

The HDPBC and the HEiDi Program

The HealthLink BC (HLBC) Emergency iDoctor in Assistance Program (HEiDi) is a significant and novel COVID-related response of the BC Emergency Medicine Network Real-Time Support Program, incorporating virtual physicians into the 811 system. The linked, cross-organizational data available in the HDPBC has provided the means for a comprehensive and timely evaluation of HEiDi to support and inform Ministry of Health policy regarding the evolution and continuation of this program.

In partnership with Michael Smith Health Research BC, Co-Principal Investigators, Dr. Riyadh Abu-Laban and Dr. Kendall Ho, Professors in UBC Faculty of Medicine, Department of Emergency Medicine and their team are able to access data quickly to analyze and evaluate results. The iterative evaluation of results will allow HEiDi to improve services and policies in a more responsive manner than they were previously able to do.



From Dr. Kendall Ho, Co-Principal Investigator:

“The improvement in latency has made the difference needed for our work to leapfrog and realize the full potential of linking qualitative, evaluation, researchers and policy makers.”

To work iteratively, access to the appropriate data must be rapid and consistently refreshed to allow what happened last week to influence what should happen tomorrow. Was equity to access of care improved? How does this differ in rural vs. urban areas? By socio-economic status? Using the HDPBC data, the HEiDi team can follow the patient’s journey after their 811 call, identify the patient’s touchpoints across the healthcare sector and identify their health outcomes. The HEiDi team can then calibrate their program and policies to achieve a higher quality of care.

From Co-Principal Investigator, Dr. Riyadh Abu-Laban: *“There is a lot of demand out there, and many areas with analogous data needs to guide policy. I hope this will be a steppingstone to work across the health system that breaks down the artificial barriers between research and quality improvement.”*



The HEiDi team, Michael Smith Health Research BC and the HDPBC continue to evaluate data, trends and outcomes, continually re-calibrating and deploying updated care and policies.

The primary outcome evaluation of this work was recently accepted for publication by CMAJ Open, and is anticipated to be in print in early 2023.

Kendall Ho, Helen Novak Lauscher, Kurtis Stewart, Riyad B. Abu-Laban, Frank Scheuermeyer, Eric Grafstein, Jim Christenson and Sandra Sundhu. Integration of virtual physician visits into a provincial 8-1-1 health information telephone service during the COVID-19 pandemic: a descriptive study of HealthLink BC Emergency iDoctor-in-assistance (HEiDi) CMAJ Open June 15, 2021 9 (2) E635-E641; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.9778/cmajo.20200265>
<https://www.cmajopen.ca/content/9/2/E635>

Ho K, Abu-Laban RB, Stewart K, Duncan R, Scheuermeyer F, Hedden L, Novak Lauscher H, Sundhu S, Chadha R, Christenson J, Grafstein E, Lavallee D, Purssell R, Tallon J, Wood N, Bryan S. A descriptive study of health system utilization and outcomes of urgently triaged callers to a nurse-managed provincial health information telephone service after initiation of supplemental virtual physician assessment. CMAJ Open, accepted December 2022 and in press.