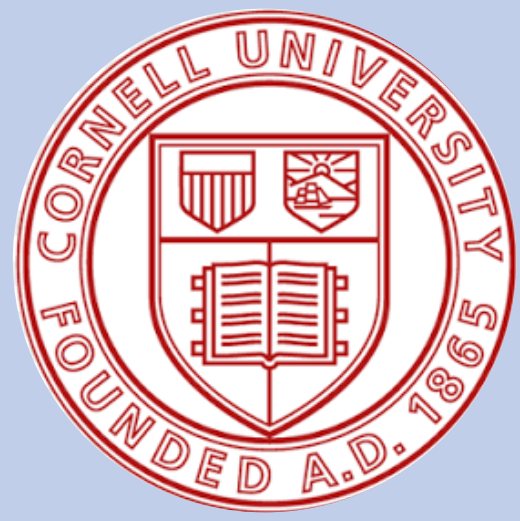




Mental Health Care and Access in Montréal

By: Sophia Kim



Introduction

Although Quebec operates under its own **universal healthcare system**, it faces unique challenges, specifically in mental health care. Patients seeking care at emergency departments can experience wait times of 12+ hours, however, patients seeking mental health care can **wait anywhere from 3-6 months** to receive care from local, community clinics called **CLSCs**.

Cultural Immersion

Montréal is lively during the summer and I was able to visit many different neighborhoods, take advantage of the many bike paths, and speak some French! Montréal is also full of parks and community spaces that I visited. I also tried some of the food that Montréal is known for, like poutine, Montréal-style bagels, and smoked meat sandwiches. The architecture in Old Montréal made it truly feel like you were in France with the historical buildings!

Internship Activities

During my time at Dr. Jai Shah's Laboratoire Traverse at the Douglas Research Centre, there were many different tasks and activities I participated in such as:

- **Interviewing and meeting participants** at the CLSC in Lasalle for the **Innowell Project**
- **Shadowing Dr. Shah** as he met with potential patients for the PEPP (Prevention and Early Intervention for Psychosis) program
- **Organizing case files** and learning about past patients who were treated at the hospital
- **Joining in on meetings** with Dr. Shah to observe what clinical meetings with other clinicians looks like (even if they were in French!)
- **Completing literature reviews** for new potential projects such as how socioeconomic factors relate to early psychosis stages

The Innowell Project

Innowell is a mental health platform that allows clinicians to track patients progress over time through questionnaires so they can tailor the care accordingly. The project is a pilot test to assess whether Innowell can be used throughout Quebec in order to streamline care and allow clinicians to track the progress of waitlisted patients.



Reflection

Through my experience, I learned a lot about how research contributes to changing health systems and also how change to a larger system starts small before becoming a greater change. I hope to explore research in some capacity in the future!

