

Center: Benewah Medical and Wellness Center
Date: 5/5/08 /FY 2008 Initiated by: Counseling Services Depart. Cycle # _____

TYPE OF QI: Project

TITLE: Time from Court Ordered Substance Abuse Assessment to Date of Assessment

Purpose of this cycle: To gather baseline data and data 2 – 3 weeks post baseline to determine whether the time from court order to actual assessment decreases using a PDSA cycle.

PLAN the change, prediction(s) and data collection

What change are we testing?	We are gathering retrospective data regarding time from Court Order for assessment to date of assessment, and then gathering data post intervention to determine whether time to assessment decreases. Currently, people are ordered to get assessments, contact BMC to pick up intake documentation, fill out and return the documentation prior to setting up a substance abuse assessment. The study procedure will be as follows: 1) The court will send the name of 10 previous referrals and the original order date for the assessment to CSD. 2) CSD staff will determine the length of time from order date to actual assessment date. This will serve as the baseline data. 3) CSD will provide a Case Manager/Outreach Worker on site at the court on Tuesday afternoons for about 3 hours for 2 – 3 weeks (time to work with 10 – 15 people), 4) the court will require the person ordered to get an assessment to meet with the Case Manager/Outreach Worker right after the court hearing in order to complete the intake documentation, 5) When the documentation is complete, the Case Manager/Outreach Worker will call the CSD Administrative Assistant to schedule an assessment for the next available opening. A card with the appointment date and time will be given to the prospective client. The baseline data will be compared with the study treatment data to determine whether length of time from court order to assessment date has decreased.
Who is testing the change?	Counseling Services
When are we testing?	May and June 2008
Where are we testing?	BMC and Tribal Court Services

PREDICTION: What do we expect to happen? There has been some concern expressed that time from court order to assessment is “too long.” We expect to learn, from the baseline data, whether the time lag is “too long.” Secondly, we predict that, with greater support up front, the time from court order to assessment date will decrease. There is no expectation about the length of decrease since the baseline data is unknown.

DATA COLLECTION

What data do we need to collect?	Baseline: retrospective data regarding length of time from court order to assessment date (see above) Study treatment data: data regarding length of time from court order to assessment date post treatment (see above).
Who will collect the data?	Initially court prosecutor will send names. CSD Counseling Services Director and a counselor will collect and analyze retrospective and treatment data..
Where will data be collected?	Counseling Services Department.

DO: Carry out the change/test, collect data, and begin analysis

What was actually tested?	Length of time from court order for CD assessment to actual date of assessment.
What happened?	Our case manager/outreach worker was available on the court-site to meet with potential clients that had been ordered to receive an assessment. For the first several weeks, the case manager/outreach worker had minimal contact due to a large number of no shows at the hearings.
Unexpected Observations:	None.
Problems:	Gathering retrospective data was a coordinating challenge, so a CSD staff member mined CSD files for baseline and study treatment data. We chose to review 5 people for baseline data and 5 people for study treatment data due to time constraints. When we sent our case manager/outreach worker to the court at the designated times, often there were no shows and court was not held. Our case manager/outreach worker made contact with 5 persons on the court site that were ordered to obtain an assessment. Our case manager/outreach worker was not available on some days that court was held.

STUDY: Complete analysis of data: Summarize what was learned and compare to prediction.

Baseline data:
N= 5

Range (in days) from court date to assessment date: 7 – 48

Mean (days): 20.2*

Study Treatment Data:

N = 5

Range (in days) from court date to assessment date: 2 – 26

Mean (days): 12**

Our study was smaller than originally intended. At first glance it would appear that having a CSD staff member on-site at the court made a large difference in mean number of days it took from court order date to assessment date. However, when the outlier was thrown out and the mean re-calculated, the difference in time was much smaller. Intuitively, if a potential client has additional support up front with documentation requirements, it would make the transition to the assessment more efficient and easier. As noted in the "Problems" section above, having a staff member on site at the court was not always an efficient use of time, due to the no-shows at the hearings. We adjusted by having the staff member available to help with documentation requirements on our site during the times that they would have been available on site at the court.

* 48 days was an outlier. With this data thrown out, the mean = 13.25 days.

** One of the persons did not follow up to get an assessment, so another person who had completed the process was chosen.

ACT

What adjustments to the change or method of test should we make before the next cycle? After the study time, CSD made a staff member available at the clinic for help with documentation, at the same times the staff member had been on-site at the court. Verbal feedback from the Tribal Court judge was positive. This avoided "wasted time" sitting at court when there were no-shows and still allowed for the potential client to receive support if needed and allowed the staff member to remain at the clinic to continue working on other projects if there was no one who needed help with documentation.

Are we ready to implement the change we tested? Yes, with the modification noted above.

What will the next test cycle be? (use back of form to elaborate) We will review this topic regularly through FY '09 to determine if further adjustments need to be made.