



## **New York State Public Health Association (NYSPHA)**

May 23, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
New York State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

RE: NYSPHA Recommendation for revisions of S345: development of Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) training

Dear Governor Hochul,

The New York State Public Health Association (NYSPHA) is pleased to provide our recommendations to you on this bill. NYSPHA is the New York affiliate of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and serves as the statewide organization for members from all disciplines across the spectrum of public health professionals, organizations, academia, and students pursuing careers in public health.

I am honored to serve as the President Elect of NYSPHA and am uniquely qualified and well-positioned to provide recommendations on this bill. I have worked in the SBIRT field for 12 years, six with OASAS and six with NORC at the University of Chicago, a nationally renowned SBIRT training and technical assistance provider, am a state-certified SBIRT trainer, and have several peer-reviewed publications on the topic.

We are in strong support of SBIRT as a public health approach to address at-risk substance use. However, this bill does not ask OASAS to do anything it hasn't already done to advance this evidence-based model. Specifically, OASAS has already developed SBIRT training and provides training and resources to the public on its SBIRT webpage, the key tasks addressed in this bill. Beyond this, OASAS developed and implemented SBIRT training, certification, and billing processes for which I was a part of the core team. Having this process in place creates a strong base that other states have sought to emulate. Unfortunately, OASAS lacks the staff support to provide training and post-implementation support to meet demand.

To ensure the bill advances the uptake of SBIRT in New York State, NYSPHA recommends that it is revised to task the state to identify an external training and technical assistance provider to support health care organizations and clinics to implement and sustain SBIRT. Without training and implementation support, the positive outcomes of SBIRT, including as an upstream intervention to address the opioid crisis, will not be fully realized. In addition, we recommend the integration of evidence-based suicide risk screening and intervention into the SBIRT model, as suicide is closely connected to substance use and continues to rise in tandem with overdose. I'd be glad to answer any questions or provide further guidance on these recommendations.

Sincerely,

*Brett Harris*

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*CC: Elizabeth Fine, Counsel to the Governor*

*Dr. Mary Bassett, Commissioner, New York State of Department of Health*

*Angela Profetta, Deputy Secretary for Health and Human Services, Executive Chamber*

*Tina Kim, Assistant Secretary for Health (Rachel Baker)*

*Kristin M. Proud, Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner, New York State Department of Health*

*Dr. Ann Sullivan, Commissioner, New York State Office of Mental Health*

*Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez, Commissioner, New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports*