

Wood Buffalo

2021-22 Annual Report

(July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022)





Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



Vicki Yellow Old Woman

It's been another remarkable year for health services in Alberta. While the COVID-19 pandemic carried on, vaccines became available which has been monumental in slowing the spread of the virus and preventing severe illness. Through it all, AHS Advisory Councils remained connected with their communities and have demonstrated an incredible spirit of volunteerism through their engagement activities.

Through Advisory Councils, AHS has received feedback on a number of important initiatives which are outlined in each of these reports. We are grateful for the involvement of our Councils in advising AHS on a range of matters of importance to all Albertans.

On behalf of the AHS Board, I extend my sincerest gratitude to all Advisory Council members for continuing to foster relationships with stakeholders across Alberta. These grassroots connections have been vital to AHS' ability to make well-rounded decisions on health services that impact so many of us. Your commitment is greatly appreciated and we look forward to the year ahead.

Sincerely,

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



Message from the Chair, Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council



Angela Betts

Another year filled with connection and passion has come and gone. Once again, I feel like it is time for celebration. Sometimes time passes in the blink of an eye and other times we are set in a holding pattern to wait to see the seeds we have planted bloom. As spring brings blooms and new life erupts around us, we too are moving forward as a strong and vibrant community with reflection and respect.

As I seek to pass the torch, I know the continued passion of our community and the partnership with the Health Advisory Council will thrive and reap many rewards.

Enjoy the day, it belongs to you.

Sincerely,

Angela Betts
Past Chair, Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council



Who we are

The Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council (WBHAC) is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members who reside in the geographic [area](#) surrounding Fort McMurray. The following members sat on Council in 2021-22:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Angela Betts (Chair)* | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Tinna Ezekiel (Vice Chair) | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Patience Akenbor | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Lisa Barter* | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Sonia Burke-Smith | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Cecile Calliou* | Fort McKay, AB |
| Natalie Castro - Gentili | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Sandy Grandison | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Todd Hillier | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Evelyn Okoh | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Farooq Shamshad* | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Carol Theberge | Fort McMurray, AB |
| Beverly Tupper | Fort Fitzgerald, AB |

**departing members through the year*



Beverly Tupper and Patience Akenbor, Advisory Council Spring Forum. May 2022.



Key achievements of 2021-22

We continued to be a strong voice for local communities. We had members of the public in attendance at each of our meetings and we look forward to seeing more as we diversify and broaden awareness of our Council in the year ahead.



During the year we partnered with AHS to host two mental health virtual training sessions. Both events, titled “Transform Your Stress: The Resilience Advantage - Strategies for Managing Stress in Challenging Times,” had 45 community members participate. These sessions helped build awareness of the factors that contribute to psychological wellness, and they provided tools to manage stress. Participants reported gaining a greater understanding of the impact of emotions on the body and how to develop an action plan to address their own stress.



Council held three virtual public meetings and one virtual engagement event. In addition to topical presentations, at each meeting we received an update from AHS North Zone leadership, a physician recruitment report from AHS Medical Affairs, an update from our community partners with the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) and held dedicated time to hear from the community.



In May, Council members attended the Annual Advisory Council Forum in Edmonton. This year saw opportunity for participation in an Indigenous Workshop, learning about asset-based community development and participation in several information sessions. We used this opportunity to network with Councils from across the province, to gather new ideas and find new ways to partner with others.



We were fortunate to recruit new members from Fort Fitzgerald and we're excited to hear more from this community. We continue seeking representation from Anzac, Conklin and Fort McKay to help represent our large geographic region. See page six for information on how to apply.



Presentations:

- AHS Addiction and Mental Health
- Alberta Cancer Screening Programs
- AHS Indigenous Wellness Core
- AHS North Zone Indigenous Health Program
- AHS Emergency Department SCN (Strategic Clinical Network)

Public Participation:

- 7 community members attended regular HAC meetings
- 45 community members attended community engagement events

A look ahead

In the year ahead, Council will host three public meetings and encourage the public to attend and share insights on healthcare services in their community. We will continue connecting with local organizations and bring feedback to our regular meetings to share with AHS in 2022-23.

Council is excited about the many large projects that AHS has underway. We look forward to co-hosting one more community event in collaboration with AHS during our upcoming year. Community stakeholders will be invited to participate in engagement and learn more about health initiatives across our Zone.

Plans for the coming year include:

- Increasing public attendance and participation at HAC meetings through connections made at community events, promotion and invitations to local stakeholders.
- Supporting the AHS Addiction and Mental Health portfolio to promote programs and services.
- Sharing information about seniors and continuing care programs and services.
- Partnering with the AHS Population and Public Health portfolio and the Medical Officer of Health to host a community event on pandemic recovery and immunizations, while sharing accurate information with communities.
- Continuing to build relationships with other AHS Advisory Councils.
- Recruitment to fill vacancies on Council, particularly from rural and Indigenous communities in our area.

We will continue building relationships with the numerous local community health partners through our meetings and events. Key stakeholders include Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), Primary Care Networks (PCN) in the Zone, attraction and retention committees, local hospital foundations/ auxiliaries. We will also continue connecting with municipal leaders, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and other local community groups.



Over the past year, Alberta's six North Zone Health Advisory Councils have contributed immeasurably to our pandemic response while also sharing key information with our communities. The Councils have also successfully engaged hundreds of Albertans while shifting to virtual community events. I applaud their ongoing efforts to remain connected.

It has been my personal pleasure to work with many of our North Zone Councils. I have always found Council members to be dedicated, true community builders, and strong voices for healthcare throughout the North. They are passionate and bring a diversity of opinions and experiences, which makes for rich dialogue and discussion. We are grateful for their time, advice and collaboration with AHS North Zone leaders.

We look forward to continuing to partner with the True North, Wood Buffalo, Peace, Lesser Slave Lake, Lakeland Communities and Tamarack Health Advisory Councils.

Stacy Greening

Chief Zone Officer, North 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.
- Delivering a presentation at a Council meeting on a health area of interest or concern.
- Provide input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#).
- Apply to [become a member](#). Members are appointed for three-year terms.

Learn more

Visit ahs.ca/advisorycouncils

✉ woodbuffalo@ahs.ca

☎ 1.877.275.8830

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

