

Podcast Transcript: Respect

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Hello, I'm Brenda Huband, Vice President and Chief Health Operations Officer for Central and Southern Alberta with Alberta Health Services (AHS).

I appreciate that you have taken the time to join the discussion on the value of respect. Respect is one of our current values and guides how we interact with patients, families, communities and with each other.

As we think about the AHS vision – *Healthy Albertans. Healthy Communities. Together.* – we need to ensure our values bring our vision to life.

As part of the refresh of our values, the definition of respect has been broadened to include how we treat others with fairness, dignity and kindness. That we value and honour diversity of patients, families, communities and each other.

Being respectful is about demonstrating compassion to everyone.

Respect goes hand-in-hand with transparency. It's about being inclusive and collaborative. Having respect for patients, families, communities and colleagues is empowering. It expresses the value and dignity we have for the people we interact with.

In developing the Patient First Strategy, we heard when patients and families feel truly listened to, their emotional needs (especially their fears and anxieties) are responded to and their values are respected, we are truly providing patient and family centered care.

Honouring the diversity, cultural and spiritual needs of patients is key.

I would like to share a work story whereby I respected diversity: the example I remember most vividly is the southern Alberta floods in 2013.

The floods impacted communities and their citizens from Banff to Lethbridge. Each community was impacted differently and required a unique response.

As one of the senior operations leaders involved, I quickly learned each community knew best what would work for them during the recovery phase from the flood. It took a while but it became evident listening and facilitating would be two of the greatest skills we would be able to offer. Communities generally determined their priorities, AHS teams supported and enabled.

Whether it was temporary housing in High River, porta-potties in Nanton, or mobile health services in many other communities that lost the ability to deliver health services as a result of the flood – each community united and really knew best, their community needs. It was humbling and a real learning moment for me to be able to listen and respect the voices of communities in this exceptional circumstance.

This memory resonates with me because the experience was so powerful. Entire communities came together for a common purpose. AHS teams worked day and night in support of Albertans, their communities and often their colleagues.

Respect was one of the values that was consistently displayed. One of the thoughts of the week was, “If you can help anybody, even a little, be glad!”

Treating others with fairness and dignity is being respectful. Let’s open up the conversation, what does respect mean to you? What actions do you take to be respectful?