

## **Abstract**

### **Background and Purpose**

Domestic violence is a public health issue that severely impacts the mental and physical health outcomes of women across the world. The purpose of this quality improvement project was to help improve mental health outcomes for survivors of domestic violence by implementing a safe and effective reminder system that specifically catered to this population. Missing appointments is a major barrier to treatment adherence and impedes staff workflow.

### **Methods: (Design and Setting, Participants, Interventions, Measurements)**

This quality improvement used a pre- and post-intervention design. It was conducted at a domestic violence shelter in the United States. The project involved 50 survivors of domestic violence with a total of 168 mental health appointments over 12 weeks. The inclusion criteria were female gender, adult patients, age 18 and older, and members of any nationality, and ethnic and religious group. The intervention involved establishing a multimodal appointment reminder system that considered issues of patient safety and the unique barriers faced by survivors of DV. To determine staff satisfaction with this new system, an anonymous Likert-scale questionnaire was completed at the end of the intervention. Four staff members were involved in this intervention.

### **Results**

There was an uptick in appointment adherence post-intervention. An increase in the mean follow-up appointments was witnessed post-intervention. Mean appointments increased from 1.28 to 2.08. 75% of staff agreed that they were satisfied with the intervention.

## **Conclusions**

A multimodal and population-specific approach resulted in more attended appointments and fewer no-shows over the course of the intervention. The intervention was successful in improving patient adherence.

## **Implications**

Safer and more effective reminder systems can improve mental health outcomes in patients by helping to bolster attendance rates and adherence to mental health therapy and medication management. It can also result in more satisfied staff.

**Keywords:** (Provide 5 keywords) Domestic Violence, Mental Health, Appointment Reminder, Adherence, Follow-up Visits