



# Increasing Retention

Elizabeth Strauss, MSIE  
NIATx Process Improvement Coach  
DeAnn Decker  
Iowa State Change Leader



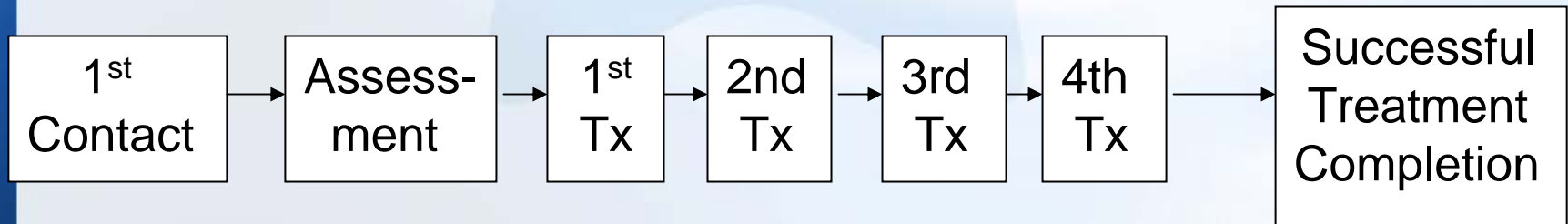
# STAR-SI

## Increasing Retention Agenda

- How the aims fit together
  - Case example - Iowa's focus on retention
- No-show Promising Practices
  - Case example - Mississippi
  - Case example - Iowa
- Continuation Promising Practices
- Questions/discussion

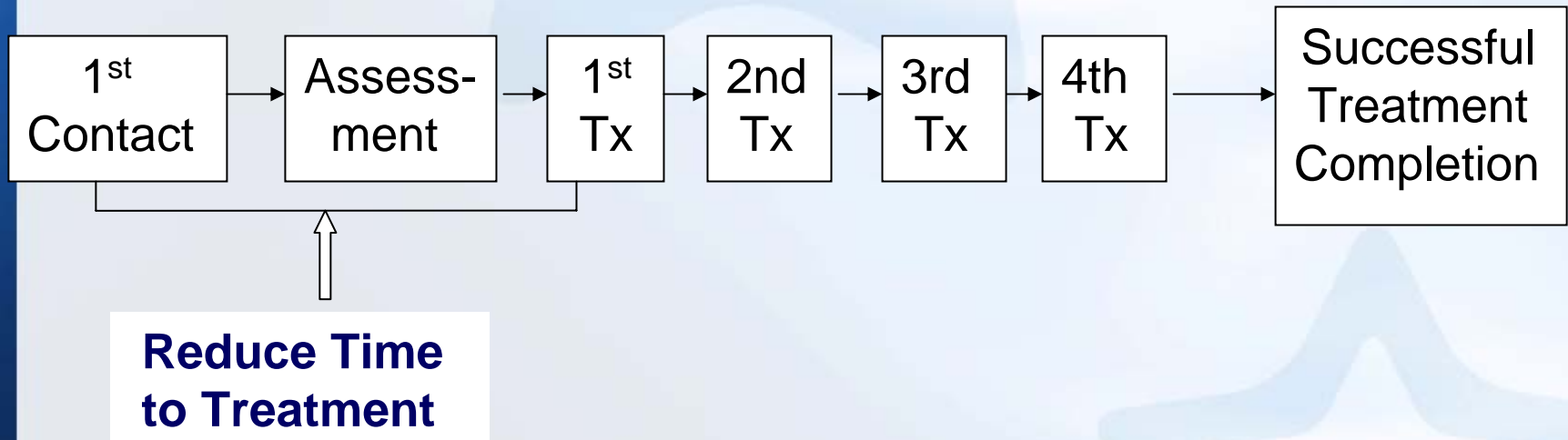
# ★ STAR-SI

## NIATx Aims



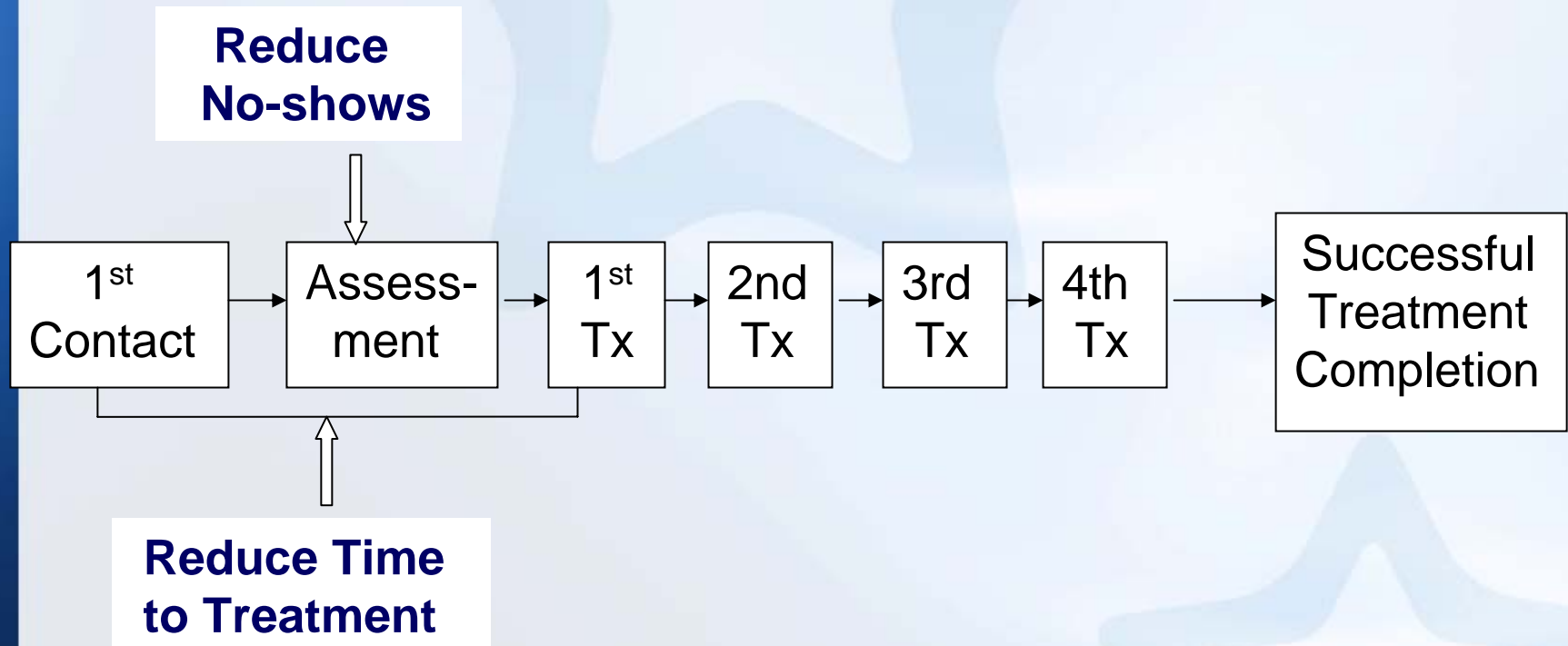
# ★ STAR-SI

## NIATx Aims



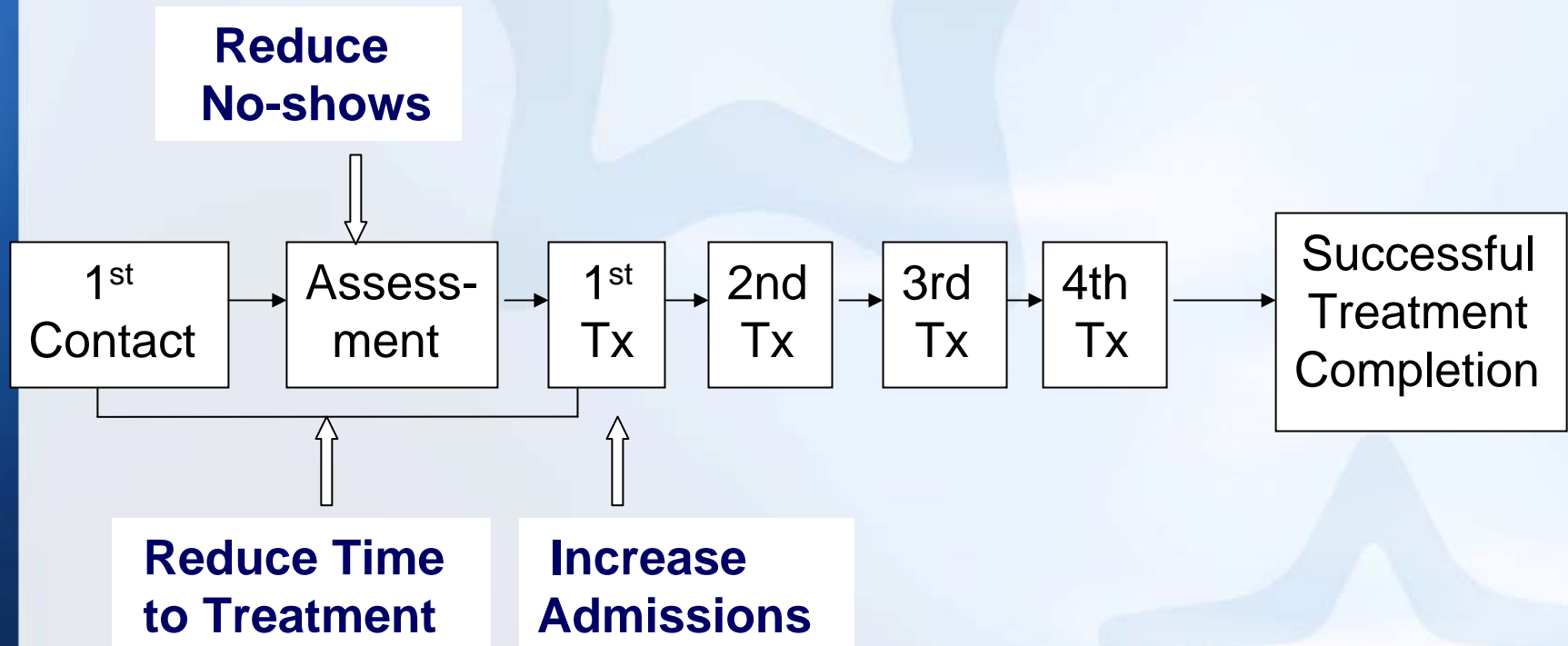
# STAR-SI

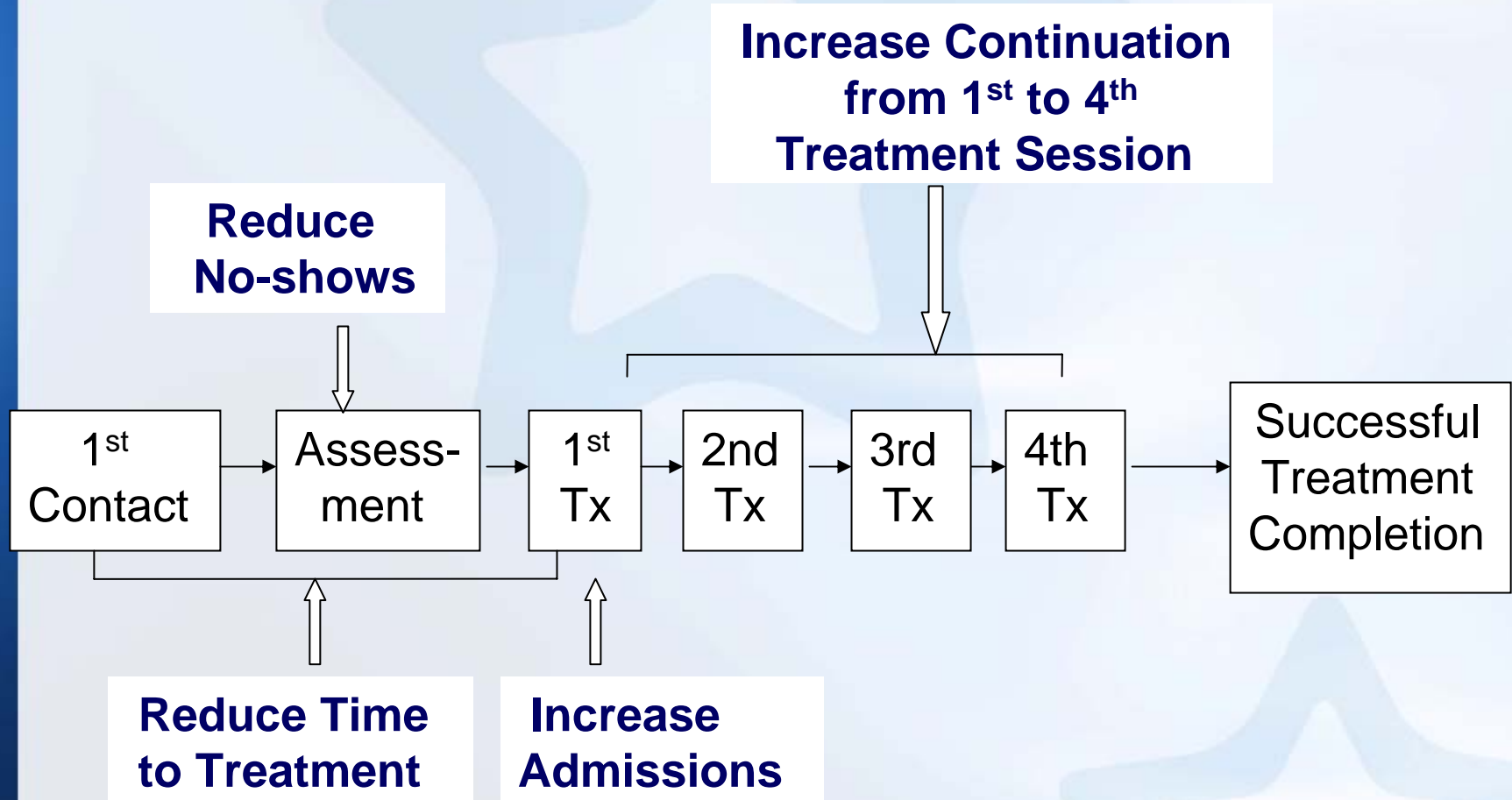
## NIATx Aims



# STAR-SI

## NIATx Aims





# NIATx Aims

**Increase Retention  
(or Conversion Rate)  
from 1<sup>st</sup> Contact to  
1<sup>st</sup> Treatment Session**

**Increase Continuation  
from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>  
Treatment Session**

**Reduce  
No-shows**

1<sup>st</sup>  
Contact

Assess-  
ment

1<sup>st</sup>  
Tx

2nd  
Tx

3rd  
Tx

4th  
Tx

Successful  
Treatment  
Completion

**Reduce Time  
to Treatment**

**Increase  
Admissions**



# NIATx Aims

**Increase Retention  
(or Conversion Rate)  
from 1<sup>st</sup> Contact to  
1<sup>st</sup> Treatment Session**

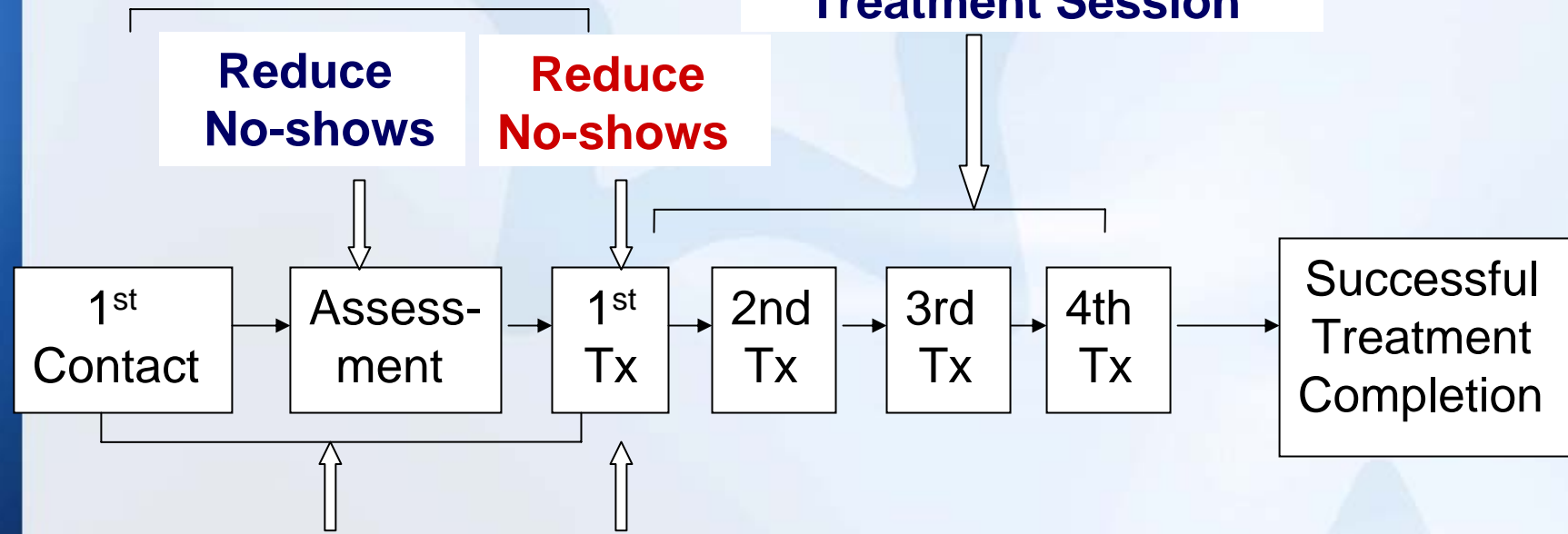
**Increase Continuation  
from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>  
Treatment Session**

**Reduce  
No-shows**

**Reduce  
No-shows**

**Reduce Time  
to Treatment**

**Increase  
Admissions**



The logo features a white five-pointed star with a blue outline, positioned to the left of the text 'STAR-SI'.

# STAR-SI

## The aims are interconnected

- Reducing **no-shows** at different points is a strategy that may help achieve the other aims.



# STAR-SI

## 1. Reducing no-shows to assessment appointment

- will increase **retention from 1st contact to assessment**, or the “**assessment conversion rate**”

# STAR-SI

## 2. Reducing no-shows to 1<sup>st</sup> treatment session:

- will increase **retention from assessment to 1st treatment session, or the “admission conversion rate”**
- This will also increase **admissions**, because you will be “converting” clients who have already made contact with the agency into admissions.

 **STAR-SI**

### **3. Reducing wait time from 1<sup>st</sup> contact to first treatment session**

- may be the best strategy to decrease no-shows to assessment appointment and no-shows to 1st treatment session



# STAR-SI

## 4. Reducing no-shows to treatment sessions

- is a strategy that will increase **continuation**



## Strategies for reducing no-shows

1. Get the patient to the next appointment *quickly*.
2. Address barriers to attending appointment.
3. Explain what to expect at next appointment.
4. Model communication with the patient on Motivational Interviewing/Enhancement Techniques.
5. Make reminder calls.



# **Non-clinical Pre-Admission Customer Services/Motivational Techniques Outline**





# STAR-SI

## Presented by:

- Natalie Andrews, Change Leader, Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.

# STAR-SI

## Sinnissippi Pre-admission Outline

### 1. Discuss the situation/problem with the client

- Ask open ended questions.  
What can I do for you?  
Can you tell me about your substance use history?  
(Instead of - What do you drink? How often?  
How much?)



# STAR-SI

- 1. Discuss the situation/problem with the client (continued)**
  - Focus on the client's reasons for coming to SCI
  - Express Empathy
    - Understand them and what they are going through.
  - Use Reflective Listening



# STAR-SI

## 1. Discuss the situation/problem with the client (continued)

- Summarize the situation with the client

For example:

“Let me make sure I understood you right. After you drink a six pack or so you start to lose control of your temper. This has caused legal and marital problems for you and you are wanting to get help with your drinking and get into our anger management group.”

 **STAR-SI**

## **2. Compile client's demographic information**



# STAR-SI

## **3. Go back to discussing the problem, if needed**

- Use the same MI technique described above

# STAR-SI

## 4. Ask the client when they would like to be seen

- The client's answer may be today, in two weeks, any day but Thursday, or on Monday afternoon.

*(If you can't accommodate request, revisit timeliness.)*

# STAR-SI

**5. Look in central scheduling to see if we have an open time slot for the requested time.**

- If so, offer that time to them.
- If not, find alternate times that are available.

Apologize to the client, and offer the client a couple of other appointment times.



## **6. Set the appointment time**

- Enter it on the face sheet, the master schedule, and the computer.



# STAR-SI

## 7. Explain to client what to expect:

- The first ½ hour is time to fill out paperwork.  
Remind client to bring in financial documentation and insurance/IDPA cards.
- The following hour will be time for you to meet with your counselor.



# STAR-SI

## 8. Ask client:

- Do you see anything that may prevent you from making your appointment?
- Use reflective listening and help problem solve.

# STAR-SI

## 9. Ask client:

- Do you have reliable transportation?
- If not, offer a cab ride, paid for by SCI.
  - Give client the cab's phone number
  - Make sure client understands it is his/her responsibility to call the cab three hours in advance of appointment



# **STAR-SI**

**10. Ask client if he/she has other questions**

## **11. Reconfirm the appointment**

- Ask client if he/she wants a reminder call
- Remind client to please call to cancel or reschedule if they can't make the appointment



## Sinnissippi Results

- Decrease in no-show rate from 58 to 14 percent at pilot site
- Decrease in no-show rate from 50 to 21 percent when spread to another area office
- Current no-show rate is 15 to 25 percent agency-wide, with variation depending on office, staff and MI training.

## **Sinnissippi Lessons Learned**

- Staff had customized scheduling process that needed to be addressed.
- Agency defined expectations for central scheduling and multiple intakes.
- A decrease in no-shows means an increase in revenue.
- When admission staff asked MI-like questions, the show rate increased.





## Increasing Retention

- *First contact sets the tone.*
- *Empathy, understanding and support contribute to retention.*

# STAR-SI

## Strategies for increasing continuation

1. Scheduling:
  - Connect patient to counselor and support staff within 24 hours of admission
  - Make it as easy as possible for patients to remember appointments and continue in treatment
  - Adjust staff schedules if needed



# STAR-SI

## Strategies for increasing continuation

2. Provide a welcoming orientation.
  - Establish clear two-way expectations
  - Assign a peer buddy



# STAR-SI

## Strategies for increasing continuation

3. Identify patients at risk of leaving and barriers to continuing in treatment on an ongoing basis.
4. Maintain counselor resiliency with staff collaboration and personal care/development.
5. Tailor treatment to patient's individual circumstances and needs.



# STAR-SI

## Strategies for increasing continuation

6. Along with a variety of educational and treatment activities, have FUN.
7. Offer positive reinforcements for continuing in treatment.



# STAR-SI

## Strategies for increasing continuation

- *The new community and relationships seem to be the best way to compete with the power of the drug.*



# STAR-SI

## Caveat

- What works at one agency/location doesn't necessarily work at another

Pilot test ...  
to make sure it's an improvement