

# PRIHS: Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Health System

## FUNDING AWARDS



Reducing inpatient readmission rates for patients discharged from acute psychiatric care in Alberta using peer and text message support

### PROJECT FAST FACTS

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**LEAD:** Vincent Agyapong

**INSTITUTION:** University of Alberta

**PRIHS AWARD:** \$980K

## THE PROBLEM

*Discharged psychiatric patients often wait 4-8 weeks for their first appointment, leading many to miss the appointment, and increasing the likelihood of relapse. As a result, patients discharged into the community are often soon readmitted to the Emergency Department.*

## THE SOLUTION

To address this significant issue, we propose to implement a two-pronged solution; providing Text4Support with or without Peer Support Service to 10,800 patients recruited across 11 sites in three zones in Alberta:

1. Text4Support is a low-cost, evidence-based system that delivers daily supportive texts to patients' mobile phones. The text messages which are developed by experts and service users and based on cognitive behavioral therapy principles address both general support and diagnosis-specific (i.e., mood disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, substance use disorders, adjustment disorders or personality disorders). Supportive text messages are received daily for 6 months.
2. Our proposed program also includes peer support services for those who are most at risk of readmission to hospital. Peer support will be provided by individuals who have experienced similar mental health challenges and are now in recovery.

In this way, we aim to reduce the psychological treatment and support gap for Addiction and Mental Health (A&MH) patients who have been discharged from acute care and are scheduled to receive mental health and psychiatric treatment from A&MH services. Both solutions are evidence-based. Our pilot test of these interventions provide evidence that psychiatric readmissions, and emergency department visits can be reduced thus we hypothesize that our interventions will not only reduce psychiatric admissions by 10-25%, but also no-shows for initial/follow-up community provider appointments, and symptom burden; leading to better quality of life for patients in the community, and resulting in cost-savings for individuals and the health system.

## ABOUT PRIHS

*The PRIHS program is designed to align the knowledge production efforts of researchers with the evidence needs of the health system. This is achieved by providing opportunities for researchers to propose solutions to priority health system challenges and access support from SCNs and other expertise within AHS to administer implementation studies. These implementation studies will help AHS identify and advance solutions that improve health care quality, health outcomes and value for Albertans.*

## VALUE & TERM

Combined pool of funds available: \$7 million. Individual award's period of support: up to three years.

## FOCUS AREAS

PRIHS VI provides a streamlined process for connecting Alberta's academic institutions with Strategic Clinical Networks™ (SCNs), patients, providers and leaders in AHS to:

- Translate research evidence into testable solutions that address priority health system challenges in Alberta as articulated by the SCNs; and
- Generate the evidence needed to identify and accelerate the spread and/or scale of solutions that foster more efficient and/or effective use of health care resources.

Learn how

[albertainnovates.ca](http://albertainnovates.ca)