

# PATIENT PERSPECTIVES ON AN ACUTE CARE ADDICTION MEDICINE CONSULTATION TEAM

## BACKGROUND & METHODS

The Addiction Recovery and Community Health team is a multidisciplinary addiction medicine consult team (AMCT) at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. The AMCT aims to improve health outcomes and care access for patients with substance use disorders.

We conducted a qualitative evaluation of the AMCT's implementation processes. This included eliciting patient perspectives to understand factors that facilitate or hinder AMCT processes, and the team's impacts on patients' hospital care and outcomes.

## FINDINGS

Patients described that the AMCT's harm reduction approach, reputation amongst peers, and specialized training were facilitators to delivery. Factors that constrained delivery included unmet care expectations, difficulties in accessing follow-up care, and conflict between the AMCT's approach and abstinence-oriented approaches amongst other hospital staff. Overall, however, patients reported that the AMCT had positive impacts on their care, such as by contributing to declines in substance use, and improvements in wellbeing and socioeconomic circumstances.

## IMPLICATIONS

The AMCT helped improve hospital experiences and perceived outcomes for patients in this study. However, further efforts are needed to enhance post-discharge follow-up, and a consistent approach to substance use disorder care amongst all hospital staff.

## WHAT DID PATIENTS SAY?

*"They did things the way I wanted to do them...But when they didn't want to do it, they gave me options...They let you decide for yourself. And that's what I need."*

*"I used to think of myself as a Bic lighter. When people are done with me, toss me away . . . I don't feel that way anymore. I feel like I have worth."*

*"[AMCT clinician] gave me the supplies and stuff. And I go to go and use them, in the bathroom, and [unit nurse] told me I was discharged because I was using drugs... so they kicked me out. "*

**Inner City Health  
and Wellness Program**

Hyshka, E., Morris, H., Anderson-Baron, J., Nixon, L., Dong, K., & Salvalaggio, G. (2019). Patient perspectives on a harm reduction-oriented addiction medicine consultation team implemented in a large acute care hospital. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 204, 107523.