

Expanding Quality Care for Alcohol and Substance Use



Americares is providing free and charitable clinics with proven tools and practices to address alcohol and substance use among the low-income patients they serve.

Challenge

Alcohol, drug misuse and substance use are serious public health issues in the U.S. that affect millions of Americans each year. The costs of substance use to individuals and communities are staggering. The National Institutes of Health estimates that each year, 88,000 people die from alcohol related complications alone, making alcohol the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States.

Strategy

To increase the number of free and charitable clinics using evidence-based practices to address alcohol and substance use, Americares is conducting a one-year pilot program. Up to thirty free and charitable clinic staff members will learn how to integrate and deliver screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment (SBIRT) for alcohol and substance use — program registered as an evidenced-based strategy by SAMHSA. Staff will learn SBIRT strategies from Kognito, the only health simulation company listed in SAMHSA's registry of evidenced programs and practices.

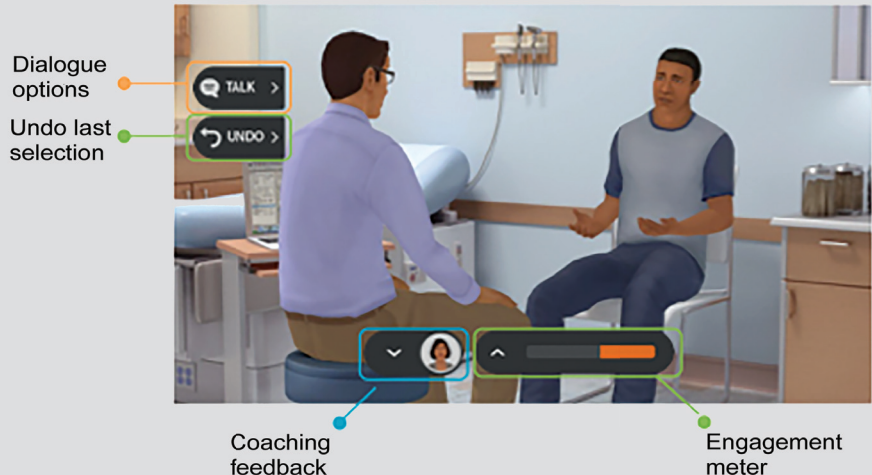
Expertise

The training is simple and effective: Health providers/ clinic staff will engage in role-play conversations with emotionally responsive virtual patients. As the health provider/clinic staff tries different approaches to having conversations about alcohol and substance use with patients, the Kognito simulation provides real-time feedback, giving participants the skills and tools they need to navigate critical conversations with patients and integrate SBIRT into their clinic settings. Americares has two SBIRT trainers who will supplement Kognito's simulations with additional training, support and technical assistance.

Americares will also foster a collaborative learning environment among the selected clinics with additional training. Our goal is to integrate SBIRT into routine practices to reduce the prevalence and consequences of substance misuse and substance use disorders. Providers that participate in Kognito's simulations are eligible to receive continuing education credits.

How does a Kognito Simulation Work?

- **Interact** with fully animated virtual patients
- **Navigate** through the scenarios by selecting what to say to the virtual patient
- **Receive instant feedback** from the virtual coach and engagement meter
- **Undo decisions** to explore different approaches to the conversation
- Receive **personalized performance** summary upon completion



The Tools: Screening, Brief-Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)

There has been a meaningful cultural shift in treating alcohol and substance use disorders with empathy and patience rather than with punishment and ultimatums. Primary care settings are ideal places to utilize SBIRT to screen all patients in addressing substance misuse or substance use disorders, and to then and provide appropriate interventions to address their needs. Free and charitable clinics can play an increasingly important role in this shift.

Kognito

Kognito is the only company with health simulations listed in SAMHSA's national registry of evidenced-based programs and practices. Research has proven Kognito's SBIRT program to be highly effective in increasing providers' competence in screening and their confidence in their ability to screen. Studies have also shown an increased integration of SBIRT into primary care practices after Kognito training.

Health care providers will practice and learn motivational interviewing, shared-decision making, emotional self-regulation, reappraisal strategies and how to express empathy.

LONG-TERM GOAL

Americares long-term goal for the SBIRT program is to build on the initial pilot by identifying best practices and lessons learned from participating free and charitable clinics and expanding the program to reach the larger FCC sector.

Americares is a health-focused relief and development organization that saves lives and improves health for people affected by poverty or disaster. Each year, Americares reaches more than 90 countries, including the United States, with life-changing health programs, medicine and medical supplies. Americares is the world's leading nonprofit provider of donated medicine and medical supplies. For more information, visit americares.org.