

September 15, 2009

## 2009-2012 Performance Measures and CEO Access and Quality Improvement Targets Posted

Alberta Health Services President and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Stephen Duckett, today released the organization's performance measures and his own agreement with the Board to achieve priority objectives, including reductions in Emergency Department wait times.

"It is important to be transparent for four reasons. First, we have difficult decisions to make in the years ahead, but we will not be deterred from driving forward on improvements in Emergency Department wait times, hip and knee surgery wait times, and better protection for seniors from influenza," said Dr. Duckett.

"Second, our performance is based on three goals: quality, accessibility and sustainability. Not one, all three. That needs to be clear and unequivocal. Over the next two or three years we will align spending with resources, but it is part of a larger commitment to improve health care.

"Third, it's not enough to talk about transparency and accountability as values in our organization. We have to live by it and stand by it, starting with my own performance agreement.

"And finally, even in these challenging economic times, we will not lose sight of the fact that our primary goal is providing care for our patients, as reflected in the priorities in my performance agreement with the Board."

### **CEO Performance Agreement Targets**

Dr. Duckett's performance agreement with the Board balances the organization's three goals. The criteria to be used in determining the amount of the variable pay on each of these dimensions are also being released today.

- 40 per cent of Dr. Duckett's variable compensation is related to improving access;
- 30 per cent is related to quality improvement; and
- 30 per cent is related to sustainability, including the achievement of budget targets set by the Board.

Dr. Duckett's annual base salary, made public at the time of his appointment earlier this year, is \$575,000 and he is eligible to receive variable pay, capped at 25 per cent of his salary, depending upon the achievement of performance objectives.

Three access improvement targets are identified in Dr. Duckett's performance agreement. Performance agreement targets include reducing wait times for complex cases in Emergency Departments from 16 hours to 8 hours over the next three years. The target wait time for less complex cases is a reduction from 5.6 hours to 4 hours. The goal is to reduce wait times for hip replacement surgery from 33 weeks to 26 weeks over three years.

Access improvement targets also include increasing community living options to reduce the number of patients waiting in hospital for more appropriate community-based care – providing the right care in the right place. Quality improvement targets include the creation of Health Advisory Councils across Alberta.

## **Health System Performance Measures**

The performance agreement targets above are included in about 50 health system measures which track current and projected performance across the health system. The first stage of the release of these measures will be posted on the Alberta Health Services' website this week. "This report is the first step in producing the most comprehensive consolidation of provincial health data in Canada," Dr. Duckett said. "It will show where we are and where we need to improve and enable us to make the kinds of change that will have a direct impact on patient care."

The performance measures include the number of people in hospital and in the community waiting for continuing care; patient satisfaction surveys; volume and wait lists for surgeries; birth and mortality rates; C-section rates; immunization rates; hospitalization due to injury; demographic information; and primary care information, including the percentage of the population with family doctors and patients who are part of Primary Care Networks. This comprehensive work will be achieved through an integration of information collected within Alberta Health Services and through collaboration with Alberta Health and Wellness, the Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) and the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI).

In several areas, including Emergency Department wait times, improvements have been initiated since the information was gathered. This data, compiled over the past four months, is the first part of a new waitlist registry. Work with the province on the registry is continuing and an updated registry is expected to be ready this fall.

Setting clear, transparent goals and objectives is part of the larger strategy of transformation of health care in Alberta, said Alberta Health Services Board Chair Ken Hughes. "We have set specific targets and actions plans to achieve these goals with the needs of patients front-and-centre in our planning. A cornerstone of the strategy is to ensure that we are increasing community living options, as well as preparing for expected increases in pressure on emergency departments. Moving toward a sustainable, balanced budget over the next two to three years will make it possible to then broaden these performance measures."

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than 3.5 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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