

Peace Health Advisory Council



Annual Report 2010–2011





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Message from the Chair, Peace Health Advisory Council

As Chair of the Peace Health Advisory Council, I am very pleased with the progress we have made in this first year. I find that the majority of the members feel that we are contributing in a useful manner to Alberta Health Services and the residents of Alberta in our role as Health Advisory Council members.

We have lost only one member to an out-of-province job and generally have good attendance for our meetings and events. This winter has been problematic for meeting cancellations, due to the weather, but we have soldiered on and the public has made the effort to come to postponed meetings.

We would like to see a quicker resolution to issues such as physician recruitment and seniors' housing, but we are cognizant of the lack of human resources and planning timelines. We do feel that there are out-of-the-box solutions to these, as well as other issues that need to be explored. We are ready to continue offering solutions that we see, or are offered to us, by the public and staff.

Now that the amalgamation of Alberta Health Services is virtually complete, we hope movement will be made on the issues that are plaguing not only remote rural areas, but our entire province. Our council is committed to health care in our area and we appreciate that the Alberta Health Services Board is as well, as demonstrated by the changes we have started to observe.

Sincerely,

Theresa Sandul
Chair, Peace 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

This inaugural year as an advisory council has been one of change. We were starting out on an evolving process in which Alberta Health Services itself was determining what it expected from the Health Advisory Councils. Overall, our council welcomes the challenge to become more involved in providing input into the current service delivery, new initiatives and capital projects in our council area.

From our very first meeting, council felt strongly that our meetings had to represent the residents of our area, not be centralized in Grande Prairie/Peace River. In the year ahead, we are planning to set up meetings across our council area. Over the past year, we have developed better strategies to inform the public of our presence by advertising our meetings.

We have participated fully in opportunities presented to us, both as a group and as individuals. The events that involved most or all of our council included; the Health Act Consultations, the first Annual Provincewide Council Meeting with all councils in Edmonton, Primary Care Network consultation, and the Health Forum Series initiative. Council members have also related to health care service delivery, taken the opportunity to meet with local advocacy groups and participated in health forums in their immediate area to bring information back to council. Opportunities in the future include the planning process for the regional hospital, a 20-year visioning process, as well as yet other initiatives of interest to the council.

We have discussed issues brought forward by the public such as physician recruitment and retention, Advanced Life Support service deficiencies in Emergency Medical Services, Aboriginal health care, and the need for community-based seniors' housing. Some of these issues are currently being addressed in the five-year health plan. Others will take longer to rectify due to staffing issues.

We are developing strong relationships with the local senior staff from Alberta Health Services and the Community Engagement Officer. Our council feels comfortable asking questions of Alberta Health Services staff and we feel they understand that if a question cannot be answered at the time, we have a rightful expectation to a timely response.

As Chair, I feel that the Alberta Health Services Board is invested in our success. A commitment has been made to interact with each of the councils via the Chairs meeting with council and the Annual Provincewide Meeting. The commitment made by Alberta Health Services Board Members to attend several

meetings a year is a welcome measure to add inclusiveness to the local Health Advisory Councils. I have had the privilege to attend most of the engagement opportunities where Alberta Health Services staff have been in attendance and have noticed a distinct improvement in staff morale as the amalgamation process winds down.



Who We Are

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

The Peace Health Advisory Council area stretches from Manning in the north to Worsley in the west, continuing eastward to McLennan, and southward to Grande Cache. *Please see Appendix 2 for the Council Map.*

The council area is a mixture of communities spread across vast territory of forests, fields, foothills, rivers and lakes, one cities, numerous towns, First Nations communities, and a number of hamlets and summer villages nestled along our rivers and lakes, in foothills and on expansive farmlands. We have a diverse population, living in long-established communities or quickly expanding urban centres.

We embrace our differences as the key element feeding our prosperity. Our members are located in various communities across our council area. As council members we provide a voice to our communities and a connection to Alberta Health Services.

“As council members we provide a voice to our communities and a connection to Alberta Health Services.”

Current Members	
Ms. Theresa Sandul (Chair)	Spirit River
Mr. Michael Ouellette (Vice-Chair)	Grande Prairie
Ms. Judy Brown	Spirit River
Ms. Donna Buchinski	Falher
Mr. Tom Burton	DeBolt
Ms. Evelyn Bzowy	Rycroft
Ms. Pasty Campbell	Valleyview
Ms. Darlene Frith	Deadwood
Ms. Leona Hanson	Beaverlodge
Ms. Fjola Joelson	Valleyview
Ms. Michelle Margarit	Grande Prairie
Mr. James McGregor	Fairview
Mr. Terry Tissington	Grande Prairie
Ms. Cheryl Van Eerden	La Glace
Past Member	
Ms. Shannon Sortland	Peace River



What We Do

The role of the Peace 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.

Peace 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.



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.

“Councils act as an advisory body to Alberta Health Services, providing feedback from the public to support the strategic direction of Alberta Health Services.”



What We Have Accomplished

Engagement of the Public

Council holds bi-monthly public meetings across the council area and has two public forums scheduled for Grande Prairie/Peace River for the summer months. Council participates in Alberta Health Services' consultation opportunities such as the Health Act consultations, the Primary Care Network initiative workshop, and the Provincewide Council meeting. Our members make themselves available in a number of ways, not only in their local communities, but in the broader community, to draw input from residents.

Provide Feedback and Advice to Alberta Health Services

We take every opportunity to interact with Alberta Health Services' staff when asked for input on initiatives. We provide briefing notes through the Community Engagement Officer on specific issues the public brings to us. We generally request to have a presentation from the department in charge of a larger, or more frequently mentioned issue, such as Emergency Medical Services.

Promote and Participate in Activities that Enhance the Health of Residents

Council members make an effort to educate themselves on different aspects of health services in our area in order to make such information more accessible to the public. The Chair responds to interview requests from the media to Alberta Health Services' initiatives and health information made available to us.



What We Have Learned

The first year has been a learning experience for the Health Advisory Council. We have heightened our awareness of community priorities and strengthened our relationship with Alberta Health Services. The council has gained a greater understanding of our role and the processes associated with council operation.



Looking Forward

2011-2012

We are in the planning stages for our two local forums which will be held in the summer as part of our yearly Work Plan. We are developing better links to local media, municipal/band councils, advocacy groups and health care support groups. As part of our effort to participate in Alberta Health Services input opportunities, we currently have members participating in the Health Forum Series, 20-Year Visioning Strategy and the Aboriginal Health Workshop.

Our annual Work Plan will be available to view on the Alberta Health Services website www.albertahealthservices.ca/1809.asp



Contact Information

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

Theresa Sandul, Chair
Telephone: 780-864-4011
Email: theresa.sandul@hotmail.com

Michael Ouellette, Vice Chair
Telephone: 780-532-2160
Email: diane.07@telus.net

Brad Cardinal, Community Engagement Officer
Telephone: 780-643-7115
Email: brad.cardinal@albertahealthservices.ca

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

Council Web Page:
www.albertahealthservices.ca/1809.asp

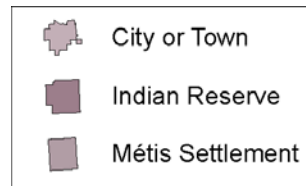
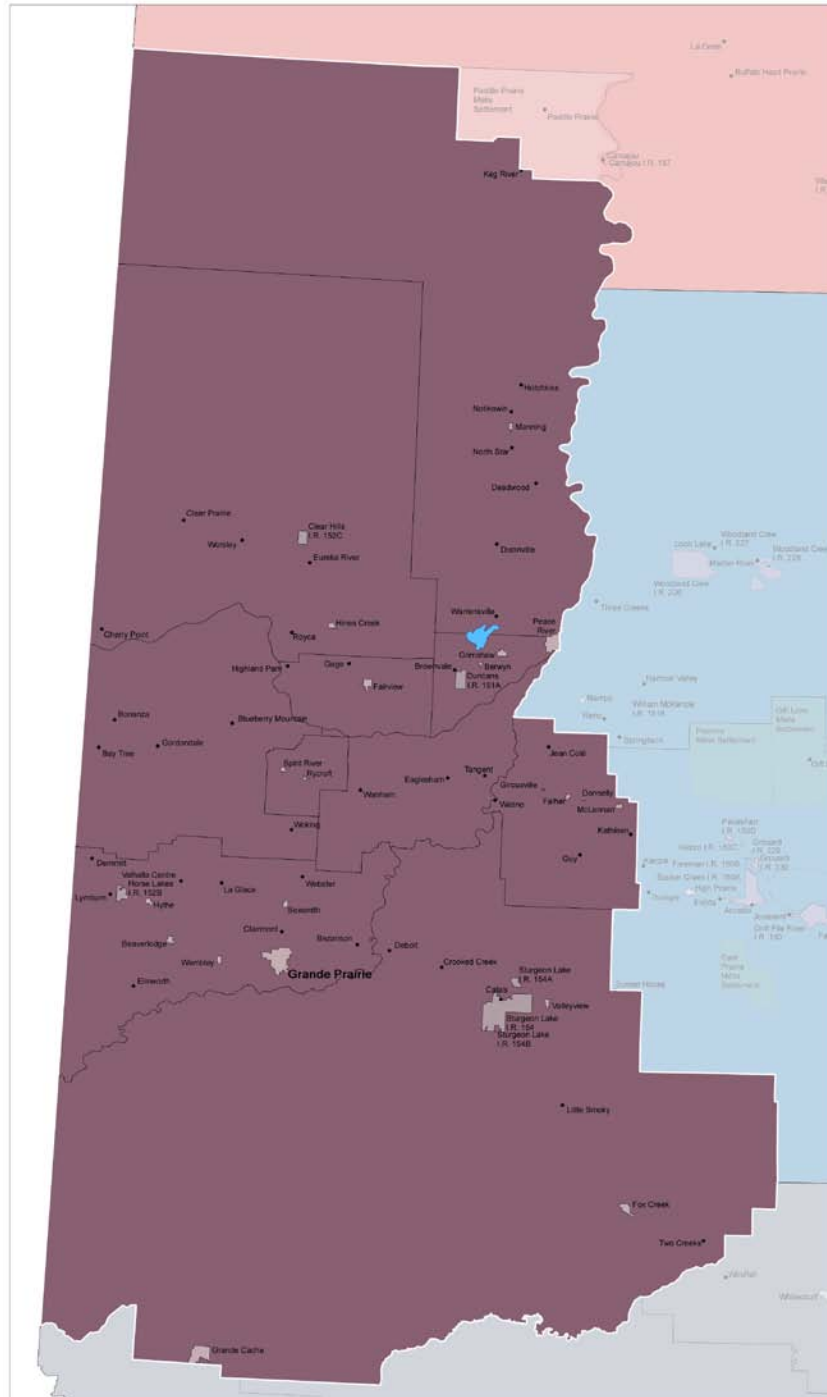
Council Email:
peace@albertahealthservices.ca

 **Appendix 1 – Provincial Map**



Appendix 2 – Council Map

Peace Health Advisory Council Map



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