Alcohol Relapse Prevention Using Mobile Technology

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Background to Relapse Prevention Project

- Intractable problem in alcohol treatment pathway – alcohol dependent clients initially engaging well but high rates of attrition in weeks following detoxification.

- Evidence suggests relapse rates as high 60% in first 6 months rising to 80-90% in first year.

- Funding and project management support from The Health Foundation – SHINE programme to deliver the pilot project.
Overview: How it Works

Service creates personal questions and/or appointments.

Service and client create personal data.

Online database and system code.

Personal message.

Computer service system for admin reports. Could be extended for access by clients and significant others.

Personal response which trigger further responses.

SMS
Overview: How it Works
/Motivational Questions

Any appointment leads back to phase 1.
Services Dashboard
Services Dashboard
Objectives

- Increase client engagement with the aftercare programmes across both services in the pathway (CAT- Tier 3 and ADS- Tier 2)
- Decrease re-referral rates.
- Reduce costs to healthcare services ie. avoiding repeated detoxification and service costs.
How Did We Do?

- Increased Tier 3 (CAT) engagement from 42% (09/10) to 72% (11/12).
- Increased Tier 2 (ADS) engagement from 17% (09/10) to 72% (11/12).
- Massively reduced re-referral rates (in year) from 9.5% to 2.2%.
- Estimated (based on local data) that for each re-referral prevented there was an average cost-saving of £19,912.
Qualitative Evaluation

- 89 clients engaged with the project whilst 84 clients chose not to engage (reasons were varied.)

- This split allowed the project team to compare the outcomes.

- Demographically the groups were similar in terms of age and ethnicity.

- Both groups had higher proportion of males compared to females – which reflects the local treatment seeking population.

- The services existing outcome monitoring tool “funnels” was used to identify the treatment outcomes.
A Comparison of Milestones Achieved by Clients Enrolled and Those Not.

Milestones Achieved
Proportion of clients enrolled/not enrolled where “Achieves Goal” or a later milestone reached.
Client Feedback

The shame and self-loathing that I feel when I have relapsed is debilitating. Why would I pick up the phone and tell my keyworker I’ve had a drink? I hate myself at times like that; I feel a complete failure. I’m not going to ring someone up to tell them “I’ve failed again!” But I know if I can get back on top of things after a lapse, I can stop it turning into a full blown relapse. That’s a really hard thing to do, when you hate yourself so much. This phone lets me tell someone I’m struggling and it helps me get the help I need at the times when I need it.
Client Feedback

- The personal messages bring back all I've gone through and what I've got to do, so they prevent me from having a drink.

- It makes you feel someone is reaching out to help.

- It's nice that someone cares and keeps in touch long after detox.

- I feel someone is there to help if I need it.

- I really appreciated it. It was very useful when I needed help in the beginning.
Practitioner Feedback

I really welcomed the concept, because personally I find the relapse prevention work the most difficult. Clients experience a honeymoon period after they have stopped drinking but then their motivation starts to dip and they relapse. This aimed to help clients over that time. Once I started using the system more I could see patterns in the client’s responses and I could contact them to offer support rather than them contact me. Even clients failing to respond to the messages, becomes a warning sign.
Improving Patient Safety, Resource Management and Timely Interventions

Without Shine, the keyworker manages patients equally. Potentially missing those about to lapse.
Improving Patient Safety, Resource Management and Timely Interventions

Shine helps the Keyworker establish who needs the most help and when.
Project Uptake

In the last 18 months a number of areas have adopted the system to support those with ‘substance misuse problems.’
Thank you for listening
We would love to hear from you!

For a full report contact:

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