Frequently Asked Questions

What Data Sources Can Be Accessed Via the CRISM-AHS Analytics Program?

This program brokers access to administrative health services data collected by Alberta Health Services. The following main data sources are available:

- *National Ambulatory Care Reporting System* (NACRS). Contains provincial emergency department (ED) and urgent care records.

- *Inpatient Discharge Abstract Database* (DAD). Contains provincial inpatient discharge records.

- *Practitioner Claims*. Contains provincial practitioner claims records. ***Note***: Access to these data requires additional Alberta Health data approvals.

- *Pharmaceutical Information Network (PIN)*. Contains medication dispensation data from community pharmacies in Alberta.

- *Provincial Registry*. Contains Alberta population demographic information from the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP) Registry.

- *The Consolidated Addiction & Mental Health Integrated Dataset (CAMH* Consists of records from multiple legacy systems used to record community addiction & mental health (AMH) data in the province. These data are composed of ambulatory outpatient visits and some bed-based services relating to community addiction and mental health. Note that here are various limitations of use for this dataset. Contact CRISM directly if you are interested in this data source.

What kinds of projects does the program support?

The program has supported (1) research projects, typically initiated by academic CRISM | Prairies members, and (2) quality improvement projects, typically initiated by AHS staff. ***Note*** that research projects may require independent review and approval by a university ethics committee at an Alberta institution. As of June, 2021, the program has supported 22 projects. Highlights from this work include collection and analyses of data from AHS services to support two successful grant applications (to CIHR & Health Canada; one project related to opioids, another related to methamphetamines) and two major AHS internal reports on historical trends and comorbidities associated with methamphetamine- and cannabis-related presentations to addiction treatment.

Who is eligible to access these data sources?

The program is available to all CRISM | Prairies members and AHS employees interested in using administrative health records to improve addiction-related services.

How do I apply to this program?

All requests to access these data sources require an application, available [here](#). All applicants are required to state clear research questions and an overview of their analysis plans.

What if I am not sure of my research question(s)?

Some applicants may require assistance in defining specific research questions and determining whether relevant data are available. The program can help by providing a consultation to assist applicants in refining research questions and data availability prior to submitting a formal application.

Does the program provide data analysis services?

Yes, but availability of analytic support for data retrieved through the program depends on the number of active projects and availability of human resources.

What if I intend on conducting analyses independently?

The program provides access to retrieved data from administrative data holdings for applicants capable of conducting their own analyses. As noted earlier, research projects accessing data via the program are required to obtain ethical approval.

How can I ensure a timely completion of my project and access to the data requested?

Having a well-designed research question, an analytic plan, and clearly defined data needs will all contribute towards a timely completion of projects.

Who should I contact if I have further questions?

Denise Adams, CRISM | Prairies Node Manager (denise.adams@ualberta.ca)
Shelly Vik, Alberta Health Services (Shelly.Vik@albertahealthservices.ca)

2