

Quicker access to treatment for new clients in a third sector addictions service



Quality issue / initial problem

North East Edinburgh Recovery Service is a third sector service who provide support to individuals affected by their own substance use. Drug related deaths in Scotland are at their highest ever recorded. The first recommendation from the 2017 Health Needs Assessment of People Who Inject Drugs, was to improve access and retention within services. Clients who attend our drop in often do so in crisis. Quick access to treatment is crucial to ensure we retain engagement, improve their lives and keep people alive.

Specific aim

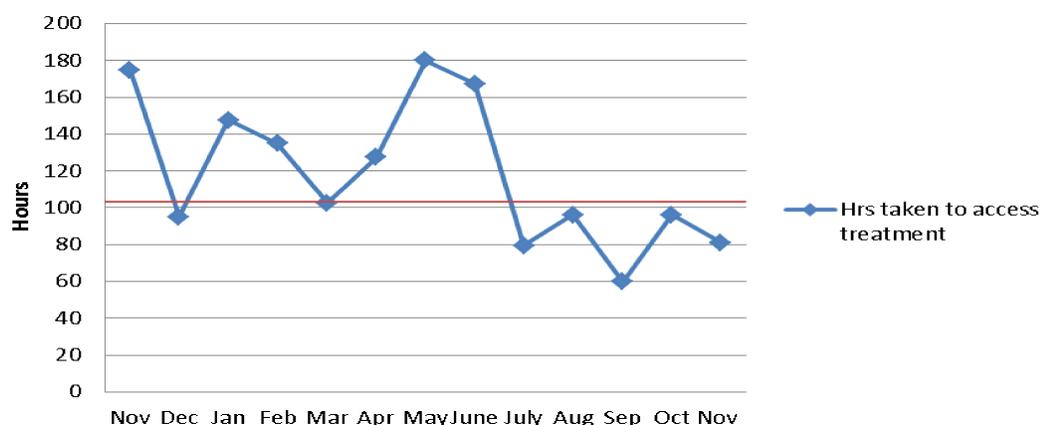
To reduce time taken to access treatment for all new clients presenting at drop-in

Measurement of improvement

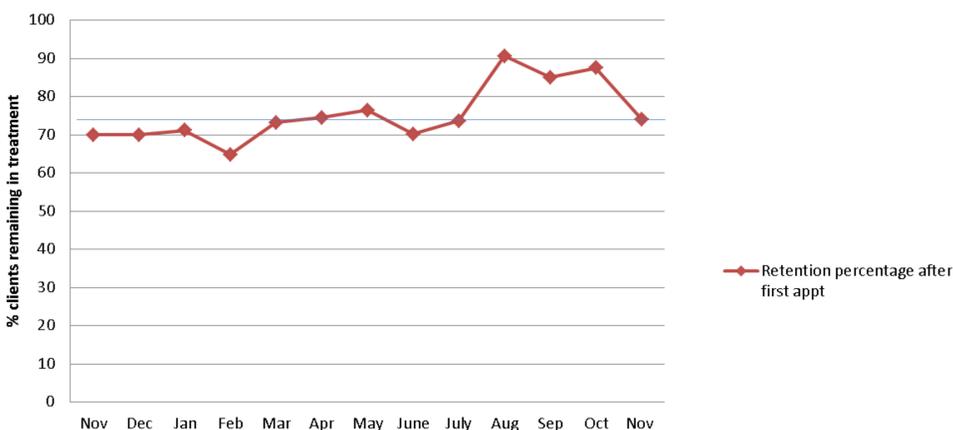
An improvement would be demonstrated by:

- Clients accessing treatment quicker, treatment starts after initial appointment rather than having to attend a second assessment
- Higher retention percentage, less drop out after first appointment
- Increased staffing availability for other tasks.

Hrs taken to access treatment



Retention percentage after first appointment



Number of new clients



Tests of change

- Combine triage and 2nd assessment paperwork to form one comprehensive document to be completed at first appointment. Approximate predicted time saving per new client = 1hr.

Tools

- Process map
- Driver Diagram
- TPS database / reporting system
- Existing triage & assessment paperwork

Effects of change

- The number of hours taken for new clients to access treatment reduced when change implemented on 1st July.
- Retention rate increased after change implementation.
- Increase in number of harm reduction interventions such as DBST & Naloxone (4 fold) have been recorded potentially a result of change (unexpected consequence due to time saved)

Lessons learned and message for others

- Involving staff team in paper work changes is imperative, they are the ones who roll this out to clients
- Expect paperwork alterations to be a work in progress, often changes don't work in practice with clients. This is time consuming at the outset (Plan, Do, Study, Act cycle)
- Future proofing paperwork changes to ensure align with new government database roll out in 2019 (DAISY). Minimise further change which can be frustrating for staff