

# Palliser Triangle

## 2020-21 Annual Report





## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



*Vicki Yellow Old Woman*

Since my appointment to the AHS Board in the fall of 2020, it has been my pleasure to become familiar with the work of the Advisory Councils. By all accounts, Councils have persevered through the COVID-19 pandemic and have found success in connecting with stakeholders as they adapted to virtual meetings well through 2021.

Advisory Councils continue to be tremendous partners in health. They have been instrumental as a conduit of information from AHS to local communities, a task of particular importance during an extraordinary period of time. Through innovation and determination, each Council has remained committed to its role of advising AHS, and to bringing forward the voices of their communities.

I look forward to working with Advisory Councils in the years ahead and watching as they continue to evolve. Thank you to each member for your ongoing dedication to improving health services for all Albertans.

Sincerely,

Vicki Yellow Old Woman,  
Chair, Community Engagement Committee, AHS Board



## Message from the Chair, Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council



*Reg Radke*

We would like to express our sympathy and support for all those who were touched directly by the COVID-19 pandemic and recognize the challenges and supportive work AHS staff provided during this time.

As representatives of our respective communities, our Council members continued to provide a voice to AHS about access to public healthcare, and in turn, provide information back into our local communities to help them navigate health and wellness services and supports.

We also hosted three virtual information sessions, open to the public on topics of senior's care, mental health supports, and COVID-19. Various members participated in sessions to gather input and feedback on province-wide health service and support initiatives such as Seniors Care and EMS services. Council as a whole, participated in local discussion with AHS South Zone on topics such as cardiac services planning, COVID infections, and immunizations.

Our Advisory Council continues to meet virtually, welcoming four new members during the past year – Kristine Russell and Krista Weiss, both from Medicine Hat, Jill Bernhart from Foremost and Kathy Hutcheon, from Oyen.

Sincerely,

Reg Radke  
Chair, Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council



## Who we are

The Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council (PTHAC) is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members who reside in the geographic [area](#) surrounding Medicine Hat. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to obtain photos of our membership. The following members sat on Council in 2020-21:

Reg Radke (Chair)	Brooks, AB
Krista Weiss (Vice Chair)	Medicine Hat, AB
Andrea Ames	Bassano, AB
Ajit Atwal	Medicine Hat, AB
Jill Bernhart	Foremost, AB
Lorrie Clizbe	Brooks, AB
Patricia Dietrich	Medicine Hat, AB
Kathleen Hutcheon	Oyen, AB
Paul Nederveen	Medicine Hat, AB
Kristine Russell	Medicine Hat, AB





# Key achievements of 2020-21

Work over the last year focused primarily on enhancing interactions with local communities and bringing forward the public’s feedback to AHS.



## Community concerns shared with Zone leadership included:

- Access to addictions and mental health supports
- Medicine Hat and Brooks Family Maternity Clinic
- Vulnerable populations and seniors impacted by the pandemic
- Outsourcing of community lab collection and linen/laundry services
- Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) procedures and policies
- COVID-19 vaccine rollout and supply



## Council engaged with AHS on the following topics:

- COVID-19 and vaccine rollout
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) listening sessions
- Facility-based continuing care
- Influenza campaign
- Unconscious bias
- Cardiac service planning



## Public Participation:

- 53 community members attended regular HAC meetings
- 197 community members attended community engagement events



Council continued building its relationship with AHS via strategic planning meetings among our Chair, Vice Chair, South Zone leadership, and Advisory Council Coordinator. These touchpoints ensured consistent and open communication and resulted in the PTHAC Chair participating in the interview and selection committee for the new South Zone Chief Zone Officer.



There was a significant increase in death by suicide, particularly among males located in or connected to the Medicine Hat area. One of our Council members participated in collaborative community meetings with Medicine Hat stakeholders to discuss strategy, community response, and ongoing planning.



Council continued building its relationship with AHS Provincial Advisory Councils (PAC) by inviting Seniors and Continuing Care PAC members share insights on the PAC role and where opportunities for further collaboration exist.

### AHS Presentations

- ❖ *Medical Assistance in Dying – South Zone*
- ❖ *Improving Virtual Health Session Experience*

### Public/Community Engagement Presentations

- ❖ *Addiction and Mental Health – South Zone*
- ❖ *Seniors and Continuing Care*
- ❖ *Covid-19 Response*
- ❖ *Transform Your Stress*



## A look ahead

A refreshed model we named HAC 2.0 was implemented in 2020 and has improved the way HACs interact with the public, including incorporating community engagement events in our annual planning calendar. HAC 2.0 was implemented amid the reality and constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in all engagement events being held virtually until it is safe to proceed in-person.

Council remains focused on informing community stakeholders, hosting community engagement events, and building new partnerships. We are committed to four key areas:

- **Addiction and mental health:** Council will support AHS zone leadership by sharing information and resources on addiction and mental health services available within their community.
- **Seniors health and continuing care:** Council will participate in local service planning, promoting seniors health priorities and ensuring zone leadership is aware of seniors health and continuing care concerns in the zone.
- **Rural health:** Council will partner with Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) and Primary Care Networks (PCN) to promote local resources, retention and recruitment of health professionals in the area.
- **Communication:** Council will advise AHS on the readability of its public resource materials and provide input on improving online navigation. We will also share information back with our communities to bring awareness of AHS channels of communication.

PTHAC will continue to value and grow current and new partnerships in health. Relationships with partners such as RhPAP, PCNs, and local health foundations are invaluable.



*We greatly appreciate the perspective our HAC members bring to the table on behalf of our communities. Their experiences help us to respond to questions, issues, and challenges they see and feel, while their input assists us in finding creative and innovative solutions to address shape the priorities within the communities they represent. The HAC's are extremely valuable to the healthcare system.*

**Linda Iwasiw**

Chief Zone Officer, South Zone

**Dr. Aaron Low**

Zone Medical Director, South Zone

Advisory Council members share advice and feedback from their communities with AHS. Councils hold public meetings and engagement activities virtually or in locations throughout their geographic area that further contribute to improving healthcare services in Alberta.

## Get involved

You can make a difference to the health and well-being of your family, friends, neighbours and community by sharing your thoughts and ideas with AHS. You can get involved by:

- Attending an [upcoming meeting](#). Agendas and notices are posted on the Advisory Council webpage: [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils).
- Delivering a presentation at a Council meeting on a health area of interest.
- Providing input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#).
- Applying to [become a member](#). Members are appointed for three-year terms.

## Learn more

Visit [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils)

✉ [pallisertriangle@ahs.ca](mailto:pallisertriangle@ahs.ca)

☎ 1.877.275.8830

Check us out on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) or by searching AHS Advisory Councils.

