

June 4, 2015

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Albertans dialled into Health Link's change of number

More than 60 per cent of callers used 811 just three days after its launch

CALGARY – Three out of every five callers to Health Link yesterday used the service's new 811 telephone number, which was introduced Monday.

More than 2,300 Albertans phoned Alberta Health Services' (AHS') health information and advice line yesterday; of those, 61 per cent dialled 811. Other callers used the service's previous 10-digit phone numbers, which will continue to connect callers to Health Link for the time being.

"We're pleased so many Albertans have responded positively to our move to a simple, easy-to-remember number for Health Link," says Lara Osterreicher, Director of Operations for Health Link.

"Our three-day statistics are beyond what we were expecting after just a few days. The statistics affirm that moving to a provincewide 811 number was the right decision and something Albertans would wholeheartedly welcome."

The percentage of Albertans who called 811 to reach Health Link has steadily increased: 41 per cent used the new number Monday, when it was launched, and 59 per cent used it Tuesday.

Osterreicher says many callers have taken time to praise the change.

"One caller commented, 'Love the new number!' as soon as we answered her call," Osterreicher says. "She said 811 is so simple to remember. She was just thrilled."

Based on data from Saskatchewan's transition to 811, AHS expects to have close to 90 per cent of Health Link callers use 811 after one year.

For more information, visit www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca/811.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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