

Medical Staff Update

This Issue: A message about the Jasper wildfire; Update on PIN leadership and priorities; Duplicative lab order merging; Edmonton Zone physicians piloting use of AHS email for AHS business; and more.

AHS recognizes that our work takes place on historical and contemporary Indigenous lands, including the territories of Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8, and the homeland of the Métis Nation of Alberta and eight Métis Settlements. We also acknowledge the many Indigenous communities that have been forged in urban centres across Alberta.

Note: Recognizing some medical staff use an alternate email address instead of an AHS email address, some information is duplicated from the AHS Update to ensure all AHS medical staff have all up-to-date organizational information that may impact their practice.

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AHS Update

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Medical Affairs News

A message from the CEO about the Jasper wildfire

Like many of you, I've watched the devastating images out of Jasper the past few days with a mix of heartbreak and horror. My heart goes out to the many of our people who live and work in and around Jasper, and those who have friends and family in the area. We know residents were safely evacuated; sadly, some of them may not have a home when they're allowed to return to the townsite. This is already a tragedy of unfathomable scale and, as of this morning, the scope of the damage is still unknown.

To our staff who live and work in the area, AHS will support you in every way possible in the days, weeks and months ahead. You can get information about the wildfire and a list of supports on the [2024 Wildfire Updates and Resources page](#) on Insite. (All Albertans can visit the [Help in Tough Times](#) webpage for a list of resources and supports.) There is also a suite of supports available 24 hours a day, every day of the year, through the Employee and Family Assistance Program. Call the [EFAP](#) intake line at 1-877-273-3134. Physicians can contact the [AMA Physician and Family Support Program](#), also a confidential 24/7 support line, at 1-877-SOS-4MDS for options and support.

As we saw during other recent large-scale natural disasters, including the southern Alberta floods of 2013 and the Fort McMurray wildfire of 2016, AHS teams across the province come together and work together to provide comprehensive emergency/disaster response. We've seen this happen this week, as well. The efficient and safe evacuation of patients and residents from our Jasper facility on Monday night was a demonstration of the incredible skill of our people. Our teams across the province continue to ensure displaced individuals, especially those with ongoing health conditions, get the compassionate care they need.

Allow me to share my profound gratitude to everyone working to address this situation. To our people directly affected by the wildfire, please know that we are here to support you in every way possible and that your colleagues across the organization are thinking of you and hoping for the best.

Athana Mentzelopoulos
AHS President and CEO

Learn Improve Together – Update on PIN leadership and priority setting

AHS continues to refine its Learning Health System (LHS) to ensure patients receive continuously improving, safe and efficient care. The Learn Improve Together (LIT) approach is being implemented to bring quality closer to the bedside, delivering better care for patients and improving their health outcomes in a fiscally responsible way.

[Read an update](#) from AHS president and CEO, Athana Mentzelopoulos, on PIN leadership and priority setting.

Duplicative lab order merging

Duplicative orders for lab tests can occur unintentionally when multiple physicians or other providers care for the same patient for different conditions. Consolidating duplicative orders for the same set of tests offers the opportunity to reduce unnecessary blood draws and costs. Reviewing results is simpler and less confusing when duplicative results are eliminated.

Connect Care integration across the provincial lab system has provided the opportunity to merge duplicative test requests, eliminating many duplicative tests. Physicians, ordering providers and patient care will not be impacted by these changes.

By eliminating duplicative orders, it is estimated that more than 20,000 duplicates can potentially be avoided per month. This initiative is part of a broader Alberta Precision Laboratories appropriateness strategy designed to free up capacity and address increases in demand.

Changes to respiratory virus infections management

AHS is standardizing the IPC management of patients with respiratory virus infections. Standardization of infection control measures, including personal protective equipment (PPE) recommendations, will simplify patient management. COVID-19 will now be managed using the same approach (Contact and Droplet Precautions) as other endemic respiratory virus infections. Contact and Droplet Precautions/Isolation will apply for any patient with a suspected or confirmed respiratory virus infection.

The Joint Statement between AHS, Covenant Health and the unions remains in effect. Healthcare workers will continue to have discretion to choose, and have access to, any PPE they feel is necessary based on their infection prevention and control risk assessment (IPC-RA), including a fit-tested N95 respirator.

There are no changes in PPE guidance related to aerosol-generating medical procedures. Healthcare workers will continue to use a fit-tested N95 respirator in addition to eye protection, gown and gloves.

For more information, visit ahs.ca.

Edmonton Zone physicians piloting use of AHS email for AHS business

On Aug. 20, 2024, AHS Edmonton Zone (EZ) will transition to using only AHS email addresses for communicating to physicians regarding AHS business and their medical staff appointment. EZ physicians were notified about this transition on July 17.

Currently, some physicians use other email addresses (e.g., ualberta.ca) as their preferred way of receiving this information. This change will help ensure EZ physicians receive important AHS information while ensuring confidentiality and compliance with privacy policy and legislation.

Staff in Provincial Medical Affairs will update the Appointment & Privileging system on Aug. 20 to ensure EZ physicians have their AHS email set as their preferred/primary email. The EZ is piloting this initiative and will share their learnings with other zones in the coming weeks.

If you currently use preferred emails as a way of communicating with EZ physicians about AHS business or an EZ physician's medical staff appointment, please begin using their AHS email by Aug. 20.

For more information about how you can access your AHS email on your devices, check out the [Accessing AHS Email & Intranet page on our website](#). If you have any questions about this transition, reach out to edm.medicalaffairs@ahs.ca.

APL physician survey

Your feedback on APL lab request services is crucial for us to understand what's working and what can be improved. Share your thoughts through a [short online survey](#), open until Aug. 15, 2024. Your input will help ensure optimal laboratory service provision. Thank you for your participation.

RAH Hospital Medicine Update – Sept. 21 & 22, 2024

Join us for the 9th Annual RAH Hospital Medicine Update on Saturday, Sept. 21 and Sunday, Sept. 22, 2024. This two half-day virtual and non-pharma conference brings together experts to update participants in various areas of practice.

Hot topics in this year's [program](#) include nutrition in the hospitalized patient, managing newer diabetic medications for inpatients, post ICU syndrome, updates in CHF, COPD, acute renal failure and more.

Relax in the comfort of your home or office and learn the latest and greatest from 14 experts delivered online through Zoom. Each talk is 25 minutes followed by a live five-minute question and answer period. The conference is available to you live and online for three months. [Visit our website](#) for more information and to register.

Physician learning

There are many learning and development opportunities outside of AHS offered to physicians. Here are some upcoming opportunities:

- [Micro-Aggression Training for Physicians](#) – Online, ongoing
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Career opportunities

Practice opportunities across a broad range of specialties are available. All vacant AHS physician practice opportunities are posted on our physician recruitment website, [Doctor Jobs Alberta](#).

Support for physicians

The [Physician & Family Support Program](#) (PFSP) continues to offer CONFIDENTIAL services on an individual basis that you can access by calling the 24-hour assistance line at 1-877-767-4637.

AHS also has [resources](#) aimed at offering support to physicians.

Additional resources for physicians:

- [AHS Virtual Health](#)
 - [CPSA's Physician Portal](#)
 - [Cumming School of Medicine Continuing Medical Education \(CME\) Resources](#)
 - [How to Access AHS Insite and Email](#)
 - [IPC Emerging Issues](#)
 - [MD News Digest](#)
 - [Physician & Family Support Program](#) - 1-877-SOS-4MDS (767-4637)
 - [Physician Wellness Educational Resources: Well Doc Alberta](#)
 - [Support Services: Well Doc Alberta](#)
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Healthy Albertans.
Healthy Communities.
Together.