

# SBIRT

Screening | Brief Intervention | Referral to Treatment

## What is SBIRT?

Screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) is a public health approach designed to identify individuals at risk for substance use disorder (SUD), including first-time impaired drivers. It involves a three-step process:

1. **Screening:** Identifying individuals who may be at risk for SUD and/or impaired driving
2. **Brief intervention:** Providing tailored feedback and support to address identified risks and promote behavior change
3. **Referral to treatment:** Connecting individuals to specialized care for SUD

## SBIRT and Impaired Driving

Impaired driving is a serious public safety and public health concern that disproportionately contributes to crashes, injuries, and fatalities. SBIRT provides a valuable tool to address this issue.

- **Early detection:** Identifying impaired drivers with SUD before they continue to put themselves and others in danger
- **Promoting safe driving:** Encouraging individuals to make safer driving choices, such as abstaining from driving after consuming alcohol or drugs
- **Addressing underlying issues:** Identifying individuals with SUD and providing access to treatment and support services

## Practical Implementation

### Screening

- **Tools:** Standardized questionnaires, such as the AUDIT or DAST
- **Settings:** Courts, law enforcement, treatment courts, community organizations
- **Examples:** Screening for alcohol and drug use at arrest, court appearances, traffic stops

### Brief Intervention

- **Strategies:** Motivational Interviewing, education about the risks of impaired driving, SUD treatment, behavioral interventions
- **Focus:** Increasing awareness of the dangers of impaired driving, presence of SUD or risky substance use, assess readiness to change, providing support to change behaviors
- **Examples:** Providing brief advice and resources to at-risk individuals identified during screening, encouraging them to use transportation alternatives, referring them to treatment resources

### Referral to Treatment

- **Purpose:** Connecting individuals with specialized services to address SUD
- **Examples:** Referring individuals to treatment programs, treatment court, other interventions to meet their needs

## Conclusion

SBIRT is a valuable tool for addressing impaired driving from both a public health and public safety perspective. By promoting early identification, timely intervention, and referral to treatment, SBIRT can help prevent recidivism and crashes, save lives, and improve the well-being of individuals and communities.

