

Alliance for Social Impact (ASI) Hub

New UQ-IITD collaborative study opens new frontiers of healthcare service research

A new study has been co-funded by The University of Queensland (UQ) and Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) Research Academy. Along with the UQ Business School (UQBS) ASI Hub, this will open new research in much-needed healthcare services delivery to distant and disadvantaged communities. The study will examine how a telehealth (telemedicine) model combined with a social enterprise model will facilitate the delivery of both primary and complex healthcare services.

Fieldwork for the project will be undertaken in India where a substantial urban-rural divide exists in health care services. This will be the first known study to examine how the synergistic benefits of telehealth and social enterprise models can be integrated for the deeper penetration of much needed healthcare services to distant and disadvantaged communities all over the world.

The study is spearheaded by a team of experts who bring complementary expertise to the project:

- [Associate Professor Jay Weerawardena](#), Co-lead of ASI, who is known for his impactful research in social innovation and dual value creation in social sector organisations
- [Associate Professor Sanjay Dhir](#), IITD, who has undertaken extensive research in policy interventions in healthcare services
- [Associate Professor Sisira Edirippulige](#), UQ Centre for Health Services Research, who has undertaken extensive research in the development and integration of e-health services.

As the UQBS Co-lead Associate Professor Weerawardena indicates, 'A combined telehealth and social enterprise model captures the strengths of telehealth initiatives in the delivery of primary healthcare services with the low-cost social enterprises model that facilitates long-term care for complex health services such as mental health.'

The IITD project Co-lead Associate Professor Dhir notes that to 'gain deeper insights the study will undertake extensive fieldwork in which interviews will be undertaken with telemedicine providers and NGO/ social enterprises, panel discussion with public health officials dealing with such services.'

'These insights will be integrated with published evidence for dissemination of findings for further collaborative and externally funded research, practitioners and policy planner interventions.'

UQ telehealth expert Associate Professor Edirippulige predicts that 'this groundbreaking study will provide evidence-based insights to any distant health services delivery context including Australia where the delivery of complex medical services in particular has been problematic.'

[Partner with UQ Business School's Alliance for Social Impact to address social issues together.](#)

