NEW GRANTS FROM RITA & ALEX HILLMAN FOUNDATION SUPPORT INNOVATIVE NURSING-DRIVEN INTERVENTIONS TARGETING THE NEEDS OF RURAL CANCER PATIENTS AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS

Hillman Innovations in Care program seeks to improve the health and health care of underserved populations

New York, NY – (November 5, 2019) – Two grants from the Rita & Alex Hillman Foundation’s Hillman Innovations in Care program (HIC) will support nursing-driven programs that seek to significantly improve care for vulnerable populations. The grants, totaling $1.2 million, have been awarded to the University of Utah's Huntsman at Home cancer care program, and to Ariadne Labs and Boston College, the Foundation announced today.

“Our goal is to address critical gaps in care by supporting promising interventions that look beyond conventional strategies and show potential for national replication,” said Ahrin Mishan, Executive Director of the Rita & Alex Hillman Foundation. “Helping nurses design, develop, and disseminate these innovative models of care is core to our mission.”

Bringing care to rural cancer patients – at home
A Hillman Innovations In Care grant will support expansion of the Huntsman Cancer Institute’s (HCI) Huntsman at Home program, allowing it to extend its service beyond the Salt Lake City area into three rural counties in eastern Utah using a combination of on-ground, remote monitoring, and telehealth strategies led by nurse practitioners.

Cancer patients living in rural areas are particularly underserved and most models of cancer care do not extend to the home setting, yet this is where many patients and family caregivers struggle.

Huntsman at Home provides intensive, hospital-quality clinical care that allows people to be discharged from the hospital sooner and receive continuing care at home. The program also addresses many unmet needs for cancer patients and their families, including symptoms and side effects that cause suffering and often result in emergency department visits and re-hospitalizations.

The program, which is based on the Hospital at Home concept, is expected to decrease length of hospitalization, re-hospitalization, and emergency department visits, and improve patient outcomes and family caregiver wellbeing.

HCI’s reputation as a leader in this area will help position this nursing-driven program for adoption by other health systems and states serving large rural populations.

The Principal Investigator is Kathi Mooney, PhD, RN, FAAN, Co-Leader of the Cancer Control and Population Sciences Program at HCI and Distinguished Professor and Louis S. Peery and Janet B. Peery Presidential Endowed Chair at the University of Utah College of Nursing, along with co-investigators Karen Titchener, MSN, NP, RN, Director of Huntsman at Home and Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Utah College of Nursing, and Anna Beck, MD, Huntsman at Home Medical Director and Professor (Clinical) at the University of Utah School of Medicine.

Empowering nurses to make childbirth safer
For American women today, childbirth has become more dangerous despite increasing rates of intervention with cesarean sections. Women today are 50% more likely than their own mothers were to die in childbirth, and black women's risk of dying in childbirth is three to four times greater than that of
their white counterparts. The rate of delivery by cesarean section -- a key indicator of the quality of labor management -- has skyrocketed, but most cesareans performed in the US are avoidable.

Research indicates a significant relationship between the quality of nursing care and the odds of cesarean, yet few hospitals are currently able to measure important differences in nursing care, let alone estimate their effect on birth outcomes, and most nurse managers have limited insight into variations in nursing practice on their own units.

Ariadne Labs and Boston College School of Nursing will work with hospitals to help nurses use data on the care they are providing to understand how their practices influence childbirth outcomes. This Hillman Innovations in Care grant will help gather the data through a well-established “audit and feedback” intervention, giving nurse-led audit committees insight into nurse-specific cesarean rates. The project will test whether this information can help nurse managers improve safety and how audit committees use this data to strengthen nursing practice.

The Principal Investigators are Joyce K. Edmonds, PhD, MPH, RN, Associate Professor at Boston College Connell School of Nursing, and Neel Shah, MD, MPP, Assistant Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology at Harvard Medical School, and director of the Delivery Decisions Initiative at Ariadne Labs. Ariadne Labs is a joint health system innovation center of Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health working to save lives and reduce suffering by creating scalable solutions that improve health care delivery at the most critical moments for people.

About Hillman Innovations in Care Grants
Grantees of the Hillman Innovations in Care program receive $600,000 in a three-year period. Launched in 2014, the program is one of the Foundation’s defining initiatives and supports bold, evidence-based interventions that improve the health and health care of vulnerable populations, including the economically disadvantaged, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ people, people experiencing homelessness, rural populations, and others.

A list of previous HIC grantees is available here.

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ABOUT THE RITA & ALEX HILLMAN FOUNDATION
The Rita & Alex Hillman Foundation’s mission is to improve the lives of patients and their families through nursing-driven innovation. To this end, the foundation cultivates nurse leaders, supports nursing research, and disseminates new models of care that are critical to making the U.S. healthcare system more patient-centered, accessible, equitable, and affordable. The foundation’s goal is to leverage the power of nursing’s unique knowledge to ensure that the healthcare system can deliver the high-quality care patients need and deserve. For more information, please visit www.rahf.org.

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