STOP Unhealthy Alcohol Use NOW

SCREENING & ASSESSMENT FOR UNHEALTHY ALCOHOL USE
Optimizing workflow in Epic & other EHRs

Designing streamlined workflows is an important part of implementing screening. Some practices may choose a paper-based process for the screening process, while others will conduct it partially or fully within the EHR. Another approach is to trial a process using paper (to refine the approach through several iterations) and then integrate the final approach into an EHR. For practices with Epic and some other EHRs, integrated tools are available to expedite screening and facilitate tracking and reporting.

SCREENING TOOLS AVAILABLE IN EPIC
AUDIT-C and AUDIT flowsheets

The AUDIT-C, a validated screener for the initial screening step, consists of 3 questions that focus on quantity and frequency of alcohol consumption. These questions are part of the Epic Foundation system.

A score on the AUDIT-C of 3 or more for women or 4 or more for men will automatically open the rest of the AUDIT flowsheet with the first 3 questions filled in, as seen **below**, so that patients with a positive initial screening result on the AUDIT-C are administered the full AUDIT (totaling 10 questions). After the patient answers the rest of the AUDIT questions, the score can help guide screening-related assessment — to distinguish patients with alcohol use disorder from those with risky drinking who do not have alcohol use disorder — as well as the subsequent clinical approach.

Accessing the screening flowsheets

To check whether these tools are already available in a site's own Epic EHR, go to **Doc Flowsheet Builder**; then in the **Open Template** field search for AUDIT-C and AUDIT. You may request that your system load the content if not found.

For practice support assistance, please contact NCAHEC at practicesupport@ncahec.net

Simple user-editable tools that we can help you develop and use

User editable tools known as "dot phrases," or SmartPhrases in Epic EHR can allow the MA, nurse, primary care provider, or others to document screening or counseling information directly into the chart, by typing the Smartphrase name preceded by a period.

SmartPhrases can expedite documentation of the AUDIT score and provider response in the chart; guide the provider through an initial or follow-up counseling session; provide access to a list of treatment and referral resources; or insert content in the after-visit summary. Our team has implemented these tools in Epic and can provide further guidance on developing and using them.

Visit-based reminders

Epic development teams can build and launch visit-based reminders (sometimes called Best Practice Alerts, or BPAs) to automatically trigger the screening and intervention process and encourage its completion. These can link directly to data entry flowsheets for documentation of screening responses, among other things:

Implementing Evidence-based Screening and Counseling for Unhealthy Alcohol Use with Epic-based EHR Tools
Barclay et al., JCJQPS, August 2019

Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test		
How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	AUDIT-C questions	4
How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day?		1
How often do you have five or more drinks on one occasion?		2
How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?		
How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected from you because of drinking		
How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been		
How often during the last year have you needed an alcoholic drink first thing in the morning to get yourself going after a night of		
How often during the last year have you had a feeing of guilt or remorse after drinking?		
Have you or someone else been injured as a result of your drinking?		
Has a relative, friend, doctor, or another health professional expressed concern about your drinking or suggested you cut down?		
Audit Total Score		