

Alberta Health Services (AHS) continues to hold 'accredited' status, and is pleased to share the results of the May 12-16, 2014 [Accreditation Canada](#) on-site survey, which demonstrates our dedication to meeting national standards for quality and safety in health care. AHS values Accreditation Canada's perspective and support on our quality and safety journey, and recognizes that active participation in the accreditation process is a valuable way to achieve a high quality, patient- and family-centred health system.

Accreditation Canada surveyors assessed areas that impact the entire organization, including Governance and Leadership, Infection Prevention and Control, Medication Management, Provincial Corrections, Telehealth and Reprocessing and Sterilization of Reusable Medical Devices at 79 sites throughout the province. The surveyors commended AHS in its preparation for, and participation in, the accreditation program and our dedication to quality improvement and patient safety. They noted continued improvements in infection prevention and control, oversight of provincial medication management, and collaboration with patients / clients and community partners. Surveyors were also impressed by AHS' focus on providing safe quality patient care, and that patient engagement and patient-centred care are key initiatives.

As noted in the [Accreditation Executive Summary](#), AHS met 85.6 per cent of the total criteria, a great achievement for such a large organization. Surveyors noted AHS is very close to meeting all the criteria and we are working hard to continuously improve services and patient safety. AHS will report on our progress to Accreditation Canada in October 2014 and October 2015. An updated accreditation decision will be awarded by Accreditation Canada at the end of the four-year accreditation cycle in 2017.

AHS is committed to excellence in governance practice. The [Official Administrator](#) and three Advisory Committees ([Audit and Finance Advisory Committee](#), [Human Resources Advisory Committee](#), [Quality and Safety Advisory Committee](#)) were noted as successfully performing the required governance functions.

'Focus and Finish'

AHS is dedicated to providing a patient-focused quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans. We collaborate with all stakeholders, including community partners, to develop the AHS annual [Health Plan and Business Plan](#). Our revised [performance measures](#) (January 2014) are aligned with national or regional benchmarks, so Albertans can see how their health system is performing compared to the rest of Canada.

Patient access and transition through service(s) continues to be a high priority for AHS, and we have begun several quality improvement initiatives to [decrease wait times in emergency departments](#) and for initial [consultation and treatment for cancer patients](#).

The surveyors noted that AHS staff, patients and community partners desire a more stable and consistent approach. AHS leadership will work hard to meet its current goals of performance and sustainability, organizational transformation, and supporting safe, healthy and engaged employees.

AHS will be reporting back to Accreditation Canada in areas such as [hand hygiene education](#) and [compliance](#), how the organization tracks [infection rates](#), aspects of [medication safety](#), and improved processes for sterilization of medical instruments and scopes. As we continue to strive for excellence, we work to improve our practices throughout the entire organization. We will use what we have learned, build and improve on it, and prepare ourselves for the on-site survey in 2015.

Accreditation is a learning and improvement opportunity for the whole organization. We will pay close attention to what we've learned and take action to continuously improve the care we deliver to our patients and families.