

Award Application

1	Project Title	FUSE
2	Clinical or Operational Area	Population Health / Primary Care
3	Healthcare System	St. Peter's Health
4	Hospital or Entity Name	St. Peter's Health
5	Applicant Name	Amy Emmert
6	Applicant Title	Senior Director of Population Health
7	E-mail Address	Aemmert@sphealth.org
8	Telephone	406-495-6908
9	Mailing Address, City, State, Zip Code	2500 Broadway, Helena, MT 59601
10	Please list the names and titles/roles of the additional members of the project team:	
	Name:	Title/Role:
	Kayla Morris	Supervisor of Community Based Services
	Haylie Wisemiller	Population Health Community Education Specialist
	Colette Murley	Community Health Worker
	Mark Nay	Community Health Worker
11	Name of Senior Risk Management or Corporate Insurance Representative	Michelle Rush
12	Mailing Address, City, State, Zip Code	2500 Broadway, Helena, MT 59601

13. The best practice/improvement submitted for consideration is a: (Check all that apply)

- Clinical Policy
- Performance Improvement Strategy (*Six Sigma, etc.*)
- Communication Strategy (*Briefing before surgical procedure, senior management rounds, etc.*)
- Other (*Please specify*)

Health Equity

14. Can the project be duplicated to support patient safety/risk mitigation strategies at other organizations?

Yes No

15. Briefly describe the project: (two paragraphs maximum, please attach any supporting documentation)

The "Housing Is Healthcare: FUSE" program at St. Peter's Health is an innovative initiative that integrates healthcare and housing stability to support high-need patients. This project combines two well-studied, evidence-based practices—Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Community Health Workers (CHWs)—that have been effectively implemented in urban settings. However, adapting and integrating these models to address the unique

challenges of a rural setting with fewer resources had not been previously widely studied. Our initiative aimed to fill this gap by collecting and reporting impact data to assess the sustainability of this approach in smaller, resource-limited communities like ours. This program targets individuals who frequently utilize the Emergency Room and are either unhoused or unstably housed. By pairing these patients with Community Health Workers (CHWs), the FUSE program offers personalized, non-clinical support to address both medical and social needs. CHWs assist patients with navigating the healthcare system, securing housing, transportation, food, and other essential services. The goal is to reduce avoidable emergency room visits and improve overall health outcomes by addressing the root causes of health issues. Since its inception in April 2022, the program has demonstrated significant success, leading to a reduction in healthcare costs and better health outcomes for the community.

The FUSE program exemplifies St. Peter's Health's commitment to community health by addressing social determinants of health. Through strong community partnerships, proactive interventions, and data-driven strategies, the program identifies and supports high-need patients, helping them maintain or secure stable housing and receive coordinated care. This comprehensive approach not only improves individual health outcomes but also alleviates the strain on healthcare services, resulting in substantial cost savings for the hospital and community. The program's success highlights the importance of integrating healthcare with social support systems, setting a new standard for healthcare delivery in Montana.

16. Describe how this project has reduced the potential for liability and improved patient safety. (one paragraph maximum)

The "Housing Is Healthcare: FUSE" program has significantly reduced the potential for liability and improved patient safety by proactively addressing the root causes of frequent emergency room visits among high-need patients. By pairing these individuals with Community Health Workers (CHWs), the program ensures that patients receive comprehensive, coordinated care that encompasses both medical and social needs. This approach reduces the likelihood of medical errors and complications associated with unmanaged chronic conditions and frequent, unnecessary emergency visits. Additionally, by stabilizing housing situations, the program minimizes risks related to homelessness, such as exposure to unsafe environments and lack of access to continuous care. The structured support and personalized interventions provided by CHWs enhance patient adherence to treatment plans and overall well-being, thereby improving safety and reducing the hospital's liability from repeated emergency care and untreated health issues.

17. What metric(s) have been used to measure and/or sustain success? (one paragraph maximum)

The success of the "Housing Is Healthcare: FUSE" program has been measured and sustained using several key metrics. Primary metrics include the reduction in the number of emergency room visits among program participants, with a focus on non-emergent visits. Additionally, the program tracks the stabilization of housing situations for patients, measuring the number of participants who maintain or secure stable housing. Cost savings for the hospital and community are also monitored, particularly the reduction in uncompensated care costs associated with frequent emergency room users. Data on patient health outcomes, such as improvements in chronic disease management and adherence to treatment plans, are regularly analyzed using tools like PowerBI dashboards. These metrics provide a comprehensive view of the program's impact, ensuring continuous improvement and long-term sustainability.

18. Are you willing to share this project with other members of AEIX? Yes No

19. Was this project an original concept created by the project team? Yes No

20. Was this project based on successful practices evaluated from literature or other healthcare providers? Yes No

21. Is this project being implemented in your health system for the first time? Yes No

22. Do you have plans to publish the project results in a professional publication or networking forum? Yes
 No

23. Is there anything else you'd like to share about this project?

The "Housing Is Healthcare: FUSE" program stands out not only for its innovative integration of healthcare and housing but also for its profound impact on the community it serves. This program embodies St. Peter's Health's commitment to addressing social determinants of health, recognizing that stable housing is fundamental to achieving better health outcomes. Through the dedicated work of Community Health Workers (CHWs), the program offers personalized, compassionate care that extends beyond traditional medical treatment, fostering a holistic approach to health and well-being.

Since its inception, the FUSE program has successfully reduced healthcare costs, alleviated the burden on emergency services, and improved the quality of life for its participants. It has also fostered strong community partnerships, uniting healthcare providers, social service organizations, and local stakeholders in a collaborative effort to support some of the most vulnerable members of the community. The program's success has garnered attention as a model for other healthcare systems seeking to innovate and improve care delivery. By continuously adapting and responding to the needs of its participants, the FUSE program is not just improving patient outcomes; it is building a healthier, more resilient community for the future.

Thank you for completing the application. Please follow these next steps.

- Please save this document in Word format and gather your supporting documentation.
- Forward the application and documentation to your senior risk management leader or corporate insurance representative. *They will need to complete and sign the Evaluation of Awards Application Form on the final page of the application before submitting it to American Excess Insurance by **Friday August 16, 2024.***

Evaluation of Award Application

The evaluation must be completed and signed by the senior risk manager or corporate insurance representative. Please evaluate the Award Application by indicating the best answer to the question.

1. **How will this project improve safety and/or reduce liability?**

- Little effect on safety and liability (1)
- Some improvement but metrics are not defined and/or it is not clear that measurable effect can be sustained (2)
- Strong effect with clearly defined metrics (3)

2. **What is the potential to share this project or practice with other AEIX members?**

- Little potential – i.e. *implementation requires major budgetary commitment, topic is highly specialized, and/or metrics are not clearly defined* (1)
- Some potential but process may be hard for another organization to implement, and/or its application may be limited - i.e. *major budgetary commitment, topic is highly specialized, and/or metrics are not clearly defined* (2)
- Strong potential for producing best practices (3)

3. **What level of impact will this project or practice have on the severity of risk exposure?**

- Little chance of impacting severity of risk but could address other issues (1)

- Some potential to impact risk exposure (2)
- Strong ability to impact severe malpractice exposure caused by significant risk events (3)

4. **What level of innovation best describes this project?**

- Project/practice is new to this organization and is based primarily on firmly established best practices (1)
- Project/practice was created primarily by applicants with some assistance from an outside vendor and contains well-established best practices with additional innovative features (2)
- Project/practice was created solely by applicants and could be included in established literature or industry best practices (3)

5. **Share your comments or recommendations.**

I recommend AEIX financially support this project and share results with AEIX membership.

	Corporate Compliance & Risk Officer	8/12/2024
E-Signature	Title	Date
406 447 2593	mrush@sphealth.org	
Phone	Email	

Send the completed application in Word format, supporting documentation, and signed evaluation to lane_taylor@premierinc.com by **Friday August 16, 2024**.

Thank you for your submission. In continued pursuit of our mission and vision to partner with forward-thinking healthcare leaders, inspire innovation, and provide the leading pathway for managing risk, we may share your project with other members of American Excess. However, this project will not be shared outside of the American Excess Insurance membership without your prior consent.