



Perinatal Addiction and Mental Health

Operational Plan 2025-2027: Roadmap

Addiction and Mental Health Calgary

December 2025

Perinatal Addiction and Mental Health Operational Plan 2025-2027: Roadmap | 2

Background

In 2019, Recovery Alberta (formerly Alberta Health Services) released the Perinatal Addiction and Mental Health Strategic Plan (2019–2023), identifying the perinatal period as a key window for addiction and mental health (AMH) support and establishing a foundation for system-wide service improvements. The 2025–2027 Operational Plan builds on this early work, advancing a coordinated, evidence-informed approach to strengthen integration and consistent care across urban, rural, and Indigenous communities. It is led through the Women's Mental Health Initiative (WMHI), emphasizing gender-responsive, trauma-informed care.

Goal

To enhance perinatal AMH services across pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum, with emphasis on equitable access and system sustainability.

Key Objectives

- Strengthen clinician knowledge and competencies
- Standardize care pathways
- Enhance data collection and monitoring
- Strengthen service navigation
- Integrate specialized services, including Enhanced Services for Women

Guiding Principles

- Patient- and family-centred
- Equity-focused
- Trauma-informed
- Evidence-informed
- Collaborative
- Sustainable

Operational Areas

1. Clinical Education & Capacity Building

Focuses on strengthening clinician knowledge across programs and services through standardized training, interdisciplinary learning, and enhanced clinical tools and guidelines, supported by ongoing evaluation.

Perinatal Addiction and Mental Health Operational Plan 2025-2027: Roadmap | 3

2. System Integration & Care Pathways

Focuses on aligning care pathways across programs, services, and sectors. Actions include service mapping, coordinated pathway development, and integration of specialized programs such as Enhanced Services for Women and rooming-in models, supported by shared protocols.

3. Service Navigation & Resource Development

Focuses on improving access to information and services through a centralized resource guide outlining services and referral pathways, supported by broad dissemination and updates.

4. Data & Performance Monitoring

Focuses on strengthening data collection and reporting through tracking service use and outcomes, analyzing trends, and supporting planning through shared insights and alignment with broader data systems.

Progress Underway

Implementation is actively progressing across all operational areas, with several key milestones already achieved or in development:

- Expanded specialized women's mental health training for healthcare professionals.
- Hosted the Annual Women's Mental Health Conference (2025 and 2026) to promote knowledge sharing and best practices.
- Delivery of two virtual training sessions in April 2026, engaging 660+ healthcare professionals across disciplines and regions
- Improved mental health screening to identify concerns earlier through the integration of PASS into Connect Care
- Strengthen referral pathways to connect women and families with timely care by adding a maximum wait time of 8 weeks for all perinatal mental health clients at screening
- Ongoing development of a Recovery Alberta tableau dashboard to strengthen system monitoring, reporting, and evaluation capacity
- Developing Indigenous care pathways to support culturally safe care.
- Integrating hospital rooming-in protocols to keep mothers and babies together during opioid withdrawal treatment in labour.
- Developing a Perinatal Mental Health Resource Hub with trusted information and service navigation through Recovery Alberta's Healthcare Professionals website

Looking Ahead

This roadmap supports continued coordination across clinical practice, system design, service access, and data. It reflects ongoing work across programs and services to support individuals and families during the perinatal period. By working together across disciplines and sectors, this plan builds a system that prioritizes the health and dignity of women and families, during one of the most vulnerable and critical stages of life, with the ultimate vision that all perinatal individuals across Alberta have access to the support they need to thrive.

Perinatal Addiction and Mental Health Operational Plan 2025-2027: Roadmap | 4

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for the various contributions, including valuable input, feedback, insights, and support, provided by the following individuals:

Dr. Zahra Mohamed, Psychiatrist
Dr. Heather Scott, Psychiatrist
Christina Gierus, Senior Project Manager
Tara Perry, Program Manager
Debbie Molloy, Program Manager
Jeffrey Danielson, Program Manager
Sheila Hemminger, Program Manager
Carla Marie Seal-Riemann, Program Manager
Susan Ponting, Program Manager
Tracey Labbie, Program Manager
Ivy Parsons, Provincial Practice Lead
Alana Syverson, Evaluation Analyst

Prepared by
Halina Bowers, Executive Director
Helen Yoo, Program Manager
