



Impact of addiction experience on confidence in and attitudes toward alcohol screening and brief intervention (SBI): Can SBI training eliminate observed differences?

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BACKGROUND

- Screening and brief intervention (SBI) is an effective early intervention for identifying and addressing unhealthy alcohol use in patients.
- Clinicians' attitudes have been shown to impact SBI-related behaviors, but little research has explored the impact of previous experience with addiction, either personally or within an individual's family, on clinicians' attitudes.
- This study examines baseline differences in confidence in and attitudes toward addressing risky substance use between students with and without previous addiction experience and whether any observed differences are reduced or eliminated by SBI training.

METHODS

Study Sample: Health professional students in seven programs at a public university (N = 484).

Measures:

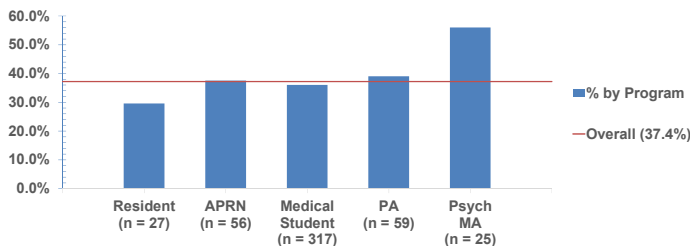
- Pre- and post-surveys prior to and following SBI training.
- Surveys assessed confidence in and attitudes toward 12 items (3 global, 9 specific) on addressing patients' substance use (1: Not at all– 5:Extremely confident)
- Four survey items examined students' experience with addiction, either personally or among family members.

Outcome: Pre- and post-training differences in confidence in and attitudes toward SBI by addiction experience and by program.

Analyses: Independent samples t-tests identified differences in pre- and post-training attitudes by addiction experience. An analysis of variance and Scheffe's post-hoc tests compared responses across programs.

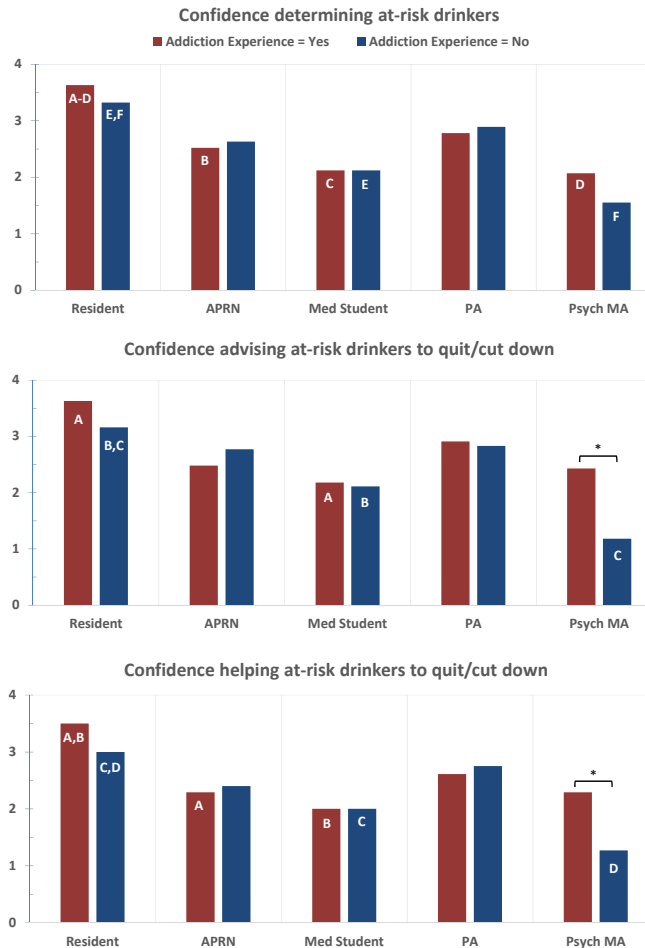
RESULTS

Figure 1. Percentage reporting experience with addiction by program (pre-training)



RESULTS (continued)

Figure 2. Confidence in performing SBI components by program and addiction experience (Pre-Training)



Note: Means with same letters are significantly different (Scheffe's, $p < .05$); * Mean scores were significantly different by addiction experience at $p < .05$

- Among global confidence measures, the difference between those with and without prior addiction experience was limited to the Psychology MA students.
- Other groups measures of confidence (not shown) showed similar results, with differences based on addiction experience found mostly in non-practicing students.
- Following SBI training, there were no observed differences in confidence by addiction experience across the groups.
- Residents reported higher confidence across all SBI components. While most differences across groups were eliminated by SBI training, residents' confidence remained higher than medical students on some items.
 - Confidence "advising" at-risk drinkers ($p = .04$)
 - Confidence "helping" at-risk drinkers ($p = .04$)

CONCLUSIONS

- A substantial proportion of health professional students report prior addiction experience.
- The impact of addiction experience on health professional students' confidence is primarily among non-practicing students.
- Observed pre-training differences between students with and without addiction experience were eliminated after SBI training.

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