

# quick facts

## SCREENING, BRIEF INTERVENTION, AND REFERRAL TO TREATMENT (SBIRT)

### What is Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)?

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is an evidence-based practice designed to identify, reduce, and prevent alcohol and other drug abuse and dependence. The SBIRT model calls for community-based screening for health risk behaviors. SBIRT offers an opportunity to identify problem drinking and substance abuse, triggering an intervention and referral to treatment if needed.

**Investing in SBIRT** can result in healthcare cost savings that range from \$3.81 to \$5.60 for each \$1.00 spent.

The approach is often conducted in medical settings including primary care clinics, hospitals, and emergency departments. SBIRT enables healthcare professionals to systematically screen and assist people who may not be seeking help for a substance use problem, but whose drinking or drug use may cause or complicate their ability to successfully handle health, work, or family issues.

### Why SBIRT?

Risky alcohol and substance use often results in poor health outcomes and substantial healthcare costs related to illness, hospitalizations, motor vehicle accidents, and premature death. Research has demonstrated SBIRT's numerous benefits.

Brief intervention in emergency departments has shown a **reduction in repeat injuries and injury hospitalizations**

### What is the goal of SBIRT?

The primary goal of SBIRT is intended to meet the public health goal of reducing the harms and societal costs associated with risky alcohol and drug use. These harms include related health consequences, disease, accidents, and injuries. SBIRT also helps individuals with the disease of addiction enter and stay engaged in treatment.

Implementing SBIRT in emergency departments has shown **reductions in alcohol consumption** and successful referral to and participation in alcohol treatment programs

Screening and brief intervention is the **single most effective treatment method** of more than 40 treatment approaches studied, particularly among groups of people not actively seeking treatment.