

Medical Outreach

Four Main Steps in Medical Outreach

1. **Assessment:** This includes your clinical assessment as well as assessment of what someone wants and what they would like to prioritize or do.
2. **Education:** This is a vital part of medical outreach. You are educating the person on your concerns, your assessment of their needs, as well as on their options and how to move forward.
 - Education should be tailored to the person's readiness to learn. Take into account mental status, cognitive status, and mental health concerns.
3. **Plan:** Make a plan with the person based on your assessment and their interests or priorities. The plan should be specific in terms of what to do, where to go, who to call, what to look out for, etc.
4. **Follow-up:** Determine how you are going to follow up with the person, e.g. see them the next day, meet them at the emergency room, or how they can contact you or other needed resources.
 - Medical outreach need not be a one-time encounter or temporary. It is an essential part of care provision and can be an ongoing part of anyone's care. The medical outreach provider should make sure that there is a plan for care and follow up and that the person knows how to reach or find outreach providers again.

Assessment

1. Level of care needed – community, outpatient, emergency, inpatient.
2. Time to treatment needed – is care needed immediately/emergently, does the person need outpatient primary care, specialty care, etc.
3. What does the person want and why – understanding someone's concerns, priorities, and fears helps the clinician to make a plan with them and best support their needs.

Remember:

- ✓ Medical outreach is an integral component of care provision, in particular for those who do not access or engage in other medical care.
- ✓ As a medical outreach provider of any type, you are the link to care for the people you see.
- ✓ A large component of medical outreach is building trust and relationships; this may be the first interaction with medical providers that a person has had in many years.
- ✓ Do not expect to get everything done at once, or even anything done in the first encounter. The first step is introducing yourself and letting someone know you are available to support them.