

Make linkage the easy choice for clients.

TIPS FROM THE FIELD:

Make room for walk-ins.

Allow someone to walk in and immediately get started by blocking off appointments for walk-in patients, not with the intention of having a walk-in client use that particular time slot, but to build a cushion into the schedule. Consider creating a simple code phrase, like: "I'm here for Red Carpet." Let that be all it takes to get someone in care.

Make only "warm transfers."

Don't leave linkage up to the client. Make the appointment with him, or, if you're collocated with care services, walk down the hallway together.

Be persistent.

Do what it takes to stay in touch. This may mean that you need to go to the client when she doesn't come to you.

Keep the door open.

Even if a client initially declines care, remain in contact. If and when he's ready to access care, the necessary steps will be easier if trust has been established.

Provide transportation.

Transportation continually ranks as a top barrier to accessing care. Provide bus passes, taxi vouchers, gas cards, or other means of getting to appointments.



What linkage roadblocks can you clear today? By the end of the year?

What's one small change you can make to shift to a more active (vs. passive) linkage process?

Start small. How can you open the linkage door a bit more today?