

Mid-Columbia Center for Living



THE PROJECT

Aim:

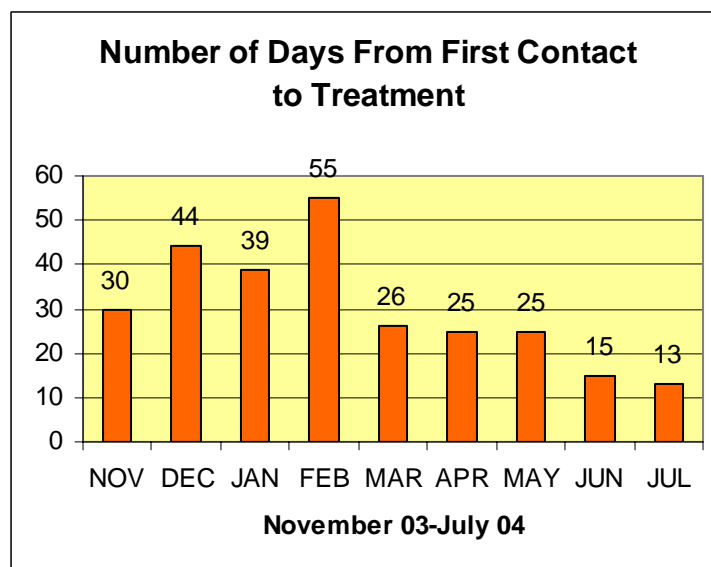
To reduce the days from first contact to clinical assessment, therefore decreasing the time between first contact and first treatment.

Action:

Assessments were changed from a 1.5-to-2 hour session, to 3 shorter sessions.

Results:

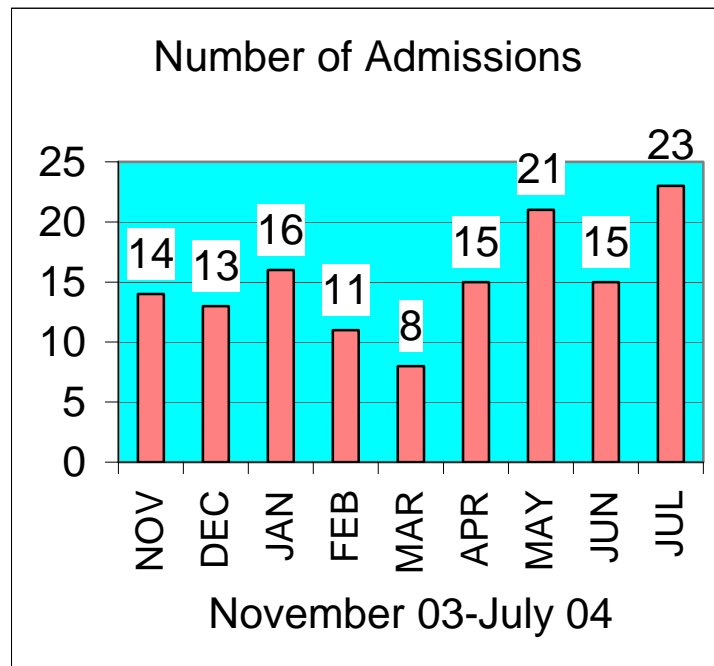
The time from first contact to treatment decreased by 42%.



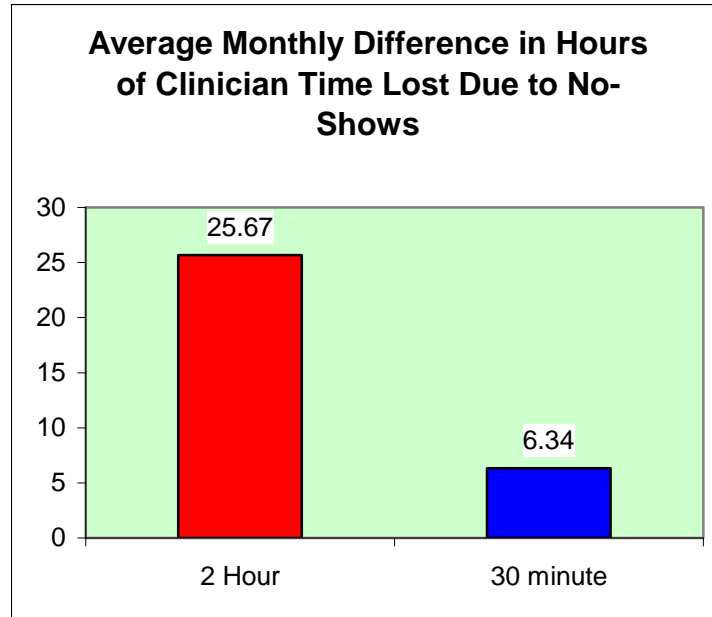
Successes:

The bulk of the paperwork previously done during an assessment was shifted until after the assessment was completed. Now, the initial assessment is an opportunity for the client to tell their story, explain their needs, and for the therapist to build a stronger rapport with the client.

The shorter time periods were easier for the clients to accommodate in their schedules, making it more convenient for them to attend scheduled sessions. As a result, admissions increased.



An unexpected benefit of this change was that the amount of time clinicians lost due to no-shows dramatically decreased. When a clinician lost two hours of time with each no-show, a few no-shows could use up a lot of time. Now, with a half hour assessment, the clinician still retains most of their time for new clients, even when a few do not come in for their scheduled assessment.



Spreading the change:

The shorter assessments were so successful with the Alcohol and Drug addictions teams that the Mental Health team has now changed their style of assessments as well.

The Hood River and Condon offices are in the process of initiating the new assessment protocol.

Sustainability:

New assessment protocol has been incorporated into agency procedures, including the electronic scheduling system.



Change Team Members

The Dalles

Christian Anderson, Sharon Guidera, Mark Levno, Delia Magana,
David Mason, Rodney McDowell, Roberta Morgan, Joni Pool,
Ruben Mosqueda, Kirby Richards, Ramona Ropek

Hood River

Valeri Bellus, Kendra Duby, Pepe Quintanila, Susan Witt