

As part of the Alberta Health Services Boards' ongoing commitment to community engagement, openness and transparency, members of the public, in attendance at the Public Board meetings, are invited to submit questions to the Board. A direct response will be provided and the question and response will also be posted on the AHS website prior to the next Public Board meeting. Questions of the Board can also be submitted through the Board Office at [AHSB.admin@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:AHSB.admin@albertahealthservices.ca)

**Q:** *Does AHS plan to adopt consistent standards for palliative care for the province?*

**A:** Yes. Presently Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health and Wellness have formed a provincial working group with the intent to develop a provincial framework and policies for palliative and end of life care for Alberta. The framework is guided by national standards from the Canadian Hospice, Palliative Care Association, Accreditation Canada and Provincial standards in Continuing Care Health Services Standards. The standards and policies being developed will provide consistency and identify core service elements for immediate, intermediate and long term goals.

**Q:** *Will the model of care ensure appropriate professional staff for the terminally ill and be the same throughout the province?*

**A:** Depending on the site of care delivery, be it in long term care settings, supportive living facilities, stand alone hospices, in client's homes or in acute care guidelines for staffing models will identify minimum staffing patterns for professional and non-professional care providers. The guidelines will aim to provide equitable and consistent care for palliative patients and families wherever they reside in the province within available resources.

**Q:** *With AHS, the H.O.P.E. funding initiative from Chinook had its funding frozen and we heard this would be restarted. It provided significant opportunities to train our health care professionals for palliative care. If and when is this going to be restarted?*

**A:** The project has been renewed with a timeline of March 1, 2010 until March 31, 2011. The committee has been formulated and the work has begun in completing the project deliverables.

In terms of the LEAP education program, there is a commitment in offering 3 more LEAP programs across the province from June 2010 – March 2011. Furthermore, a sustainability plan is also being developed to offer resources for communities to continue with this education program beyond the timeline for the project.

## Questions from the Public

**Q:** *What is AHS plan for palliative care services in Grande Prairie and surrounding area?*

**A:** It is recognized through a gap analysis review; there are inconsistencies across the province with respect to palliative and end of life services. The gap analysis shows that there is a need to develop consistent evidenced based service standards in palliative and end of life care. This will be achieved through the development of a provincial framework and associated policies where core palliative care and end of life services are to be provided. This framework and policy effort will assist zones in the necessary service planning required to meet the needs of palliative and end of life clients in key communities where services are needed or require further enhancements.

**Q:** *Why are we the only zone without a regional palliative care program? How does AHS plan to address the lack of palliative care nurse specialists in our zone?*

**A:** The framework and policy development will provide specifics to assist zones in their service planning where services are needed or require further enhancements. It is vital that this work occurs in collaboration with Zone Operational Leaders. There are learnings from 3 overarching care models of excellence which exist in the province which will assist in program planning decisions.