

# Enhancing the Adoption of MyAHS Connect Patient Portal on the University of Alberta General Internal Medicine (GIM) Units

Dr. Ruojin Bu, Jesse Lafontaine, Chris Mayhew, Pamela Mathura, and Dr. Rob Hayward

## BACKGROUND

- A patient portal is a digital health tool that can improve patient engagement and treatment adherence by providing individuals with secure access to personal health information such as laboratory results, medication lists and clinical notes.
- MyAHS Connect is a patient portal that launched with the Connect Care (CC) clinical information system at the University of Alberta Hospital in 2019.
- Hospitalizations offer an opportunity to introduce MyAHS Connect to patients and to promote its use. However, there has been limited portal usage among hospitalized patients.

## BASELINE DATA

### Frontline Patient Story

- 59 year old female admitted to Hematology unit with relapse of Thrombotic Thrombocytopenic Purpura used MyAHS Connect on personal cell phone and iPad to follow daily laboratory markers, such as hemoglobin, platelet, and LDH.

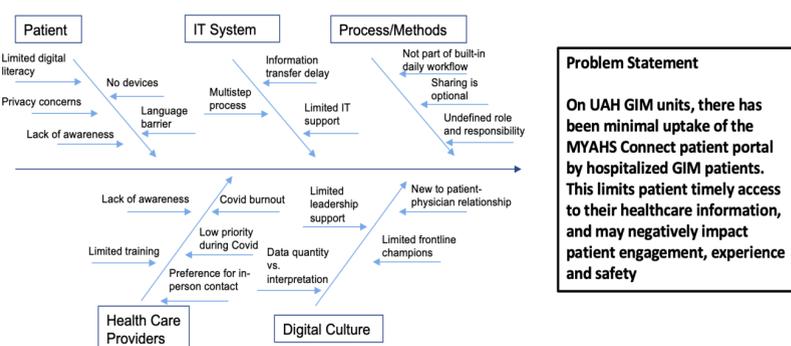
### Frontline Staff Interview

- All were aware of the patient portal but only half knew the name of the portal. Most did not know where to find the patient status within CC regarding MyAHS Connect.

### Patient Care & Unit Managers Interview

- MyAHS Connect was not integrated into the workflow, and there was no role clarity of who should offer or activate this. No one had training on using MyAHS Connect or understood what was required to be done.

## FISHBONE ANALYSIS

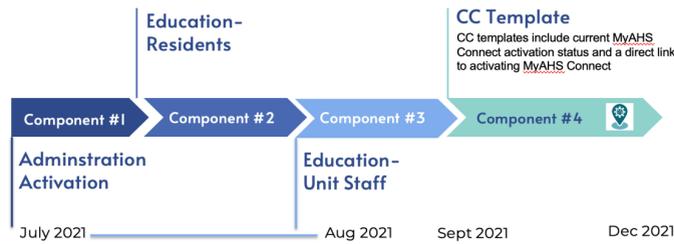


## THE AIM

This quality improvement project aimed to increase the percentage of active MyAHS Connect patient portal status on GIM units by 10% over a 6 month period.

## METHODS

### Multicomponent Intervention



### Intervention Component #1 Administration Activation

**MyAHS Connect Activation Work Package**  
**Clinical Operational Readiness**  
 Work Package: MyAHS Connect Activation  
 Target Audience: All Connect Care users; Inpatient/Outpatient Clinics, Emergency/Urgent Care, Programs and Services

**Sample script**  
 We want to let you know about a new tool we can use to share information with you... that you can see from your home through your computer or smartphone. It's called MyAHS Connect.

Figure 1. MyAHS Connect activation training package for hospital registration, admitting, emergency department and GIM clinic staff.

### Intervention Component #2 Resident Education

**Better Health. Powered by Information.**  
**Patient Portals**  
 What do they mean to residents?  
 Rob Hayward, General Internal Medicine  
 August 5, 2021

**MyAHS Connect**  
 MyAHS Connect is a secure, online, interactive tool, provided by Alberta Health Services that gives you access to your Connect Care health information. The health information viewable in MyAHS Connect is a reflection of the Connect Care record that your healthcare team uses and it is available to Albertans 14 years of age or older with an Alberta Identification Card or Alberta Driver's License.

Figure 2. MyAHS Connect resident training presentation (left); one page handout included in the GIM rotation orientation (right).

### Intervention Component #3 Unit Staff Education

**MyAHS Connect**  
 MyAHS Connect is a secure, online, interactive tool, provided by Alberta Health Services that gives you access to your Connect Care health information. The health information viewable in MyAHS Connect is a reflection of the Connect Care record that your healthcare team uses and it is available to Albertans 14 years of age or older with an Alberta Identification Card or Alberta Driver's License.

**MyAHS Connect is not for urgent medical needs. For medical emergencies, dial 911.**

To sign up for MyAHS Connect, complete the following steps:

- Create a MyAlberta Digital ID account by going to <http://account.alberta.ca/>. Start the process of verifying your MyAlberta Digital ID by confirming your identity with your Alberta Driver's License or Alberta Identification Card. If you already have a MyAlberta Digital ID, go to step 2.
- Log in to MyHealth Records <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/MyHealthRecords/> with your confirmed MyAlberta Digital ID username and password. You will need your Alberta Personal Health Number for this step.
- Click on MyAHS Connect.

**Important Final Step:** Within 10 business days, you will receive a MyAlberta Digital ID verification code in the mail. Follow the instructions provided to complete the sign-up process and to have permanent access to MyAHS Connect.

Figure 3. MyAHS Connect sign up instructions in After Visit Summary.

### Intervention Component #4 Connect Care Interventions

**System SmartPhrases**  
 H&P: AHSIPPOCADMIT  
 Consult: AHSIPPOCONSULT  
 Discharge: AHSIPPODCSUMMARY  
 Transfer: AHSIPPOCTTRANSFER

Figure 4. Connect Care documentation template containing MyAHS Connect portal status and a link for activation.

## RESULTS

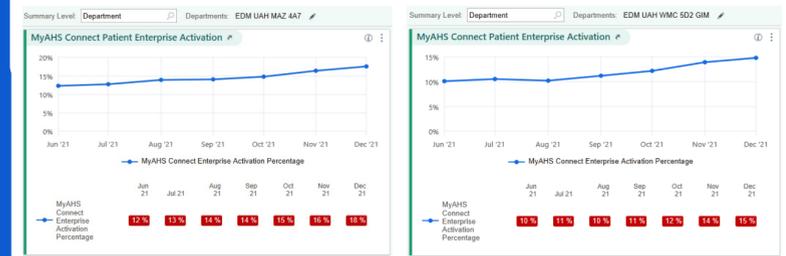


Figure 5. MyAHS Connect Activation Percentage on Unit 4A7 (left), which remained as a non-Covid GIM unit throughout the duration of project; MyAHS Connect Activation Percentage on Unit 5D2 (right), which was converted into a Covid unit at one point during the duration of project.

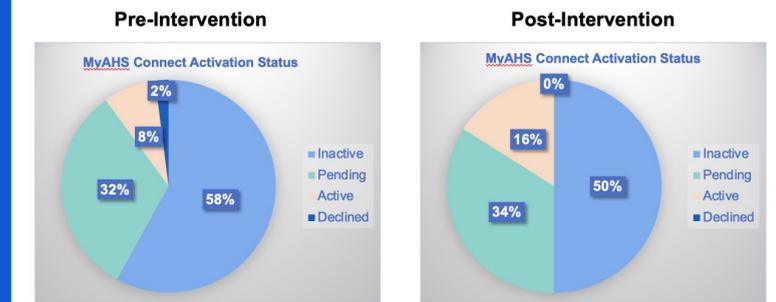


Figure 6. Comparison of pre to post intervention chart audits for 5 GIM units. Pending indicates that patient had sign-up instructions shared with them but has not acted on sign-up process. Active indicates that patient has an active account, no further action required.

## CONCLUSIONS & LIMITATIONS

- There was an increase in active portal status across all sampled GIM units and the largest increase on a single unit was 6%.
- Comparison of pre to post intervention chart audits for the sampled GIM units revealed an increase in active portal status of 8%.
- This was limited by Covid disruption that resulted in the delay or reduction of our efforts across all interventions.
- MyAHS Connect sign up process is complex by itself.

## NEXT STEPS

- Survey patients and health care providers to understand their experiences and perspectives.
- Obtain usage analytics to learn how patients and health care providers interact with the portal.
- Share our knowledge and recommendations with Connect Care patient portal advisory group as Alberta Health Services plans to launch MyAHS Connect patient portal at more health care facilities across the province.

## REFERENCES

- Engaging the Patient in Healthcare: An Overview of Personal Health Record Systems and Implications for Alberta. Alberta Health Services (AHS). 2009. URL: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/org/ahs-org-ehr.pdf> [accessed 2021-12-10]
- Information Management and Information Technology Strategic Plan. Alberta Health Services (AHS). 2015. URL: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/about/msd/ahs-msd-ahs-imit-strategy.pdf> [accessed 2021-12-10]
- Dendere R, Slade C, Burton-Jones A, Sullivan C, Staib A, Janda M. Patient Portals Facilitating Engagement With Inpatient Electronic Medical Records: A Systematic Review. Journal of Medical Internet Research. 2019;21(4). doi:10.2196/12779