As the temperature outside climbs higher our thoughts are turning to what to do over the summer. Before everyone heads off to their sunny adventures, here is an update on what has been accomplished and a look at the work ahead.

In May 2016, the Palliative and End-of-Life Care Innovations Steering Committee (PPAL/EOL ISC) met and endorsed the Palliative and End-of-Life Care (PEOLC) program charter and the EMS PEOLC Assess, Treat and Refer project charter. They have also been endorsed at the Integrated Continuing Care Steering Committee (ICCSC) meeting in June 2016. The next step is to present them to the Alberta Health Services Clinical Operations Executive Committee for their review and approval.

The provincial PEOLC team would like to express our thanks and appreciation for the many hours of effort and commitment from individuals who have contributed to the development of the above charters and participated on the PPAL / EOL ISC and Working Groups.

Over the next fiscal year, PPAL/EOL ISC will be working on meeting the goals and deliverables outlined in the two charters for:

- **EMS PEOLC Assess, Treat and Refer Phase II Implementation**
- **Provincial PEOLC Website Phase III**
- **Provincial Bereavement Project Phase II**
- **A Resource Guide for Community Based PEOLC Phase II**

The PPAL/EOL ISC will be meeting at the call of the Chair over the summer and plans to reconvene in September 2016. The working groups will continue to meet over the summer months, however the meeting frequency will be moderated.

Whether you are staying in or heading out of the city, province or country, we wish everyone a happy, healthy and enriching summer.

*Have a wonderful summer!*
Michelle Peterson Fraser has been announced as the new Senior Consultant for the Provincial Palliative and End-of-Life Care Team. Michelle has been an RN for the past 32 years. Of those 32 years she has been employed with Alberta Health Services for 23 years working in a variety of roles within the specialty areas of both Oncology and PEOLC. As well as working at the frontlines as a nurse, she has been in many management roles including: Assistant Patient Care Manager of Unit 57, (an adult Bone Marrow Transplant unit at FMC), the Patient Care Manager of The Alberta Children's Hospital Bone Marrow Transplant unit, The Oncology Clinic and The Hemophilia/Hematology Clinic and 6 1/2 years working as The Director of Resident Care at Agape Hospice. For over the past 3 years Michelle has been the Provincial Lead for PEOLC with Community, Seniors, Addictions and Mental Health. Michelle helped to facilitate the development of the Palliative and End of Life Care Alberta Provincial Framework document and has been leading provincial initiatives since then, as recommended in the framework. Michelle is most proud of being able to help improve PEOLC to Albertans on a provincial level.

We are pleased to announce that Tracy Lynn Wityk Martin is the successful candidate for the Provincial Lead – Palliative End-of-Life Care Practice Development. Tracy Lynn Wityk Martin, M.Sc., has led evaluation and quality improvement for various programs within PEOLC in the Calgary Zone for over ten years. She has a Master's of Science Degree in Counselling Psychology from the University of Calgary. Her work as a Quality Specialist has involved leaders, clinicians, administrative staff and data from all health care sectors in both acute care and in the community. Tracy Lynn has education in the areas of health care leadership, change management, project management, quality improvement, patient safety and palliative care. She is experienced in leading working groups and projects, and her enthusiasm for planning meaningful evaluation and improvement is contagious.

Tracy Lynn has started her new role on May 16, 2016 and is excited to contribute to efficient and effective PEOLC/ continuing care services throughout Alberta as the Provincial Lead – Palliative End of Life Care Practice Development. Please join us in congratulating and welcoming Tracy Lynn to her new role.

Accreditation 2017

Alberta Health Services Hospice and PEOLC services will be reviewed by Accreditation Canada in May 2017. Accreditation involves assessing and improving the services we provide based on Accreditation Canada’s standards and is part of ongoing quality improvement initiatives.

A Continuing Care Service Excellence Team (CCSET) has been established and members are currently working on reviewing the April 2016 self assessment results. Three working groups have been established to review the self assessment results and create action plans to address any gaps in accreditation readiness. One of the working groups is the Hospice, Palliative End-of-Life Care working group chaired by Michelle Peterson Fraser.
To begin the new 2016/2017 fiscal year the website working group has been reconfigured to be more efficient and effective when maintaining and adding new content. A smaller more robust group of PEOLC subject matter experts meet monthly to assess new content for submission. We are grateful to the five zone representatives for their ongoing dedication and time helping the website keep up to date. We are also thankful to two new patient and family advisors reviewing new public facing content.

Also a deliverable for 2016/2017 is the coordination and implementation of an evaluation strategy to improve user-experience. Tracy Lynn Wityk Martin is new to our team and her experience and skills will be invaluable as we strive to evaluate and promote the website.

Please contact Sharon.iversen@ahs.ca with any questions or concerns.

A preliminary draft of a Resource Guide for Community Based PEOLC has been completed and has been sent to hospice societies, PEOLC associations, and AHS PEOLC zone operations for their review and feedback. Over the summer the working group will be reviewing the feedback received to further improve and enhance the Resource Guide. In the fall the Resource Guide will be brought back to PPAL / EOL ISC for their review and final endorsement.

The goal for 2016/2017 is to further develop and promote the Resource Guide through engagement with Alberta communities and build a sustainability strategy to keep the Resource Guide current.

Other objectives for the fiscal year include:

- Outlining a comprehensive communication/awareness plan to share the Resource Guide with Alberta communities to help them enhance or build PEOLC capacity within their areas.
- Engaging AHS communications to advertise the Resource Guide to both general public and front line providers in primary care.

Thank you to Alberta Hospice Palliative Care Association for facilitating the socialization of the Resource Guide with the hospice societies and PEOLC associations.

The provincial PEOLC team is grateful to everyone who has contributed to the preliminary draft of the Resource Guide. We are looking forward to the next iteration of the guide.
Within the Alberta PEOLC Framework, standardizing and spreading palliative emergency symptom management support provided by clinicians & EMS within every zone was identified as a top priority. During the 2014/2015 fiscal year, all the zones worked collaboratively to implement a provincial Emergency Medical Services Palliative and End of Life Care Assess, Treat and Refer (EMS PEOLC ATR) Program to support clients experiencing palliative emergencies within the community setting. In the 2015/2016 fiscal year, the program will be expanded to include a number of enhancements which will increase access to the program and expand the care that is provided to PEOLC patients in the community and will be at a state of readiness for implementation for the 2016/2017 fiscal year.

The first year of ATR activations wrapped up at the end of March. Activations occurred in every zone during the 2015/2016 fiscal year and nearly 100 patients were treated in their home during symptom crisis who previously may have been transported to hospital. The year one evaluation report, which will provide details on the first year’s activations, and staff and family experience surveys, will be available for stakeholder review soon.

Phase II will launch later this fall and will include a number of enhancements to further support collaboration between EMS and community clinicians, and expand patient/family access to the program:

- **Remote clinician access** - clinicians contacted by patients in symptom crisis can activate EMS without being in the home and collaborate to provide patient care in person (if possible) or over the phone when EMS arrives.

- **EMS activation** - when EMS arrives at the home of a PEOLC patient in symptom crisis without a clinician on scene (through a routine call to 911), treatment in place can still be provided in collaboration with an online physician (required) and clinician on the phone (as available), with notification of the event to the patient’s primary care team for any required follow up.

Training materials to support the Phase II rollout will be available in June.
PEOLC Bereavement Initiative

Bridging over into 2016/2017 fiscal year our awesome large (22) working group has continued to sustain a high degree of energy and momentum. We are grateful to PPAL / EOL ISC for endorsing all five Phase 1 recommendations and it is now the task of the working group to look at ways to implement these recommendations.

Tracy Lynn Wityk Martin is new to our working group and has much to offer us based on her many years of work in PEOLC.

Some major projects on our “to do” list are:

- Further populate new Inform Alberta bereavement directories soon to be posted on the website
- Post new grief and bereavement content on PEOLC MyHealth Alberta
- Customize bereavement package contents to reflect zone specific information
- Explore provincial care before and after death programming
- Develop an evaluation plan

Please contact Sharon.iversen@ahs.ca with any questions or concerns

Advance Care Planning
Goals of Care Designation
www.conversationsmatter.ca

ACP Day 2016!

April 16, 2016 marked National Advance Care Planning Day! This year, the zones organized and set up information sessions throughout the week, taking the opportunity to inform Albertans about the process of Advance Care Planning: a way to think about, talk about and document wishes for health care in the event that individuals are unable to communicate for themselves.

All Zones participated in raising awareness and providing Albertans with resources on Advance Care Planning. The Calgary Zone had booths set up at four locations, including the Foothills Medical Centre. ACP conversation cookie bundles were distributed to all inpatient and outpatient units and staff were encouraged to initiate ACP conversations for themselves. The Calgary Zone also developed three new green sleeve instruction handouts: one for users; one for people who are instructing people regarding green sleeves; and a clinician guide for supporting ACP conversations with patients. In the Edmonton Zone, booths and displays were set up, including sites at the Grey Nuns and the Misericordia Hospital. Memos and resource information were distributed within the zone, encouraging sites to display ACP Posters and information on how to order ACP resources. It sounds like a lot of fun was had by all in informing and bringing awareness to Albertans on the importance of Advance Care Planning!

On behalf of the Provincial ACP/GCD Team, a huge congratulations to all the zones, sites and staff that participated in making ACP Day 2016 a great success!
The North Zone palliative care team continues to participate on the provincial working group for bereavement care. We are in the final stages of having resources ready for distribution. Last call—if anyone knows of community agencies that provide bereavement services in North Zone that you have not yet identified, please email them to Loretta Manning at loretta.manning@ahs.ca.

In April, Palliative Care Resource Nurse Loretta Manning attended the Plamondon Catholic Women’s League Meeting to talk about palliative care. Discussion items included the palliative care approach and starting palliative care early, rather than late. We also talked about the EMS-ATR program and how home care is a good place to start if they know of persons requiring care, and how to make this connection.

The nursing skills session in Lac La Biche was cancelled in May due to the wildfires. We will be starting with the new series on Delirium in July for staff in this community.

Also, on the education front, our team has had many requests for both professional and support level education. In response to this, we will be travelling out to Grande Cache in June to deliver sessions. These will be the basis of palliative education that will help the zone meet the Continuing Care Health Service Standards. Thank you to the Central Zone for sharing your resources.

New work has started in preparation for Accreditation in 2017. Loretta has joined the provincial Hospice and Palliative End-of-Life Service Excellence Team on behalf of North Zone.
Advance Care Planning Videos

Advance Care Planning / Goals of Care Calgary along with Tom Baker Cancer Centre are excited and pleased to announce the release of 6 videos. These videos were developed to further Advance Care Planning / Goals of Care education and engagement for both members of the public and healthcare providers through storytelling.

These six short videos offer personal narratives highlighting the impact and benefit of Advance Care Planning / Goals of Care on the healthcare experiences of both healthcare workers and patients. Included are perspectives from patients facing terminal illnesses, family members, an oncologist, and a paramedic who all echo that Advance Care Planning / Goals of Care are an essential part of patient-centered care. These are real patients, families, and healthcare professionals sharing their unique and intimate experiences. We are grateful to them for being honest, open and courageous in sharing their stories.

Thank you for the dedication and talent of Sharon Iversen and Dave Chittick for shooting and editing this material.

Please contact Alexandra Kushliak (Alexandra.Kushliak@ahs.ca) for video information and location.

Palliative Care—Facts of the Month

One of the initiatives arising out of the Palliative Care Community of Practice at South Health Campus was to create and distribute “Palliative Facts of the Month” in order to raise awareness around palliative care resources and best practice. Clinical Nurse Specialists and Nurse Clinicians from the Calgary Zone Palliative Care Consult Service expressed interest in broadening the audience of this valued initiative, and a small working group was formed in May, 2016. This working group has representation from urban and rural sites of care to include Acute Care, Community (Home Care) and Long Term Care / Assisted Living.

A series of Palliative Care Facts of the Month containing access information and facts about quality palliative and end of life care will be created, modified to include site specific processes (contact numbers / site & program specific resources) and disseminated by the working group representatives to the sites and frontline clinicians providing direct patient care across the zone. In collaboration with a Clinical Nurse Educator (CNE) this working group is well positioned to identify learning opportunities presented in practice, modify content and ensure broad distribution. Tailored Facts of the Month will be sent by site leads to a CNE group using site-specific e-mail distribution lists.

Upcoming Facts of the Month include:
- What is Palliative Care
- Clarification on what a “C” GCD means
- How to consult Palliative Care
- The importance of oral care
- How to identify and treat oral thrush

For more information please contact us at janet.vandale@ahs.ca or hayley.shepherd@ahs.ca
The Eduardo Bruera Award in Palliative Medicine is given annually to a physician who demonstrates excellence in the field of Palliative Medicine as recognized by his or her peers. It honours the achievements of Dr. Eduardo Bruera, an internationally recognized palliative care physician and researcher. The award recognizes those physicians who have made a difference at a local/regional level, demonstrating a commitment to excellence in palliative medicine in any of the following areas: clinical palliative medicine, education, research, program administration, or international involvement in palliative medicine.

Dr. Robin Fainsinger, Clinical Director, Tertiary Palliative Care Unit, Grey Nuns Hospital and the Medical Lead for the Palliative Institute, was the recipient of the 2016 Eduardo Bruera award.

Dr. Fainsinger began his career in palliative care in 1990, when he left a family practice in Saskatchewan to pursue a fellowship at the University of Alberta, under the mentorship of Dr. Eduardo Bruera and Dr. Neil MacDonald.

In 1999, he assumed leadership of the Capital Health Regional (now Alberta Health Services Edmonton Zone) Palliative Care Program, a position that he still holds. The program had been established in 1995 as the first fully comprehensive and integrated palliative care program in Canada. During his tenure, Dr. Fainsinger has successfully advocated for the preservation of this model within the context of successive changes in organization of the health care system.

He became Director of the Tertiary Palliative Care Unit at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital in 2006, overseeing its expansion from a 14-bed to a 20-bed ward. The unit serves the most complex palliative care patients in the northern half of the province. In recent years, he has played a key role on the Provincial Palliative and End of Life Innovations Steering Committee. He has also assumed medical leadership for the Covenant Health Palliative Institute, which seeks to influence excellent palliative care in Alberta through research, policy input, clinical support, clinician education and public outreach.

His colleagues at the Palliative Institute are grateful for his vision and leadership, and congratulate him on this well-earned recognition.

Dr. Cara Bablitz is the recipient of the Palliative Medicine Resident Research Award from the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians. This award recognizes the best scholarly project by a resident enrolled in a palliative medicine residency program.
Nationwide Survey for Consensus Development Conference on Palliative Care

All Canadians will eventually need access to quality palliative care and end-of-life care for themselves or their loved ones, but receiving it has been an issue in Canadian healthcare for decades.

Covenant Health Palliative Institute, a Canadian leader in health research and education, has joined with Alberta’s former health minister Fred Horne and key national health and industry partners to draw Canadians into a Canada-wide discussion on a national strategy for palliative care. This initiative, Palliative Care Matters, will reflect the views of Canadians and support the change they believe needs to happen in our country.

Palliative Care Matters begins by surveying Canadians about palliative care, their attitudes and what they expect, including the services and supports they value most and their views on access and best approaches. The survey will be conducted by Ipsos Reid, a leader in Canadian research.

Members of the public will then join with experts at a national consensus development conference in November 2016. A panel of interested citizens will weigh the evidence gathered during the course of the survey and deliver a bold and thoughtful consensus statement. This statement will bring together professional knowledge and powerful lived experiences, and anchor a comprehensive report which will include a national strategy and roadmap for change.

By responding to the survey, Canadians’ voices will be heard and their feedback will contribute to a vision for equitable, comprehensive and appropriate palliative care in every province and territory.

For more information on the initiative, please visit www.palliativecarematters.ca or email Carleen Brenneis, Director, Palliative Institute, at carleen.brenneis@covenanthealth.ca
The 27th Annual Palliative Care Education and Research Days will take place from October 24 - 25, 2016 at the Fantasyland Hotel in West Edmonton Mall, Edmonton, Alberta Canada.

Covenant Health is proud to support and provide delegates the opportunity to gather, meet, share experiences and exchange ideas with other healthcare colleagues representing many disciplines from all over Alberta and surrounding provinces.

The conference committee is excited to present renowned speakers this year in addition to two challenge panel discussions.

The Sandy McEwan Lecture on October 24 will be delivered by Barbara Pesut, PhD RN, University of British Columbia, and is entitled, “Covenant or Contract? Achieving a Home Death in Rural Areas.”

On October 25, Professor Geoff Mitchell, PhD, MBBS, FRACGP, FACHPM, from the University of Queensland, will deliver the Neil MacDonald Lecture entitled, “Primary care’s role at the end of life: Why it’s important and how it can be achieved.”

In addition, **in-depth workshops, concurrent sessions and posters** will address all aspects of end-of-life care. Topic areas include:

- Back to Basics: Symptom management, direct clinical care
- Emerging Issues & Trends: innovations and research in Palliative & End of Life Care
- Challenging clinical care needs for Palliative and End of Life patients and their families
- Psychosocial / Spiritual & Wellness

**For more information, please contact:**

Viki Muller, Research/Project Coordinator  
Phone: 780.735.7493  
viki.muller@covenanthealth.ca
Covenant Health Palliative Institute is pleased to announce the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) Fall Seminar, jointly sponsored by the EAPC Palliative Research Centre and EAPC Research Network, will take place in Banff December 1-3, 2016. This event marks the first time this conference is being held outside Europe. Our theme for the 6th annual seminar, is “Transatlantic collaboration: Enhancing clinical care through palliative care.”

Dr. Robin Fainsinger, Clinical Director, Tertiary Palliative Care Unit, Grey Nuns Community Hospital and Section Chief, Edmonton Zone Palliative Care Program, has been honoured with the GW Hanks lectureship which will be presented at the conference. The conference program also consists of 10 internationally renowned speakers and a large part of the program will be based on submitted abstracts. Deadline for abstract submission is September 30, 2016.

In today’s granting environment, the assistance of an expert faculty to assist in proposal development is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to become more competitive in national competitions. With sufficient interest, the scientific committee is prepared to host a pre-conference workshop to support the development of proposals – “How do faculty members express their interest?” If you are interested in a pre-conference contact Viki Muller viki.muller@covenanthealth.ca

Please see http://pallres.org for abstract submission guidelines and registration.
It’s About Life: Navigating the Reality of Hospice Palliative Care

On any given day in hospice palliative care, we’re faced with the reality that the end of life is a complex journey. Family dynamics, spirituality, pain and suffering, and ethical concerns are just some of the difficult issues we face. Learning to navigate these real life problems that come with living, working, and volunteering in hospice palliative care is the topic for the AHPCA 2016 Roadshow.

“It’s About Life: Navigating the Reality of Hospice Palliative Care” is an interactive full-day workshop which will help you develop practical strategies through inspiring discussions, self-reflection, and thought-provoking case studies provided by our Roadshow communities and guest presenter, Dr. David Falk.

Workshop Fees (Includes lunch)
$10.00 for current 2016-17 AHPCA members
$35.00 for new members – fee has been generously subsidized by Edson FCSS (includes AHPCA/CHPCA membership to March 2017)

REGISTER ONLINE at AHPCA.ca or call Theresa Bellows at 403-473-7845

Edson
Monday October 3, 2016
Seniors Pioneers Cabin
4836 – 7 Ave, Edson AB
Workshop 9:00-4:00 pm Registration and Coffee 8:30 am

Host: Edson FCSS Program

Please register at www.ahpca.ca

This workshop can be used for Continuing Education credits
Non Chartered Project Activities

The Provincial PEOLC team is currently working on the following four non chartered activities:

**Capacity Planning**

Preliminary discussions are under way with Continuing Care Strategic Implementation, Capacity Management, Seniors Health. The expert panel will reconvene in the Fall of 2016 to continue capacity planning and forecasting for PEOLC spaces in acute care and hospital settings and PEOLC home care.

**Dashboard**

- Provincial PEOLC data and Advance Care Planning and Goals of Care Designation indicators / data has become available. The plan is to publish this data on Tableau dashboards.
- A sub-working group will be struck to standardize hospice reporting.

**Guidelines for Home Care Patient Death**

- The working group has drafted a skeletal guidelines document for home care patient deaths that occur at home, in Supportive Living 1 and Supportive Living 2 settings.
- Will be consulting with various stakeholders over the summer and will begin review with legal and ethics in the fall.

**Clinical Knowledge Topics**

In collaboration with the Clinical Knowledge Clinical Management portfolio in AHS the following Clinical Knowledge Topics are being developed for the Clinical Information System:

- Advance Care Planning / Goals of Care Designation
- Provincial Palliative Sedation Guidelines—Dr. Mike Slawnych is the topic lead
- End of Life Care / Imminently Dying Guidelines

Dr. Sonya Lowe is our Clinical Knowledge PEOLC physician lead for this work, she started in June 2016.

**Contacts**

General questions or comments email: palliative.care@ahs.ca

- **Dr. James Silvius**, james.silvius@ahs.ca
  Medical Director, Community, Seniors, Addictions & Mental Health
- **Barbara O’Neill**, barbara.o’Neill@ahs.ca
  Senior Provincial Director, Cancer SCN & Critical Care SCN
- **Michelle Peterson Fraser**, michelle.petersonfraser@ahs.ca
  Senior Consultant, Palliative & End of Life Care, Community, Seniors, Addictions & Mental Health
- **Tracy Lynn Wityk Martin**, tracylynn.witykmartin@ahs.ca
  Lead, Palliative & End of Life Care, Community, Seniors, Addictions & Mental Health
- **Claire Chapman**, claire.chapman@ahs.ca
  Lead, Advance Care Planning / Goals of Care Designation
- **Sharon Iversen**, sharon.iversen@ahs.ca
  Educator, Palliative & End of Life Care, Community, Seniors, Addictions & Mental Health
- **Richard Wallington**, richard.wallington@ahs.ca
  Director, Alberta Thoracic Oncology Program
- **Cheryl Cameron**, cheryl.l.cameron@ahs.ca
  EMS Lead Palliative & End of Life Care, Community, Seniors, Addictions & Mental Health
- **Aurora Leang**, aurora.leang@ahs.ca
  Project Coordinator, Palliative & End of Life Care, Community, Seniors, Addictions & Mental Health