

# **Increasing Utilization of Mental Health Resources by Adolescents Screening Positive for Depression and Anxiety at the ECU Pediatric Diabetes Clinic**

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Disclosures: None

**Background:** Adolescents with diabetes are at increased risk for depression and anxiety, which left untreated, may negatively affect diabetes management and outcomes (Bernstein et al., 2013)

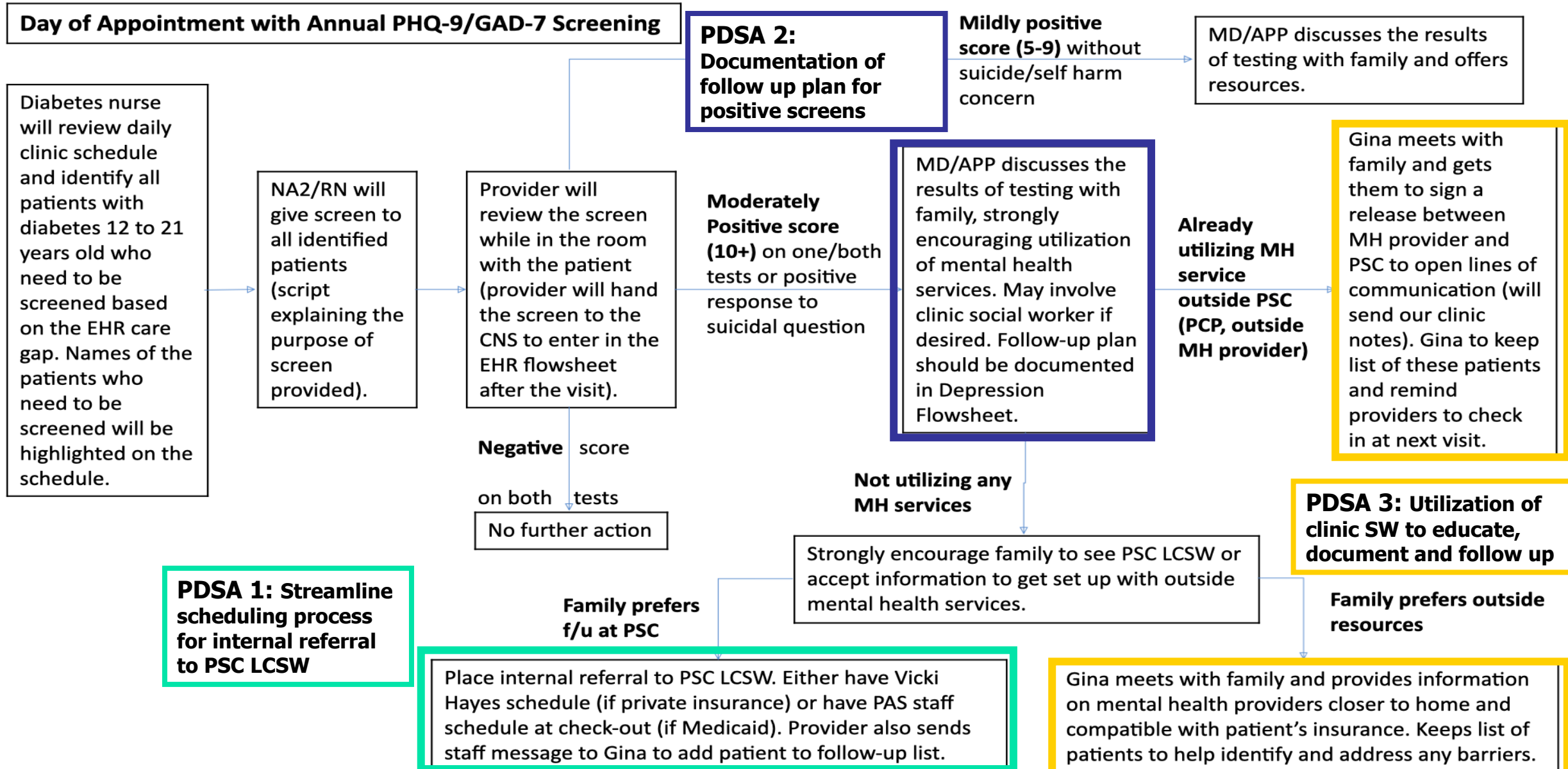
- In 2020, implementation of a standardized screening protocol in the ECU Pediatric Diabetes Clinic successfully increased annual screening rates for depression and anxiety from 2% to 46%.

- During this time period, though, only **40%** of patients with significantly positive screens (score of >10 on the PHQ 9 or GAD-7 and/or self harm concerns) without an established mental health provider were offered and accepted information regarding mental health resources and only **21%** of those with significantly positive screens had confirmed utilization of mental health services.

**Aim statements:** Through the implementation of standard process for responding to moderate to severely positive screen and or self/harm concerns focusing on education, documentation and follow up, in 12 to 18 months we aim to:

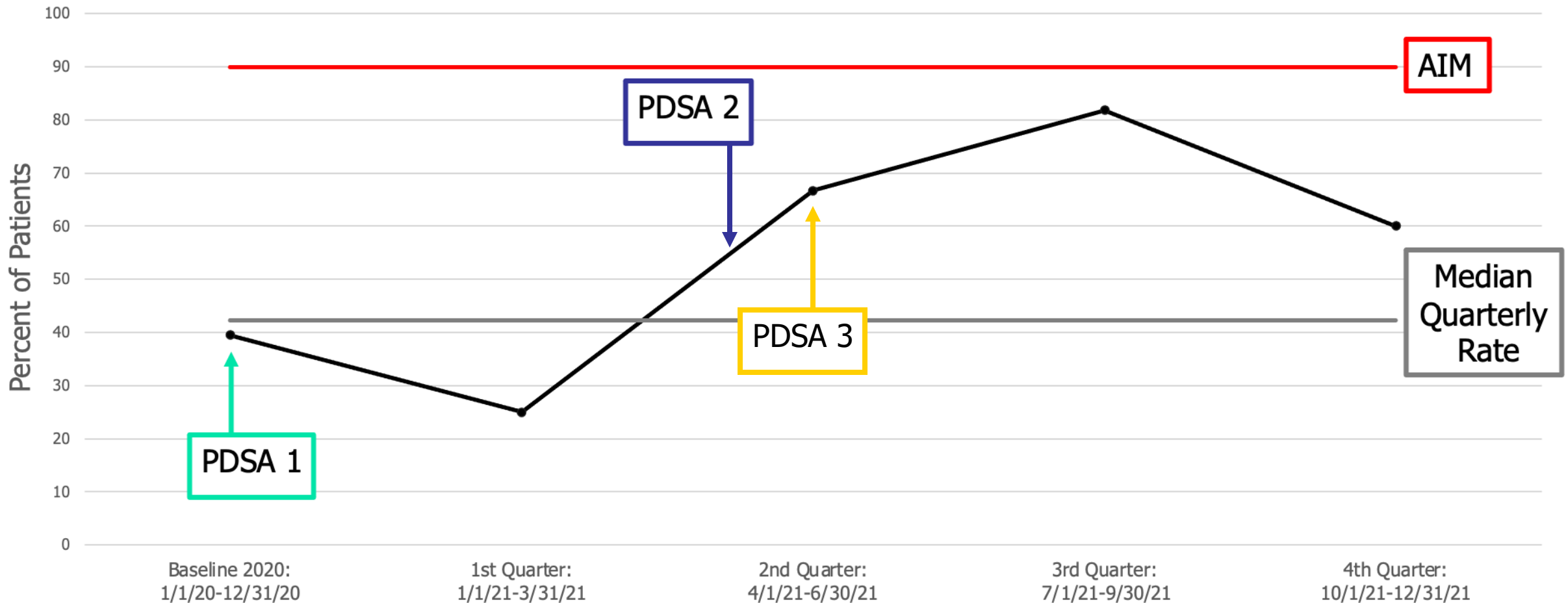
1. Increase the percentage of patients 12 to 21 years seen in our diabetes clinic with moderate to severely positive screens without an established mental health provider who are **offered and accept** mental health resources from **40% to 90%**
2. Increase confirmed **utilization** of mental health resources for patients with moderate to severely positive screens from **21% to 50%**.

# Methods: PDSA Cycles



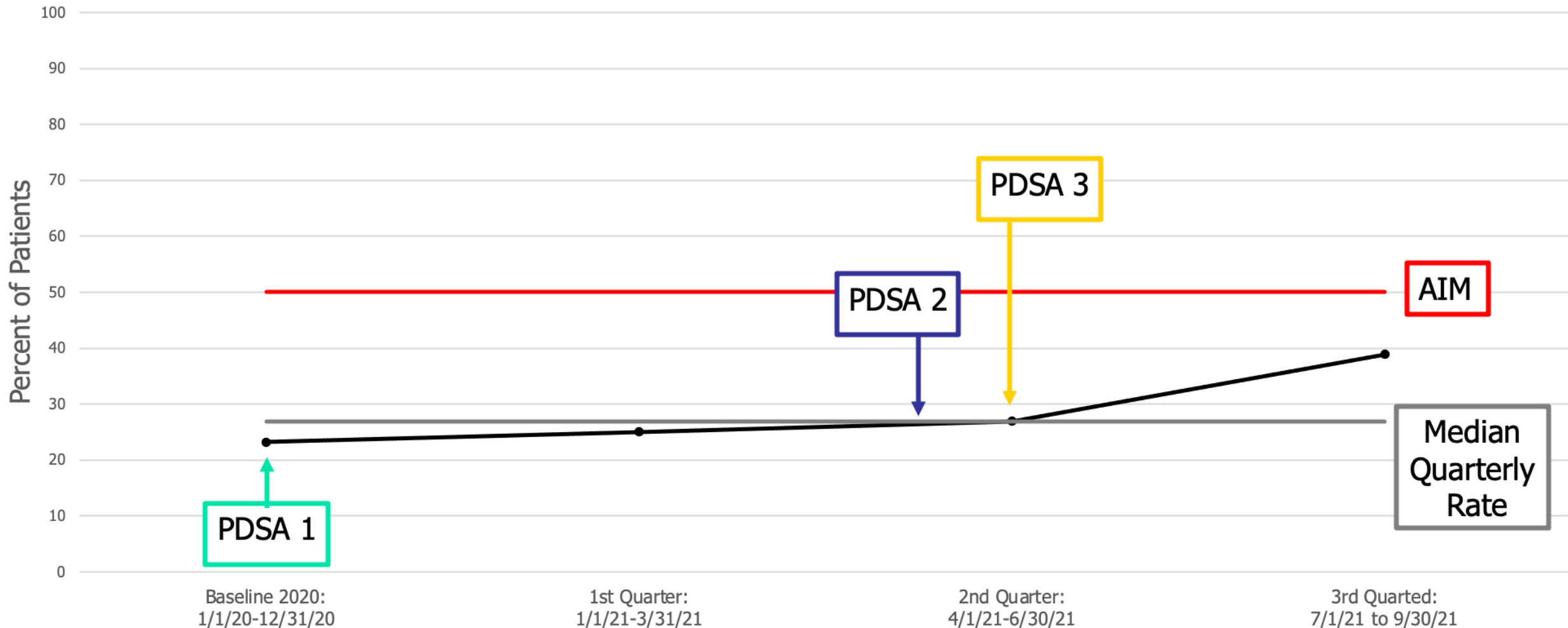
# Results: Offered and Accepted

Percent of adolescents with diabetes without an existing mental health provider with a score or 10 or greater on a PHQ-9 or GAD-7 or self harm concerns who were offered and accepted mental health resources at time of the positive screen



# Results: Utilization Rates

Percent of adolescents with diabetes with a score or 10 or greater on a PHQ-9 or GAD-7 or self harm concern with confirmed utilization of mental health resources within one year of the positive screen (updated quarterly)



# Conclusions

While this project is still ongoing, through the implementation of a process that focuses on patient education and encouragement utilizing our clinic social workers we have increased rate of acceptance of mental health resources among patients in the pediatric diabetes clinic and are starting to see the impact on utilization of mental health resources. The hope is to improve disease control and quality of life in our adolescents with diabetes.

## **Lessons learned:**

- By focusing on a later step in the process first, we missed that there were issues with an earlier step that was impacting the achievement of our larger aim.
- Standardizing both a process and its associated documentation is crucial for consistency and follow-up.
- Utilizing clinic social workers as champions of change was the key to success – their expertise has been crucial for increasing acceptance of resources and ensuring follow-up of barriers.