



Welcome!

Please put your name, pronouns, practice name, and role in the chat.

You can ask questions via the chat we will monitor it as we go along. We will also pause for questions periodically.

These slides and the recording will be made available on the [Practice Innovation Program website](https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/practice-innovation-program/current-initiatives/1302-behavioral-health-integration/for-practices).

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AGENDA

- **Upcoming Events - Kathy**
- **Connecting the Dots: Screening and motivational conversations about alcohol**

*Carolyn J. Swenson, MSPH, MSN, RN
Consultant and QPR Suicide Prevention
Trainer*



Events on the Horizon

March 5, 2025, 12:00 – 12:45

LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Behavioral Healthcare
Alex Floyd, LCSW, One Colorado

Thursday, March 20, 2025, 12:00 – 12:45

Developing Financial Sustainability for Integrated Behavioral Health Practices Part 2
Dr. Lesley Manson, PsyD, Arizona State University Pam Ballou-Nelson

Monday, April 21, 2025
Spring Collaborative Learning Session
Keynote speaker – Attorney General Phil Weiser

Register Now!

2025 Collaborative Learning Session



<https://tinyurl.com/4zu7sa3e>

All Practices and Practice Transformation Organizations participating in the 1302 Behavioral Health Integration Project are invited to register and attend.



Keynote Speaker:
Colorado Attorney General, Phil Weiser

 Practice Innovation Program
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



Monday April 21, 2025

Registration opens at 8:00am

Anschutz Medical Campus, Health Sciences Building



Department of
Family Medicine

Scan to complete evaluation



https://practiceinnovationco.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6VbsOc5C1RjKpfg



Practice Innovation Program

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Project funded by the Colorado
Department of Healthcare Policy
and Finance per House-Bill 22-1302
Healthcare Practice Transformation



COLORADO
Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Connecting the Dots: Screening and motivational conversations about alcohol

Carolyn J. Swenson, MSPH, MSN, RN

Consultant and QPR Suicide Prevention Trainer

February 28, 2025



Department of
Family Medicine



Connecting the Dots: Screening and motivational conversations about alcohol

Carolyn Swenson, MSPH, MSN, RN

February 28, 2025



GOALS

1. Explore brief screening for alcohol use.
2. Explore how to tailor conversations about alcohol to individual health and life circumstances.
3. Examine ways to destigmatize conversations about alcohol and health.





Dry January

Alcohol-Free for 31 Days



Sober

OCTOBER



NEW TONIGHT

U.S. SURGEON GENERAL WARNS OF LINK BETWEEN CANCER & ALCOHOL

DOOM
SURGEON GENERAL ON
ALCOHOL, WARNING



National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine
New Report Reviews Evidence on Moderate Alcohol
Consumption and Health Impacts
News Release | December 17, 2024

Key Points

1. Patients deserve to know how alcohol affects health.
2. Adults who choose to drink should stay within moderate drinking guidelines: no more than 1 drink/day for females and 2 drinks/day for males.
3. There are no health reasons to start drinking alcohol .
4. Most health risks are associated with heavy drinking, including alcohol use disorder, but even moderate drinking is associated with some health risks.
5. Alcohol is a carcinogen.
6. Exploring underlying reasons for drinking sometimes leads a person to identify reasons to cut back or stop drinking.



Binge Drinking in Adults

Women: More than 3 drinks in ~2 hrs.
Men: More than 4 drinks in ~2 hrs.



Heavy Drinking in Adults

Women: More than 7 drinks/week
Men: More than 14 drinks/week



What is Unhealthy Alcohol Use?



Any amount of alcohol
at any time during pregnancy

Drinking while Pregnant



Any alcohol use under age 21

Underage Drinking

US Standard Drink Sizes



12 ounces
5% ABV beer



8 ounces
7% ABV malt liquor



5 ounces
12% ABV wine

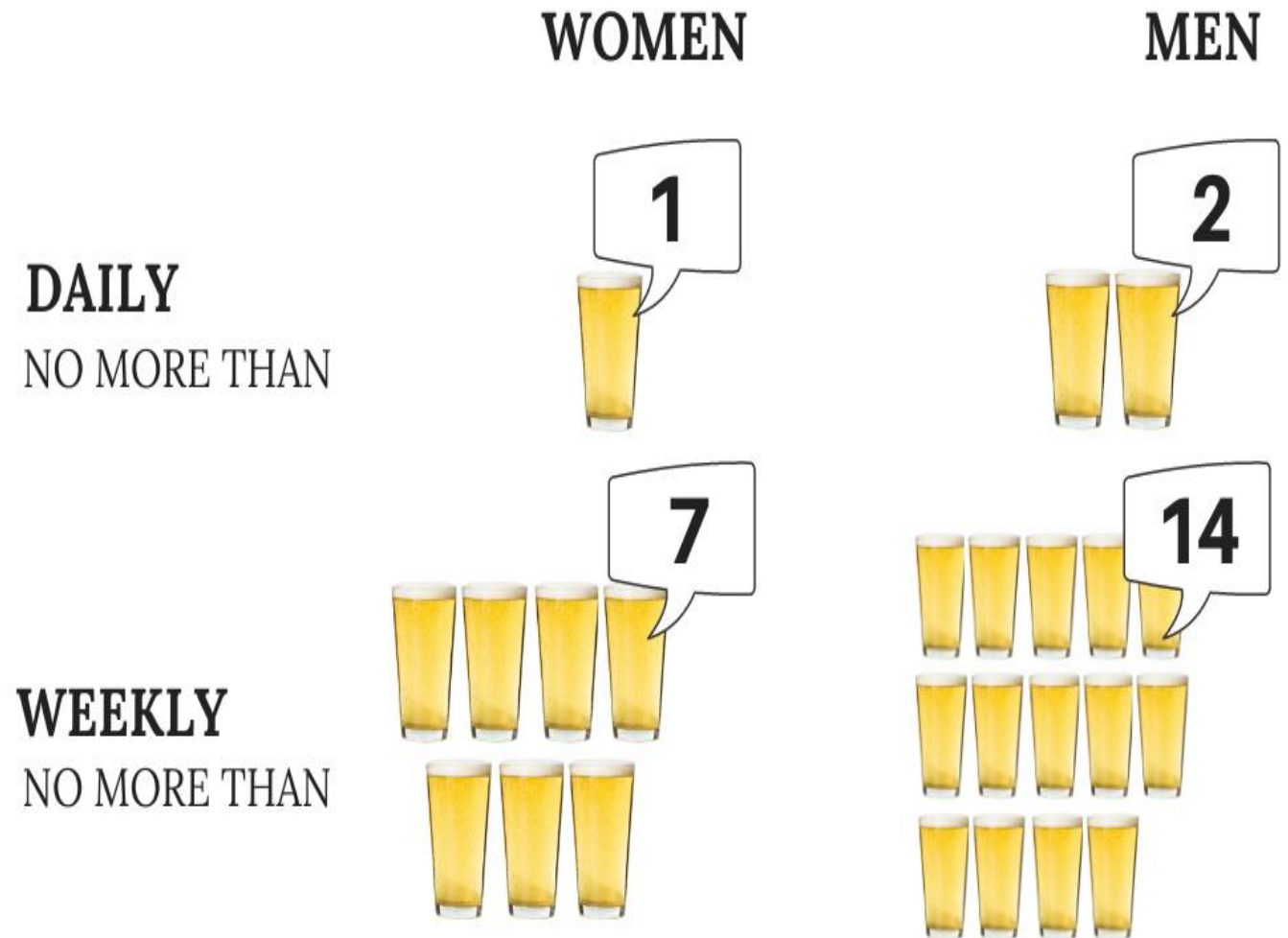


1.5 ounces
40% (80 proof)
ABV distilled spirits
(gin, rum, vodka,
whiskey, etc.)

ABV = Alcohol by Volume

What is considered low-risk drinking, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services?

The number of drinks below is determined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020.



Why Ask Patients About Alcohol?

↑Risk

Suicide
Breast, colon, liver, head & neck cancers
Stroke
Accidents and injuries
Unintended pregnancy
Sexually transmitted infections
Dementia

Causes

Alcohol use disorder
Fatty liver
Cirrhosis and cardiomyopathy
Pancreatitis
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
Medication interactions

Worsens

Hypertension
Diabetes
Depression and Anxiety
Insomnia
Gastrointestinal conditions
Atrial Fibrillation
Weight gain

Brief Screening for Alcohol

“How many times in the past year have you had X or more drinks in one day?”

Positive Response	Men \leq 65 years	Women & Men $>$ 65 years
1 or more times	5+/day	4+/day

“How many drinks do you have on average each week?”

Positive Response	Men \leq 65 years	Women & Men $>$ 65 years
	15+ drinks/week	8+ drinks/week

*Any alcohol use by pregnant women or $<$ age 21 is a positive response

Patient name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Alcohol screening questionnaire (AUDIT)

Drinking alcohol can affect your health and some medications you may take. Please help us provide you with the best medical care by answering the questions below.

One drink equals:



12 oz.
beer



5 oz.
wine



1.5 oz.
liquor
(one shot)

1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Monthly or less	2-4 times a month	2-3 times a week	4 or more times a week
2. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?	0-2	3 or 4	5 or 6	7-9	10 or more
3. How often do you have five or more drinks on one occasion?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
4. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
5. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
6. How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
7. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
8. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because of your drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
9. Have you or someone else been injured because of your drinking?	No		Yes, but not in the last year		Yes, in the last year
10. Has a relative, friend, doctor, or other health care worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?	No		Yes, but not in the last year		Yes, in the last year

0 1 2 3 4

Have you ever been in treatment for an alcohol problem? Never Currently In the past

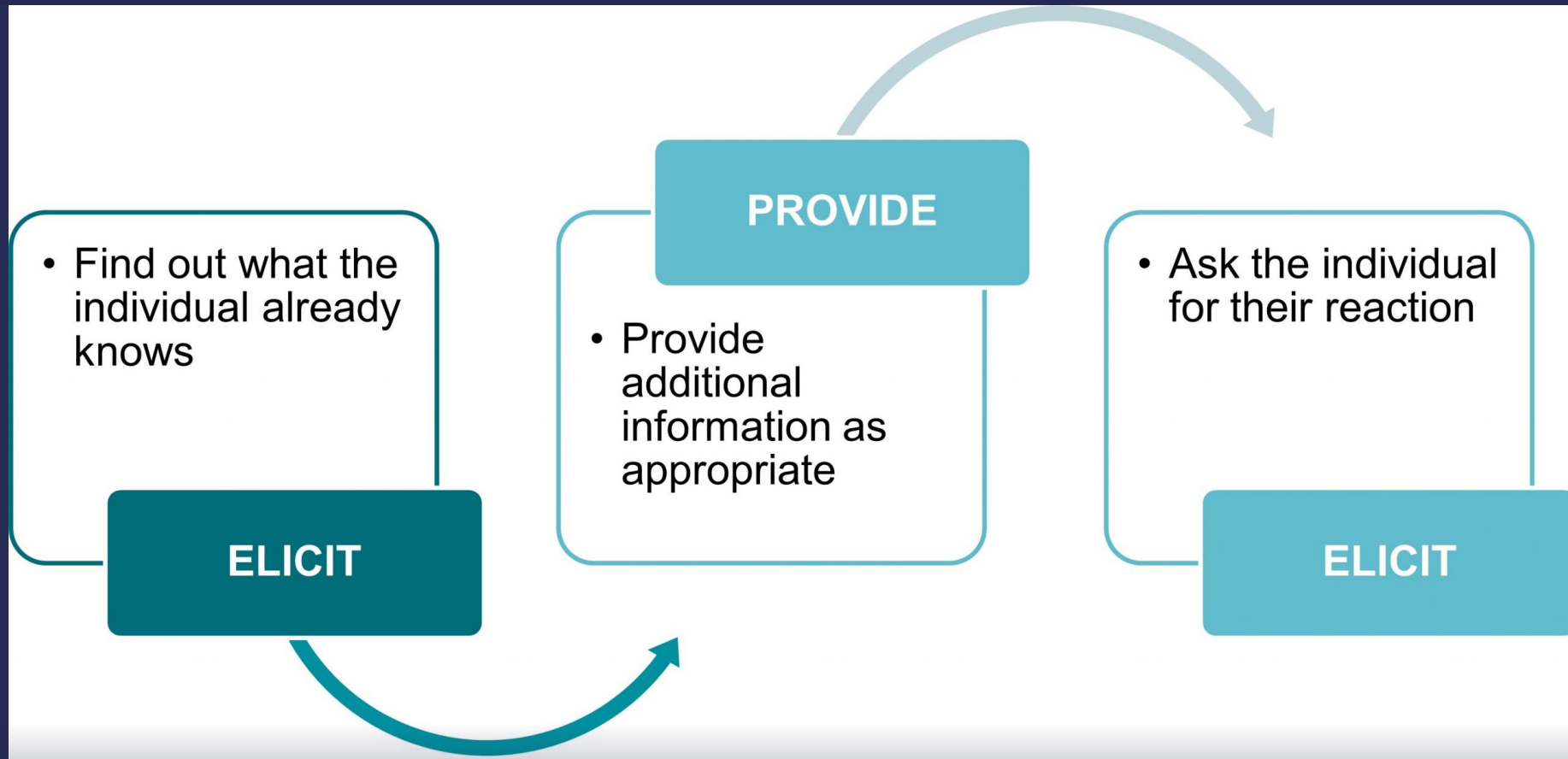
I II III IV
0-3 4-9 10-13 14+

Further Screening: AUDIT

Motivational Conversations

- Respect autonomy
- Ask permission to provide information and advice
- Seek to understand the patient's perspective and expertise on their life
- Ask open-ended questions to explore the issue and elicit “change talk”
- Offer reflections to show understanding and move the conversation forward
- Negotiate next steps with the patient
- Offer ongoing support even if change doesn't happen

Elicit - Provide - Elicit



Example: Elicit-Provide-Elicit

1. *Thank you for answering the questions we ask all patients about alcohol. What do you know about how alcohol can affect your health?*
2. *Well, I've heard that maybe a little wine is good for my heart. And I know not to overdo it or I feel awful the next day.*
3. *One thing to consider is that staying within moderate drinking guidelines- which is no more than 2 drinks/day for men- can help prevent future health problems related to alcohol. Even moderate drinking can increase the risk of colon cancer. What do you think about this information?*
4. *Hmm.. I guess pretty often I have more than that . Good to know and maybe it's worth cutting back a little.*
5. *What would cutting back look like for you?*

Brief Intervention

The logo for SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) is located in the top left corner of the slide. It consists of the letters "SBIRT" in a white, sans-serif font, enclosed within a white outline of the state of Oregon.

Steps of the brief intervention:

Raise the
subject

Provide
feedback

Enhance
motivation

Negotiate
plan

The Yale Brief Negotiated Interview Manual (2005)
D'Onofrio, Pantalon, Degutis, Fiellin, O'Connor. Yale University

Example: Brief Intervention

1. *We ask all patients about alcohol. Would it be ok to discuss your responses to those questions?*

P: *I guess so.*

2. *You said you probably have about 21 drinks per week; is that right?*

P: *Yeah, weekdays a couple of beers after work then a few mixed drinks on top of that on weekends.*

3. *Would it be ok to share some information with you about alcohol and health?*

P: *OK, no problem.*

4. *Moderate drinking for a man is considered no more than 2 drinks /day. More than that can lead to some health concerns over time. For example, alcohol increases the risk for some types of cancer including colon cancer. What do you think about this information?*

P: *Interesting. It's not really something I've thought about.*

Example- Brief Intervention continued

5. *It is new information to a lot of people. How important would you say it is to you to consider cutting back on alcohol where 0 is not at all important and 10 is very important?*

P: *Maybe a 5. Kind of unsure.*

6. *What made you choose 5 and not a **lower** number?*

P: *Well, I care about my health, and there is some cancer in my family. But I'm not sure right now.*

7. *So, cutting back might make sense for your health **and** you will figure out if it's a good idea at some point.*

P: *Yeah, I guess that's where I'm at.*

8. *Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this with you.*


P: *No problem. Thank you for the information.*

When a person is not motivated to change

- Affirm autonomy: their choice to change ...or not change and that they will know best if it is a good idea. This can decrease reluctance to consider making a change in the future.
- Ask how they would know if cutting back is a good idea at some point in the future.
- Offer assurance of ongoing care regardless of whether they make a change.
- Agree to focus on other concerns that might be helpful to them.
- For example, if alcohol is a way to cope with stress, loneliness, sleep problems, offer to discuss **other ways** to address those issues.



Harm Reduction

- Decrease frequency and/or quantity of alcohol consumption
 - Alternate nonalcoholic beverages with alcoholic beverages and eat food while drinking
 - Keep track of triggers and consequences of drinking (moods, sleep, relationships, work, etc.)
 - **Add** other approaches to manage stress, depression, loneliness, poor sleep before changing drinking
 - Avoid combining alcohol with opioids or benzodiazepines
 - Avoid situations and settings that tend to result in excessive drinking
 - Make a safety plan for risky situations such as driving under the influence, or when personal safety or decision-making might be at risk.
- 

Destigmatize Conversations about Alcohol

- Tie alcohol to overall health and wellness- it is not only a behavioral health issue!
- *“We ask all patients about alcohol to provide high quality, comprehensive care.”*
- *“We believe that patients deserve to know how alcohol can affect their health.”*
- *“You will know best if changing your alcohol consumption is something to consider.”*





SAY

Person with a use disorder

Substance use, unhealthy or risky substance use

Positive/ negative screen

Person arrested for a drug violation

Reoccurrence/ set back

Substance(s) used

Gestational exposure to substances/ exposed in utero



INSTEAD OF

Addict, drug abuser, drunk, alcoholic

Substance abuse

Clean/ dirty

Drug offender

Relapse

Drug of choice, habit

Addicted baby

Language Matters

Thank you!

Do you have any questions?

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THANK YOU!

