




AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY

Improving Care Transitions with Innovative Technology and Health Services Research: A Journey through AHRQ's Health IT Portfolio

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HHS Organizational Focus



- Cure and Care are two sides of the same coin.
- While science and research to discover cures is needed, **science, research, and implementation to improve care is imperative.**

Learning Objectives

- Describe AHRQ's Health Information Technology Research portfolio and discuss how it supports research focused on improving care transitions.
- Discuss AHRQ's research funding opportunities that support the use of innovative health IT solutions to improve care transitions.
- Identify examples of innovative AHRQ funded health IT research projects that are aimed to improve care transitions for people with multiple chronic conditions.

AHRQ Mission

To produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and to work within HHS and with other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used

Agenda

- Background
 - AHRQ
 - Division of Health IT
- Highlights from AHRQ's health IT research portfolio
 - Health IT safety, patient-reported outcomes, clinical decision support
- Care Transitions health IT research
- Questions

AHRQ's Health IT Program

Produces and disseminates evidence about how health IT can make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable

- Established in 2004
- Has invested in research grants and contracts awarded to 289 distinct institutions in 48 States and the District of Columbia
- Currently has 108 active health IT research grants that represent a \$125M investment

Producing Evidence

- The effective delivery of health care services is increasingly reliant on obtaining, using, and analyzing digitized data and information via new technologies.
- Patients, families, providers, and policy makers need rigorous research to determine how best to incorporate these new technologies to create a learning health system that improves the safety, quality and efficiency of healthcare.
- AHRQ's health IT program funds research to create actionable findings around "what and how health IT can work best" in care settings

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AHRQ Health IT

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Producing Evidence: How do we do it?

- Primarily via investigator-initiated grants of the following types:
 - Exploratory/Developmental (R21)
 - Large Research Projects (R01)
 - Small Research Projects (R03)
 - Research Demonstration and Dissemination Projects (R18)
 - Conference Research Grants (R13)
 - Research Demonstration Cooperative Agreements (U18)
 - Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Award (K08)
- We post specific funding opportunities in key areas of program interest
 - <https://www.ahrq.gov/funding/fund-opp>
- Grant applications undergo peer review and are scored by a specific Health IT study section

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Featured Initiatives

- Develop applications for collecting and integrating standardized PRO data into EHRs or IT systems
 - App Challenge
- Advancing evidence into practice through CDS and making CDS more shareable, standards-based and publicly- available
- Special Emphasis Notice: NOT-HS-009
 - Encourages research on safe health IT practices, such as design, implementation, and usability, by all users, including patients

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Funding Announcements

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Other Interest Areas

- Bringing evidence to practice
 - EPC program
 - USPSTF
 - Mobilizing computable biomedical knowledge
- Artificial intelligence
- Interoperability (New Focus)
 - Notice of Intent (NOT-HS-19-009) to publish a funding opportunity announcement to improve **transitions of care** through innovative health IT

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Funded Care Transitions Research



- **Using Location Based Smartphone Alerts Within A System of Care Coordination - David T. Liss**
 - This project will design and implement a care coordination system using a smartphone application that sends location-based alerts to care managers when high-risk patients receive care at a regional hospital or emergency room.
- **Interactive Patient-Centered Discharge Toolkit To Promote Self-Management During Transitions - Anuj K. Dalal**
 - This project will implement and evaluate a previously developed, interactive, patient-centered discharge toolkit to improve the transition of care from the inpatient to outpatient settings.

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Funded Care Transitions Research



- **Improving Rural Healthcare Transitions Through Health Information Exchange - Kenneth Wood**
 - This project enhanced an existing health-information exchange (HIE) to enable clinicians to work more effectively and efficiently and to utilize the HIE more fully when managing care transitions.

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Funded Care Transitions Research



- **Electronic Medication Adherence Reporting and Feedback During Care Transitions - Jeffrey L. Schnipper**
 - This project will design and implement a care coordination system using a smartphone application that sends location-based alerts to care managers when high-risk patients receive care at a regional hospital or emergency room.
- **Coordinating Transitions: Health Information Technology Role in Improving Multiple Chronic Disease Outcomes - Sharon Hewner**
 - This study aimed to improve care transitions for low-income patients with multiple chronic conditions using health information exchange, and found significant reductions in inpatient and emergency department utilization.

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Questions or Comments?



Thank you!

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Funded Care Transitions Research



- **Care Transitions and Teamwork in Pediatric Trauma: Implications for Health Information Technology Design - Ayse Pinar Gurses**
 - This project seeks to develop an understanding of the cognitive work of clinician teams and family members involved in pediatric trauma care transitions in order to design usable and useful health information technologies.
- **Automated Notification for Follow-Up Testing Recommendations Across Care Settings – Ronilda Lacson**
 - This project built an automated intervention that recognized critical imaging results that require additional testing and populated a discharge summary with recommendations, resulting in improved patient follow-up.

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