

Quick Guide Helping Providers Start Conversations about Substance Use

AzMAT Mentors Program Provider Collaboration Tool - #1

The AzMAT Mentors Program aims to increase capacity for offering substance use disorder/opioid use disorder (SUD/ODU) prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery. This is a tool for experienced medication assisted treatment (MAT) providers to use when collaborating with less experienced MAT providers. Please consider using this during collaborative consultations if your collaborator indicated a high priority in clinical care.

Reflect on personal values and beliefs about people who use drugs or are in recovery.

- **Reason #1.** Providers in AzMAT Mentors demonstrate a commitment to offering SUD/ODU treatments. Yet, taking time to reflect on our values and beliefs about people who use drugs or are in recovery ensures that implicit or explicit biases are acknowledged and considered.
- **Reason #2.** People who use drugs or are in recovery come from diverse backgrounds. It's important to consider our values and beliefs based on stereotypes or other factors to help reduce stigma.

▶ **TIP:** Research shows reflection may lead to improved clinical skills.¹ Take 10-15 minutes to jot down a few notes in response to these prompts and reflect on the responses:

I **think** people who use drugs or are in recovery [.....]

I **value** [.....] about people who use drugs or are in recovery

I **view** people who use drugs or are in recovery as [.....]

I **know** the types of services and supports that are most effective for people who use drugs or are in recovery include [.....]

Develop a screening, brief intervention/treatment, and referral workflow for all patients²⁻³

- **Screening is recommended⁴⁻⁵** and maybe an effective way to start a conversation about substance use. There are many screening/assessment tools. Here is a link to screenings/assessments that may be appropriate for your setting <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/books/NBK248419/>. Consider checking with payors to determine their requirements for reimbursing screening services. Here is a PDF link that is a two single-question screening tool: <https://www.icsi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Brief-Screen-FINAL.pdf>. This tool serves as a simple screening tool that is easy to follow for new and experienced providers.
- **Brief Interventions/Treatments are** effective³ for addressing substance use concerns. Depending on screening/assessment results different interventions may be needed. Develop a risk stratification strategy based on severity. Examples:
 - Brief provider-directed advice
 - Brief provider-directed interventions/treatments. Behavioral and/or pharmaceutical.
- **Referrals provide** additional services and support to patients based on a variety of issues (substance use, mental health, social determinants of health, family/peer support). Types of referrals include standard (send referral with limited support/follow up) and warm handoffs (help patient link to care/follow up).
 - ▶ **TIPS:** (1) Assess the support needed to make implementing this workflow **feasible**. (2) Offer advice and strategies for implementing this workflow **efficiently**. (3) Communicate **pragmatic** implementation methods.



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Practice increases skills and confidence

- **Consider using** Motivational Interviewing⁶ or the **Ask – Tell - Ask**⁷ methods:
 - **Ask permission** by saying: “I’d like to talk with you about your results from the alcohol and drug use screening would that be okay with you?”
 - **Tell the patient** in simple terms what you want them to know such as: “I’m concerned about your alcohol and drug use. The screening shows you are using alcohol and drugs in unhealthy ways which might be putting your health and wellness at risk.”
 - **Ask for more information** using open ended questions such as “I’m curious to hear more about your thoughts regarding your alcohol or drug use...”
- ▶ **TIP:** Conduct a role-play to practice using this model. Offer feedback on strengths and areas for improvement.

Please visit the AzMAT Mentors website at: <https://crh.arizona.edu/mentor>

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- 1 Livingston JD, Milne T, Fang ML, Amari E. The effectiveness of interventions for reducing stigma related to substance use disorders: A systematic review. *Addiction*. 2011 Aug 4; 107(1): 39-50. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2011.03601.x>
 - 2 Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment Model. Rural Health Information Hub. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/moud/2/initiating/sbirt>
 - 3 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Surgeon General, *Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health*. Washington, DC: HHS, 2016. <https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/>
 - 4 Screening for unhealthy alcohol use. US Preventative Services Task Force. November 13, 2018. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/unhealthy-alcohol-use-in-adolescents-and-adults-screening-and-behavioral-counseling-interventions>
 - 5 Screening for unhealthy drug use. US Preventative Services Task Force. June 9, 2020. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/drug-use-illicit-screening>
 - 6 Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers. Accessed December 3, 2021. <https://motivationalinterviewing.org/>
 - 7 What is Ask, Tell, Ask? Institute for Healthcare Improvement. Accessed December 3, 2021. <http://www.ihl.org/education/IHIOpenSchool/resources/Pages/AudioandVideo/ConnieDavis-WhatsAskTellAsk.aspx>



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