



# PRIMARY HEALTH CARE INTEGRATION NETWORK

## Integrated Provincial Program

### Contact

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### Key Partners

[Accelerating Change Transformation Team](#)

[Alberta Health](#)

[Alberta Medical Association](#)

[Primary Care Network Leadership](#)

Primary Care Network Members

[Virtual Patient Engagement Network](#)

## Major initiatives and achievements, 2022-2023

Over the past year, medical leaders within the Primary Health Care Integration Network (PHCIN) have collaborated extensively with AHS and primary care to increase understanding of key issues impacting integration, at a system level and between primary and specialty care.

### Systems Foundation for Integration (IT Integration Activities)

PHCIN and the PHC Provincial Program support several high priority AHS initiatives that are focused on improving how health information flows across our healthcare system. These are mostly focused on integration—interfaces where ‘bridges’ between sectors are being built. These ongoing efforts involve providing support to community healthcare providers during the implementation of AHS’ Connect Care program (Launches 1-6) and facilitating the implementation of Community Information Integration and Central Patient Attachment Registry (CII/CPAR) in AHS community clinics. Notably, the PHC Provincial Program is primarily responsible for the implementation of CII/CPAR in AHS’ primary care clinics. We are also involved in ensuring that these new initiatives are working well with existing IT infrastructure, such as eDelivery (electronic results routing), the provincial electronic health record, and Netcare.

Both PHCIN and the PHC Provincial Program contribute to how this information is communicated to stakeholders across primary care and acute care, as well as considering the voice of the patient. We also work collaboratively with the SCNs and the Alberta Medical Association (AMA) to advocate for, and advance, initiatives designed by, and for, primary care. An example is [One:Care Path](#), a pathway and primary care/patient-developed care plan to support patients with multiple conditions.

The PHCIN and Program have also continued to support the rollout of **Connect Care** in Alberta. The work of the Connect Care Provider Bridge has included communicating with primary care providers, listening to their concerns, and coordinating a response back to address specific concerns and questions related to Connect Care. A priority piece of work has been to support family physicians with troubleshooting eDelivery of lab reports and other clinical documentation and reporting any results routing issues for efficient and effective resolution.

### Linking to Specialists and Back: Alberta Surgical Initiative (ASI) Specialty Access Bundle

Work on the ASI Specialty Access Bundle is continuing with the aim to have all bundle components co-designed and implemented by the end of the 2023 fiscal year. This work is provincial in scope and aims to improve access to specialty care for patients across Alberta.

Following extensive engagement and co-design activities designed to interface with primary care, the **Facilitated Access to Specialized Treatment (FAST)** project was launched provincially in 2022 for Orthopedics and Urology. FAST is a centralized access and intake system that will help to ensure that patients are seen by the most appropriate provider in the shortest amount of time.

The [Provincial Pathways Unit \(PPU\)](#) launched in September 2022. The PPU is a shared priority between AHS Primary Health Care and the Strategic Clinical Networks that aims to promote collaboration between primary care providers, specialists, and patients in the development of clinical and patient pathways. [Alberta’s Pathway Hub](#), a centralized provincial repository for all clinical, patient and referral pathways, has been under development. The first iteration of the Hub soft-launched in May 2023, with the official launch in September 2023. The coming months will provide an opportunity to test and optimize the site based on user feedback. [Learn more](#)

### Alberta’s Pathway Hub

Transforming Healthcare: One Pathway at a Time.



Recent pathway co-design work includes:

- Optimization of three provincial clinical pathways for Orthopedics
- Completion of provincial clinical and patient pathways for Urology in March 2023
- An in-person co-design session involving specialists, primary care providers and patients (held March 2023 in Calgary). This day launched the pathways work with General Surgery, Vascular and Gynecology and focused on the ongoing evolution of the Specialty Access Bundle.

## Transitioning from Home-to-Hospital-to-Home (H2H2H): Implementing the H2H2H Guideline

The PHCIN, in collaboration with the AMA, is working with partners in both acute care and primary care to support the interfaces and implementation of the H2H2H guideline. H2H2H is being integrated into the implementation of priorities such as Connect Care, Acute Care Bundle Improvement (ACBI), and the Alberta Health-led Continuity of Care Policy, which supports principles and role clarity for AHS and Primary Care Networks to support information continuity and access. Monitoring measures are being developed to support the H2H2H transition, including Team Targets for acute care and primary care. This data will help primary and acute care play their respective parts and work to advance AHS' priority to improve patient flow. It will also provide leadership with meaningful metrics to support planning decisions.

## The Transitions in Care Provincial Implementation Network (PIN)

The Transitions in Care PIN is part of the provincial Primary Care Network governance structure. Its aim is to support implementation of the H2H2H guidelines, and facilitate local customization regarding transitions in care. The PIN is a forum for teams to bring their lived experiences and commitment to quality improvement through Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) trials, outcomes, data and more; learn from each other; and share knowledge and best practice. It is intended to help healthcare professionals find innovative ways to implement the recommendations in the H2H2H Transitions Guideline.

As a provincial structure, the Transitions in Care PIN aims to amplify collective impact, prevent redundancies across zones, and improve system integration between primary and acute care. In addition, it will: provide a common voice for escalation and advocacy; simplify the coordination of reporting and implementation activities; track progress through standardized dashboards; identify risks and mitigation strategies; develop change management resources; leverage IT systems like CII/CPAR, EHR, EMRs, patient and provider portals, and Connect Care; and endorse leading operational practices (LOPs) that will bring the guideline to life.

## Impacts on health and care

- ▶ Improved transitions, especially from home to hospital and back to home
- ▶ Better coordinated, faster access to specialist care when appropriate, informed by clinical pathways and guidelines
- ▶ Patients, families, caregivers and community members more actively engaged with care providers and other partners to co-create innovative solutions for care coordination challenges
- ▶ Improved continuity of information and care
- ▶ Improved patient flow between acute care and primary care

## Other highlights: PHCIN Virtual Patient Engagement Network (VPEN)

PHCIN continues to interface and co-design with patients and partners by including them in a variety of working groups associated with high priority initiatives, such as ASI/SAB and Transitions in Care/H2H2H. Over the past year, patient and family advisors have contributed to a diverse range of PHCIN initiatives. Several examples are highlighted in the [Year-End Engagement Summary](#) produced by the **PHCIN Virtual Patient Engagement Network**. This report recaps patient and family advisor engagement with Primary Health Care over the 2022-2023 fiscal year and showcases the diverse range of projects where patient and family advisors are impacting the transformation of Primary Health Care in Alberta.

From April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, the Primary Health Care Virtual Patient Engagement Network (VPEN) received 31 requests for patient and family advisor support, resulting in 25 engagement opportunities shared with members. For more information contact [PHC.IntegrationNetwork@ahs.ca](mailto:PHC.IntegrationNetwork@ahs.ca)

## PRIMARY HEALTH CARE INTEGRATION NETWORK

Grants and Publications	Engagement	Outcomes and Impact
 <b>3</b> Peer-reviewed Publications	 <b>56</b> Workshops & Presentations	Improved access to evidence-informed clinical, patient and referral pathways via Alberta's Pathway Hub, an online, searchable repository.
 <b>\$2.5M</b> Research Grants	 <b>115</b> Research Members	<b>50</b> pathways currently available on the Hub, spanning 15 health disciplines

[www.ahs.ca/phcin](http://www.ahs.ca/phcin)