \$4.30 in future healthcare costs for every dollar invested in intervention.<sup>6</sup>

Of the 21 preventative services recommended by the USPSTF, screening and brief intervention ranks among the top five based on benefit and cost-effectiveness—higher than screening for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, breast, colon or cervical cancer and osteoporosis<sup>7</sup>—providing a net savings of \$254 per person screened.<sup>8</sup>

*See Sources on reverse side.*

For more information about SBIRT, including how it can work in your healthcare setting, visit:  
<http://www.oasas.ny.gov/AdMed/sbirt/index.cfm> or contact OASAS at [SBIRTNY@oasas.ny.gov](mailto:SBIRTNY@oasas.ny.gov)

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Office of Alcoholism and  
Substance Abuse Services

## Sources

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