

BOLTON ALCOHOL RELAPSE PREVENTION PROJECT

Authors:
Julie Aulton
 GMW Mental Health Trust
Phil Ramsell
 NHS Bolton
Renate Kalnina
 d2 Digital by Design

Alcohol dependency is a relapsing condition and is predicted in 80 to 90% of clients. Many alcohol dependent clients undertake multiple detox and aftercare courses. The cost of this, together with associated healthcare, welfare and criminal justice costs is considerable.

The post detox phase of treatment or 'aftercare' is extremely important and is where alcohol services commit most of their time, effort and skills in supporting clients. Nevertheless, many clients fail to fully engage with aftercare and consequently relapse.

Increasing engagement rates and reducing relapse rates are key to improving outcomes for clients and for services.

The Bolton Alcohol Relapse Prevention Project or 'SHINE project' is delivered by a partnership of two service providers GMW Mental Health Trust, and ADS, the local PCT and a digital technology company d2 Digital by Design. It uses mobile phone technology to improve the communication between clients and the service provider in 2 ways:

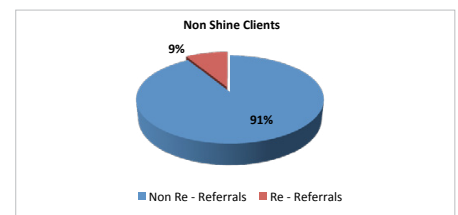
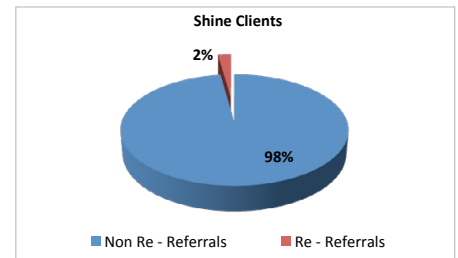
- 1 Text message reminders are sent to clients in advance of their next service appointment asking for them to reply if they are coming or not.
- 2 Individually tailored text messages are sent to clients daily via an automated system and depending on the client's response are followed up with supportive

messages (or direct contact) pitched at an appropriate level. This element of the service is innovative and has never been tried with alcohol dependent clients before.

After 12 months of trialling this system with clients entering aftercare we were able to compare the results with a comparable group who had not been recruited to the project.

The engagement rates between the two groups show a significant improvement for SHINE clients over the trial period. Those using the phones showed 72% engagement rate compared to 57% for those who didn't use the phones.

The short term re-referral rates also show a significant improvement with 4 times less re-referrals for SHINE clients. **This could amount to savings of over £100,000 per annum.**



Engagement rates in CAT aftercare				Annual totals
Indicator	Measure	Target	Baseline	
Number of people recruited for Shine	Project Dashboard (web database)	118	NA	89
Number of people not recruited to Shine	Alcohol Service Outcome monitoring tool	NA	NA	84
Engagement rates (Shine clients)	Web Database	75%	42%	72% (64)
Engagement rates (Non-Shine clients)	Alcohol Service Outcome monitoring tool	NA	42%	57% (48)

"It does not matter that it is automated... you know the work that has gone into creating the messages"

"It [the phone] feels like a part of me."

"Once the message said to find something to occupy myself, I went into garden for 3 hours, and afterwards felt really proud of myself"

"The phone gives me confidence. I back up my messages and go back to them."

