NIKKI SMITHERS, President, The Christopher Smithers’ Foundation

“It’s a pleasure to be with you today. Before we begin, I’d like to thank my dear friend Pierpaolo of OCCAM. Our foundation has been partnered with OCCAM for the past 20 years and I’m very proud of the work we’ve done together. It’s one of the nation’s older foundations, dating back to 1952, with a focus on alcohol and substance use disorder. With me today I have three of my children who are very active in the foundation’s work. Today they’re going to share with you some of the projects they’ve been working on and I hope we can begin a new era of addiction treatment and therapy with the focus on AI.”

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BRINKLEY SMITHERS, Vice-President, The Christopher Smithers’ Foundation

“It’s an honor to be here with you guys today. Back in 2018, I was interning at LICAD, which stands for Long Island Council for Drug and Alcohol Dependence, and I remember sitting in a small office, thinking that I had never seen a public service announcement that moved me. I think we’re all human, we want to feel something, and I think those feelings are the blocks to change. So I started writing and now we have a PSA called “Hey Charlie”, done in collaboration with Leicad, the Smithers Foundation, and HeavyTv about the growing opioid epidemic. Now more than ever it is needed. We have to raise a stigma against addiction and I feel like the only way to do this is through moving images and AI, mental health assistance, and such. We can play the video.”

*VIDEO PLAYING*
The video shows that addiction is not a moral drama, it’s a medical issue. Next, I’ll be introducing my brother Nick. He will present the Smithers Foundation most recent project he’s been working on, called “Project Be Vulnerable”, an AI-generated system to help us assist therapists in their therapy.”

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NICHOLAS SMITHERS, Director, The Christopher Smithers’ Foundation

“Today I present myself on behalf of the Smithers Foundation and as a college student from New York University. In the US alone, we are witnessing a severe assurance of clinical staff capable of evaluating patients. The stigma surrounding mental health treatment exacerbates this challenge, hindering admission and interventions along with many other
barriers to treatment. Our current methodologies for tracking and managing patient intake primarily rely on surveys and paper forums, which are not only tedious but also lack sterilization. This impedes the efficient sharing and utilization of data for research and the development of advanced care methodologies for our doctors.

In this era, where technology and AI tools like Chat GPT have become an influence for many, we propose a revolutionary solution: a digital screening model powered by AI. This program aims to streamline the evaluation of mental health issues, thereby enhancing the triage process for both patients and clinicians. Moreover, AI screening models for mental health treatment have the power to standardize data collection, reduce stigma, and produce the best treatment research in the development of innovative public health interventions.

I’m glad to share that we have created a proof of concept program named “Project Be Vulnerable” for just that. Upon entering the “Be Vulnerable” website, you can immediately start chatting with a first-of-its-kind, multi-connected chatbot system, that generates robust and holistic patient intake from an entire patient conversation. Summarized in as little as 25 chats, the therapeutic chatbots can access CBT motivational interviewing tasks and provide education information for databases, medical scales, and research.

Our next steps include defining our program, setting up HIPAA Compliance web servers, conducting a pilot study, and creating a profile section where viewers can see therapists that best match with them. Additionally, users can have single and group therapy, as well as the opportunity to meet different people online who match with them via therapists. Therapists can give the bots information from their sessions so that the users can do homework between sessions and access information from there as well.

The Smithers Foundation and OCCAM are encouraging a new age of mental health treatment, where therapy isn’t just generally administered during times of suffering, but instead treated regularly, like dentist visits or physicals at the doctor’s office. Our methodology encompasses the development of AI-driven tools, data connection analysis, and the integration of digital twin technology. This holistic approach requires a multidisciplinary effort, leveraging the latest technology and medical expertise, to best assist our psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, and other mental health professionals.

Simply put, “Project Be Vulnerable” not only has the goal to transform the way we approach mental health and substance abuse but also sets a precedent for international cooperation in tackling global challenges.”

*PRESENTATION: this is the backend of the AI program, which contains the OPENAI-powered chatbot that we have programmed to communicate with each other via a “Head” Bot.*

“While this may seem like just a regular chatbot, it is using medical skills that a psychiatrist would use when diagnosing someone. The head therapist just gathers very basic and simple information from people like name, country, religion etcetera.”
At this point therapists screen that person for substance abuse, so out of all the disorders to choose from, it chose substance use. Now it’s asking questions from the craft scale, which is a series of questions a psychiatrist would use to officially diagnose someone with substance use disorder. Now the screener is doing a little bit of CHR therapy, so when the therapist gets a report, it can go off with the therapy that has been had with the Bot already, to see what works and what doesn’t.”

*PRESENTATION: this page shows the entire patient chat, summaries, and an Excel sheet for a therapist*.

“It then uses another AI, to put it into an Excel sheet which kind of university uses this for patients as well.
I’d like to introduce my brother Cristopher Smithers, who will continue this conversation on AI therapy. Thank you.”

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CHRISTOPHER B. SMITHERS, Jr., Secretary, The Christopher Smithers’ Foundation

“Thank you, Nick. I will now be sharing our foundation’s mission, offerings, and limitations. I’d like to introduce you to “Project Wellness”’. The Smithers Foundation focuses on educating the public that alcohol use disorder and opioid use disorder are respectable, treatable medical illnesses from which people can and do recover, encouraging prevention programs and activities with an emphasis on high-risk populations and continually fighting to reduce and eliminate the stigma that is associated with the medical illness of addiction.

The Foundation’s current offerings and limitations are as follows. Currently, our Foundation and our associate organizations receive many calls and inquiries in search of advice or guidance regarding recovery programs. They are currently met with, at least in our generalized response, based more so on the symptoms of addiction, as we call them, and not the causes. These generalized symptoms treating recommendations, along with strains on accessibility and reach, are a foundation’s main limitations. Now a symptom of addiction comes more in the form of repeated substance abuse, whereas a cause of addiction comes more in the form of trauma or social pressures.

While initially finding a solution to the symptoms of addiction, our plan is also to target the causes. We intend to harness the power of AI to act as a complement to the assistance we currently provide. To begin one’s recovery journey, one must understand why one became addicted in the first place, whether that be genetic, environmental, personal, or other factors. You cannot combat symptoms if you cannot target causes.

However, these factors are person-specific. No one solution works for everybody. That is why, as counterintuitive as it may seem or sound, at some time, moving to an AI-based platform can offer a more feasible solution to a holistic, individualized human-centered approach. The wide accessibility, tailored experience, and strong database capabilities of
AI chatbots can offer our foundation a chance to help combat the at times overwhelming complexity of addiction recovery and assistance.

Now, the AI project in the journey towards recovery from addiction, personal support can be pivotal. Recognizing this, our foundation is currently developing “Project Wellness”, an AI-based chatbot designed to guide recovering addicts toward the rehabilitation, therapy and wellness programs most suited to their unique circumstances and needs. At the core of our chatbots, functionally are two primary focuses: identifying the causes, and creating a plan to recover from the symptoms. A holistic understanding of the user’s current situation through a chatbot will help deliver not just recommendations for reliable recovery programs, but also a thorough plan tailored to the individual’s life.

Secondly, we hope for this bot to serve a greater purpose than only finding a rehabilitation program for users to move on to. We hope that this bot will be capable of remaining by the side of the recovering addict throughout their journey. By following up with its user, it can stay up to date with their progress and work with them, to understand the why behind their addiction.

In this way, rather than just battling the addiction itself, we will help our users, by solving both the internal and external factors that put them in an environment that induces their addiction in the first place. This holistic approach means “Project Wellness” will support strategy extending beyond formal programs, such as taking up new hobbies that align with the individual’s interest or spending more time with the family, all aimed at fostering a supportive environment conducive to recovery.

By providing a platform that not only connects individuals with the programs but also encourages the development of supportive lifestyle changes, we aim to contribute meaningfully to individuals battling with addiction. This initiative is a treatment to our belief in the power of technology to bring positive change in the realm of wealth and well-being, offering a path for those seeking to reclaim control over their lives.

The next steps: currently, as my brother Nick mentioned, this project “Be Vulnerable” has an MVP which in my project we are continuing to develop and train. Our foundation is creating a team of developers, designers, and researchers to build an extension to the vulnerable project wellness as the capabilities of AI expand, we hope to expand the project relentlessly parallel to it. We intend for a continued commitment and dedication to the enhancement of this chatbot and hope that its own learning capabilities allow for it to improve itself and its own responses with time. Our goal is to launch this project to the public by the close of August this year. So stay tuned guys.

Addiction may not necessarily be curable, but with the right support, it could definitely be treatable. Asking the first question of how, why, when, and where to seek help can often be difficult for individuals struggling with addiction. Hopefully, the Smithers Foundation platform “Projects Wellness” and can get people in their path again. I thank you all.”

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