

E-Mental Health for Youth and Young Adults

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What's this project about? The health system in Alberta is currently challenged to meet the needs of youth and young adults with anxiety, mood and substance use disorders. There is increasing demand, long waitlists, limited rural access, and stigma attached to accessing services.

The prevalence of mental health problems and limited access to in-person, one-on-one counselling in a clinic setting provides an opportunity to introduce innovative online technologies as an additional service delivery approach to prevention, early detection, assessment and therapies for youth and young adult population with low to moderate need.

The use of eMental Health (eMH) services, delivered via the Internet or other innovative technologies, to youth and young adults with mental health and addiction issues will be implemented and evaluated. By implementing eMH we will improve access to services and support, as well as clinical outcomes including mental health and wellbeing.

How do we plan to do this?

We will focus on youth and young adults between 14 and 24 years and will look at internet delivered 1) screening & assessment 2) peer-to-peer & family support 3) Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and 4) brief intervention for substance misuse. Targeted groups are those living in selected urban, rural, and remote locations and will include those of Indigenous backgrounds. We will look at clinical outcomes, the economic impact and the benefits to the overall health system.

What's happening next?

With the help of youth and their families we are designing what the integration of eMH can look like. We are finalizing the research design and outcomes measurement framework for this research study and are applying for funding through the SPOR Rewarding Success Initiative, due January 2019.

For more information, please contact the Addiction and Mental Health SCN: addictionmentalhealth.scn@ahs.ca

