

# David Thompson Health Advisory Council



## *Annual Report 2010–2011*







## Table of Contents

Message from the Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council .....	2
Message from the Chair, Alberta Health Services Board .....	3
The Year in Review .....	4
Executive Summary .....	4
Who We Are .....	5
What We Do .....	6
How We Are Accountable .....	6
What We Have Accomplished.....	7
Engagement of the Public.....	7
Provide Feedback and Advice to Alberta Health Services.....	8
What We Have Learned .....	9
Logistics and Process .....	10
Looking Forward .....	10
2011-2012.....	10
Contact Information 2011-2012 .....	12
Appendix 1 – Provincial Map .....	13
Appendix 2 – Council Map .....	14



## Message from the Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council

It is our pleasure to provide you with the David Thompson Health Advisory Council's Annual Report for 2010-2011. In our inaugural year, the council has put forth considerable energy preparing to engage with communities on a variety of levels.

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council has listened to our communities to learn what is working well and to identify health needs and gaps. The council, through communications and presentations, identified opportunities for improvement and submitted briefing notes regarding the challenges faced trying to meet the needs of our senior population. Council has provided feedback to Alberta Health Services about the on future direction of health care. Council members participated in the Central Zone Driving Forces Workshop in collaboration with Alberta Health Services to identify areas for improvement in health care.

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council will continue to explore possible ways to engage citizens in order to benefit the health system within our communities. Our council has recently focused our efforts on our Diversity and Community Engagement subcommittees. Through these committees, we are working toward engagement opportunities amongst targeted populations in central Alberta.

We are aware of the role of our council and that there are abundant issues to address in health care. We firmly believe there is enough power in the voice of our community to affect change in our health care system. With the understanding that health care touches all of our lives, we look forward to building relationships with our communities and Alberta Health Services to further enhance health care service delivery.

Council would like to extend our appreciation to the Alberta Health Services Board, the Health Advisory Committee of the Board and the Community Engagement department for the resources and tools they have made available to us.

By moving forward with confidence, we can maintain and improve the health of our communities.

Sincerely,

Diana Rowe  
Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council



## Message from the Chair, Alberta Health Services Board

Health Advisory Councils are an important link between Alberta Health Services and the people we serve. We can only be genuinely responsive to Albertans if we understand their needs and listen to their concerns, which include hearing directly from councils.

Health Advisory Councils were established to engage local community members to provide feedback on what is working well within the health care system, suggest areas for improvement, and identify local issues and concerns.

The inaugural year for Health Advisory Councils has been highly effective in establishing processes, connecting with Albertans across the province and building foundational relationships both with communities and the Alberta Health Services Board and Leadership. Continually nurturing these connections will enable councils to be better informed and work more effectively in bringing the voice of communities to improve health care across the province.

In the first year of operation, councils have contributed significantly to key Alberta Health Services strategic planning initiatives. Key consultations included the 2010-2015 Health Plan, Alberta Health Act, Accreditation Canada consultation, Provincial Menu, Community and Rural health planning initiatives and the Strategic Scenarios 2030 “Driving Forces Workshops” which centered around health planning for the next 20 years.

Building on these successes over the next year will provide a valuable mechanism for communication and information flow between communities and Alberta Health Services. The Alberta Health Services Board and Leadership are committed to ensuring that Health Advisory Councils are successful in their work now and into the future. Board members will continue to increase engagement opportunities with councils, and attend council meetings, engagement events and community consultations.

In closing, we would like to thank all council members past and present, for the time, effort and expertise they have dedicated to bringing the public perspective forward to improve health care planning across the province.

Sincerely,

Ken Hughes  
Chair, Alberta Health Services Board



# The Year in Review

## Executive Summary

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council has enjoyed a year filled with learning, listening, participating and presenting. We have also structured our council in a way that engages the public. It has been no small feat to achieve this in our first year. By reflecting on our challenges and reviewing our achievements, we are reminded of how far we have come. This report provides the opportunity for our council to highlight our activities.

*“Each member brings with them a passion for healthy people, healthy communities and a healthy province as well as a vision for sustainable health care.”*

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Located in south-central Alberta, our council currently has 12 volunteer members who have been appointed by the Alberta Health Services Board. Members represent the voice of the communities within our geographic area. Each member brings with them a passion for healthy people, healthy communities and a healthy province as well as a vision for sustainable health care. Dedication from our council has been invaluable and, together with our communities, we will provide a solid voice that represents all Albertans.

One of the council’s key roles is to understand what works well and where gaps in health care service delivery lie. This has presented itself in many ways in our first year when we had not decided on a formal structure from which we would engage our communities. We are encouraged that our communities have been eager to bring forward their concerns and that our council is proactive in responding to requests. The value of our informal networks has also been beneficial to our work.

Alberta Health Services has actively engaged with the council over the past year. We continue to build our relationship and look forward to working together to bring the voice of Albertans forward to create a better health care system.

As a council, we look at the past year with a sense of accomplishment, knowing that our success is dependent upon the support we receive from our communities and Alberta Health Services. Together, we will make a difference. We recognize that it will take all of us working together to achieve the vision of a sustainable health care system.



## Who We Are

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council was established on June 30, 2009 under section 9(4) of the Regional Health Authorities Act (1994). The David Thompson Health Advisory Council was established to enhance engagement between communities and Alberta Health Services. *Please see Appendix 1 for the Provincial Map.*

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council area stretches from the communities of Lindale in the north to Saunders in the west, continuing eastward to Compeer and southward to Sunnynook. *Please see Appendix 2 for the Council Map.*

Towns, hamlets, villages, counties and urban centres make up the geographic area that our council supports and all are nestled in mid-central Alberta covering nearly 90,000 square miles. The council area supports a population in excess of 423,000 people who reside in over 140 rural communities, in cities like Red Deer and Sylvan Lake. We have a diverse population as illustrated by numerous First Nations Reserves, Hutterite colonies and seniors to name a few. It is our diversity that provides the richness of community and culture that we, as Albertans, embrace.

As council members, we aim to provide a voice reflective of our communities, while maintaining a connection to Alberta Health Services.

<b>Current Members</b>	
Ms. Diana Rowe (Chair)	Drumheller
Mr. Bruce Buruma (Vice Chair)	Red Deer
Ms. Grace Higgins	Red Deer
Mr. Gerald Ingeveld	Sundre
Mr. Darren Kuz	Red Deer
Mr. Randy Littlechild	Hobbema
Ms. Janice Lockhart	Wetaskiwin
Ms. Landa O'Neill	Red Deer
Mr. Bob Reid	Red Deer
Ms. Barb Shepherd	Lacombe
Mr. Lou Soppit	Rocky Mountain House
Ms. Leona Thorogood	Stettler
Ms. Jeannette Vatter	Drayton Valley
<b>Past Members</b>	
Mr. Clifford Watt	Sylvan Lake
Ms. Dawn Morrow	Innisfail
Ms. Stacey Carmichael	Red Deer
Ms. dawn elliot	Coronation
Dr. Stéphane Perreault	Red Deer



## What We Do

The role of the David Thompson Health Advisory Council is to:

- gather information on public input regarding health, health needs and health services for the residents of the community served by the council;
- provide advice to Alberta Health Services regarding health issues, needs and priorities, access to health services, the promotion of health and other matters requested by Alberta Health Services; and
- promote and participate in activities that enhance the health of residents in the communities served by the council.

David Thompson Health Advisory Council members reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and have a broad interest in health issues as well as the health and well-being of the communities they represent.

*“David Thompson Health Advisory Council members reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and have a broad interest in health issues as well as the health and well-being of the communities they represent.”*

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## How We Are Accountable

Health Advisory Councils were established on June 30, 2009 under section 9(4) of the Regional Health Authorities Act (1994). The Alberta Health Services Board approved the Bylaw by which the councils were established, which was then approved by the Minister of Health and Wellness. The Alberta Health Services Board appointed members to each council following a provincewide recruitment drive in September 2009. Councils act as an advisory body to Alberta Health Services according to the council Charter and Bylaw. Council members are required to reside within the geographic area of the council to which they are appointed and serve terms of two or three years to a maximum of five years.

Councils act as an advisory body to Alberta Health Services, providing feedback from the public to support the strategic direction of Alberta Health Services. In this role, councils:

- provide feedback about what is working well in the health care system and areas for improvement;
- engage residents by talking to members of the community and advise of what they are saying about health services in their area;
- consider information provided by Alberta Health Services and identify issues or trends from a local perspective;
- provide feedback to Alberta Health Services on matters pertaining to health services and service delivery on an ongoing basis; and
- provide feedback to Alberta Health Services about strategies to further engage the community on health care delivery.



## What We Have Accomplished

### Engagement of the Public

The first year of council work has been focused on determining processes, working through foundational pieces, developing Work Plans and solidifying our role. This has not been an easy task, but through public engagement, we further define our role. Without these valuable discussions we would not have evolved to where we are today.

Interactions that council had to date with the public include requests to hear from the City of Red Deer, the Safe Harbour Society (an organization that provides care to the vulnerable and disadvantaged), Covenant Health and Dr. Scott Oddie from Red Deer College. With each request received we have taken into consideration our role, knowing that we cannot be everything to everyone. This has been a learning experience for us.

Our geographic area faces the same concerns as other parts of the province, while other challenges are unique to our area. Seniors care is a topic of concern for our communities and, as a result, we have had representatives from Mountain View Seniors Housing and the Central Alberta Council on Aging, present their perspectives to council in September and November of 2010, respectively. From these presentations and other sources of information, council created briefing notes (outlined in further detail below) to present to Alberta Health Services.

*“...we continually hear our communities’ perspective on health care and are able to discuss concerns around service delivery.”*

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Council members have also been approached by organizations to present at various forums, including the Central Alberta Governance Circle, the Town of Blackfalds, Red Deer College, the Town of Stettler and the Red Deer District & Community Foundation – Vital Signs program. While this was mostly to inform these organizations of our role and create awareness, they were also integral to initiating essential conversations with our communities around health care service delivery.

In a more informal sense, public engagement occurs on a daily basis for council members through casual conversations within our own personal networks, we continually hear our communities’ perspective on health care and are able to discuss concerns around service delivery. From these conversations, we are able to bring back information to the council and assess if there are particular themes that surface in our area. We do not overlook the power of casual conversation as we continue to develop our community engagement plans for the coming year.

## Provide Feedback and Advice to Alberta Health Services

*“We have seen Alberta Health Services engage advisory councils provincewide over the past year on a variety of topics. This provided the opportunity to represent our communities’ voice and, in turn, influenced the development of strategies and policies by Alberta Health Services.”*

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We have seen Alberta Health Services engage advisory councils provincewide over the past year on a variety of topics. This provided the opportunity to represent our communities’ voice and, in turn, influenced the development of strategies and policies by Alberta Health Services. A listing of these events is found below:

- **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** – In April 2010, Alberta Health Services came to all councils across the province to request feedback on the draft contractual provisions with EMS providers, specifically, the Service & Performance Requirements for EMS Contract Service Providers in Alberta. This was in response to Alberta Health Services taking over as the sole provider of emergency services across the province and the need to re-develop service agreements with EMS Contract Service Providers in Alberta.
- **Alberta Health Act Consultations** – In June 2010, all councils were approached by Mr. Fred Horne, MLA for Edmonton-Rutherford, Parliamentary Assistant to Health and Wellness and member of the Standing Committee on Health, to assist in a provincewide engagement initiative to help shape of the Alberta Health Act.
- **Primary Care Strategy** – In June 2010, the Primary Care area of Alberta Health Services asked each council to review their draft strategy on building a Primary Care Foundation. This provincewide engagement initiative was followed by an all-day forum held in Edmonton where councils participated in an interactive session with a broad cross-section of stakeholders.
- **Central Zone Driving Forces Workshop** – In February 2011, representatives from the council participated in an all day workshop intended to identify key innovations to improve the health of the population and to develop quantitative and narrative scenarios to analyze the impact of projected trends on the health of Albertans.
- **Accreditation Canada Focus Group** – This focus group provided Accreditation Canada with an external assessment of Alberta Health Services’ Achievement of Standards and Required Organizational Practices, both of which directly impact Alberta Health Services’ ability to meet or exceed quality standards in health care delivery.
- **Community and Rural Services Planning Framework** – As five of our communities within the council area have been involved in this process to date, council has taken a keen interest in collaborating with Alberta Health Services to support community member engagement.

- In various other formats, such as online surveys, council has been able to provide feedback on issues related to the Tobacco Policy development and also to select a name for the Stanford Chronic Disease Self-Management programs.
- Presentations to council from organizations representing the best interest of seniors, prompted council to further research and discuss this topic. A briefing note was forwarded to Alberta Health Services in February 2011. This briefing note requested an update on:
  - a long-term plan to increase the service capacity for senior residents who need access to local Continuing Care Services in the council area;
  - an increase in funding to support age in place programs;
  - strengthening the relationship between Alberta Health Services and service partners to ensure models of care are consistent and equitable; and
  - increased communication with communities regarding Alberta Health Services' long-term vision for seniors' care facilities.

## What We Have Learned

Our journey over the past year has been one filled with learning. Alberta Health Services is an enormous entity with many moving parts. We have openly absorbed all knowledge brought to us from both Alberta Health Services and our communities.

*“Our relationship with the Alberta Health Services Board and executive has been invaluable in order to understand the operational and governance side of the council.”*

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Our learning has happened in many forms including formal council meetings from leadership within our area, and by attending focus groups and asking questions about provincial programs such as Primary Care. Ensuring that we are informed and kept up-to-date on current topics and trends in health care has better prepared council members to engage communities in dialogue.

We have put forward additional requests for information from Alberta Health Services, an example being our desire to understand Alberta Health Services' strategy to address diverse and vulnerable populations. Alberta Health Services responded by providing us with the strategy.

Our relationship with the Alberta Health Services Board and executive has been invaluable in order to understand the operational and governance side of the council. Regular meetings with all 12 Chairs and members of both the Alberta Health Services Board and leadership provided a venue to further understand the visions for councils, bring forward comments, understand the broader landscape of each council and provide council's perspective on items being considered.

In addition to the relationships established through the Chairs meetings, there have been various other opportunities to engage with the Alberta Health Services Board and executive, including discussions at Alberta Health Services Board meetings and the Annual Provincewide Council Meeting.

## Logistics and Process

We learned the following:

- awareness of our council and our role is still unknown within our communities. It became apparent that we needed to develop a communications plan to promote ourselves to our communities;
- the commitment to fulfill our role as council members was greater than anticipated, and adjusting accordingly has impacted our member's ability to fully participate;
- holding our official meetings centrally in Red Deer is beneficial;
- pre-planning is crucial;
- it is important to structure the agenda to accommodate learning and council member discussion; and
- the development of subcommittees has enabled our council to move forward with specific events and opportunities to engage the public.



## Looking Forward

### 2011-2012

As a council in 2011-2012, we will see the benefits from the processes we developed and the planning we completed in our inaugural year. We will develop our 2011-2012 Work Plan based on the outcomes of the work completed in 2010-2011. Our annual Work Plan will be available to view on the Alberta Health Services website at [www.albertahealthservices.ca/1816.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/1816.asp)

In December 2010, Alberta Health Services announced a proposal to expand and strengthen the role of Health Advisory Councils in order to provide greater engagement with Albertans. The enhanced role will ensure councils connect regularly with the Alberta Health Services Board and management regarding strategic planning initiatives, both locally and provincially.

We look forward to networking at our second Annual Provincewide Council Meeting in June 2011. We appreciate the opportunity for our members to connect and build relationships with fellow members from across the province and with the Alberta Health Services Board and leadership.

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council is particularly excited about the knowledge gained, relationships built and the momentum we have acquired.

*"The David Thompson Health Advisory Council is particularly excited about the knowledge gained, relationships built and the momentum we have acquired."*

The work we put into planning for next year has rejuvenated council members. We have a line of sight and we continue to move forward, one step at a time.



## Contact Information 2011-2012

We welcome the opportunity to hear your voice. Please contact us at:

Bruce Buruma, Chair  
Telephone: 403-340-0412  
Email: [bburuma@rdpsd.ab.ca](mailto:bburuma@rdpsd.ab.ca)

Diana Rowe, Vice Chair  
Telephone: 403-820-1116  
Email: [dianarowe@xplornet.com](mailto:dianarowe@xplornet.com)

Vicki Giacobbo, Community Engagement Officer  
Telephone: 403-943-0835  
Mobile: 403-870-5963  
Email: [vicki.giacobbo@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:vicki.giacobbo@albertahealthservices.ca)

Community Engagement Department:  
Telephone: 1-877-275-8830  
Fax: 403-943-1163  
Email: [community.engagement@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:community.engagement@albertahealthservices.ca)

Council Web Page:  
[www.albertahealthservices.ca/1816.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/1816.asp)

Council Email:  
[davidthompson@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:davidthompson@albertahealthservices.ca)

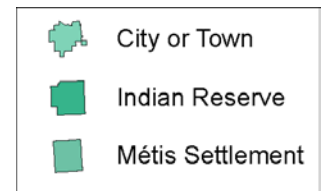
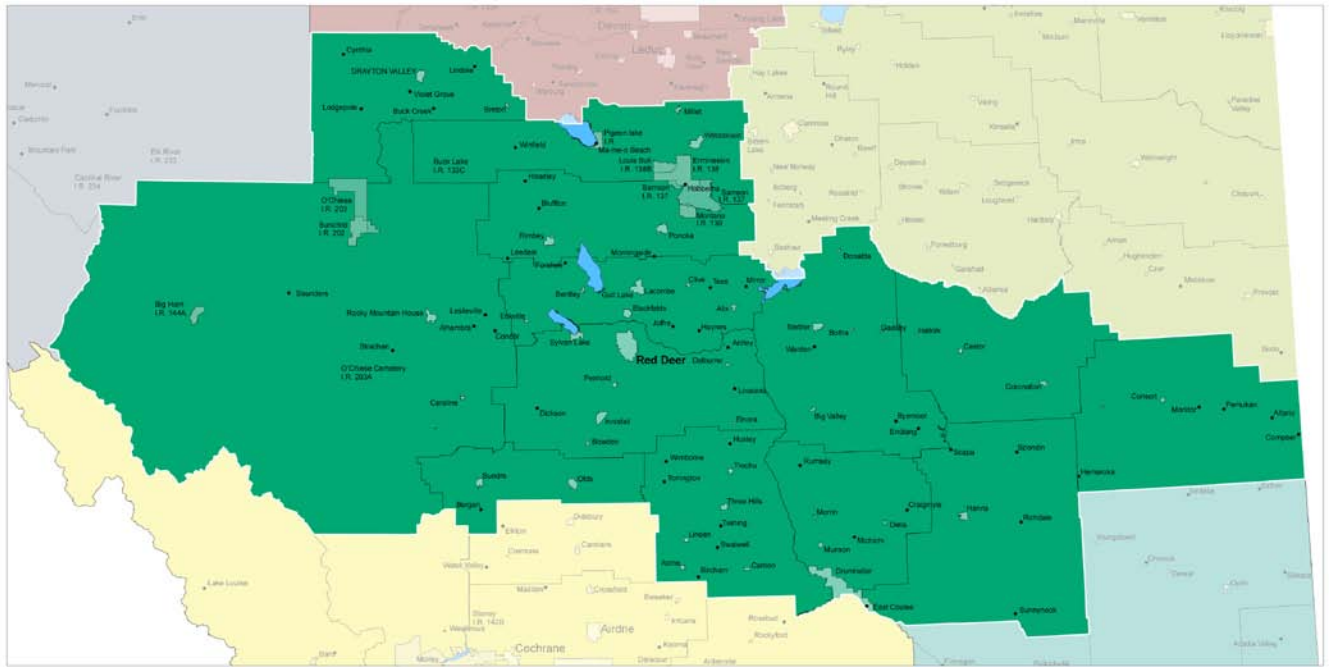
 **Appendix 1 – Provincial Map**





## Appendix 2 – Council Map

### David Thompson Mountain Health Advisory Council Map





*Bringing the voice of  
communities to build  
a better health system*