

Women's Alliance To Strengthen Treatment Access and Retention

WASTAR

Michele Padilla, Project Director

Diane Thorkildson, Executive
Champion and Change Leader

WASTAR Process Improvement Team

- University of Nevada, Reno
CASAT (Center for the Application of
Substance Abuse Technologies)
 - Michele Padilla & Nancy Roget
- Step 2 / Lighthouse of the Sierra
 - Diane Thorkildson & Tanja Hayes
- V.A. Hospital – Palo Alto, CA
(Evaluation Component)
 - Elizabeth Gifford

Step 2

Lighthouse of the Sierra

- Reno, Nevada
- OP/IOP coupled with Transitional Housing
- Approximately 40 F/T & P/T Employees
- Treating women and their families
- Private, non-profit
- Funding: 43% state/local; 31% federal; 3% client fees; 23% charities/foundations

WASTAR Rapid Cycle AIM

- To decrease the drop out rate from assessment to admission
- Baseline data (August 03) showed a 25% drop out rate
(10 of 40 clients were “no-shows” post treatment admission)

Changes Made

- Shifted responsibility for who assigns a “primary counselor” from Clinical Supervisor to Assessment Clinician
- Created a weighted equation to determine assignment of next primary counselor based on work load
- Primary counselor completed a follow-up call within 24 work hours of being assigned a client to: schedule appointment, resolve barriers to keeping appointment and to begin to develop a relationship

Change Data

- Rapid Cycle timeframe:
October 16-24, 2003 = 9 days
- 10 client assessments scheduled
- 7 clients completed assessments
- 3 clients did not show for assessment appointment – what happened to them? (Future WASTAR question)

Change data (cont.)

- Of the 7 clients who completed assessments:
 - 2 clients chose not to enter treatment for personal reasons
 - 2 clients assessed were referred to higher LOC's
 - 3 clients were assessed as appropriate for treatment at Step 2
 - Of these 3 clients, all 3 were immediately assigned a primary counselor using new technique and received F/U call within 24 hours of being assigned said counselor

Lessons Learned

- Weighted equation developed to assign primary counselor works
- Eliminates one-person job responsibility - allowing others to assign primary counselor when needed
- No-waiting time from assessment to assignment of counselor helps

Lessons Learned

- F/U calls easily implemented; discovered most counselors already conducting F/U calls
- F/U calls allow for immediate connection with incoming client and new counselor
- F/U calls give counselor an opportunity to resolve any barriers to client keeping assessment appointment

Lessons Learned

- Spend more time with staff processing impending changes
- Due to the length of the rapid cycle, team plans to continue with the changes and track data for longer period of time – then adopt, adapt or abort changes

Things WASTAR Needs Help With

- In a small agency, how do we accommodate (in a timely fashion) walk in clients?
- How do we track down clients that no-show for the initial assessment appointment – realizing some clients may not have phones/contact numbers?