

# Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council

2023-24 Annual Report



**Alberta Health  
Services**

Palliser Triangle  
Health Advisory Council

## Message from Athana Mentzelopoulos & Dr. Lyle Oberg

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As we reflect on the journey of the Health Advisory Councils over the past 15 years, it is with a profound sense of gratitude and appreciation that we bid farewell. The dedication, passion, and invaluable contributions of each member has left an indelible mark on Alberta's healthcare landscape, touching countless lives across our communities.

Since its beginnings, the Health Advisory Councils have served as a beacon of community engagement and collaboration, bridging the gap between healthcare providers and the diverse needs of Alberta. Your commitment to fostering dialogue, advocating for patient-centred care, and championing initiatives to enhance the quality of care in your respective communities has been truly commendable.

We are deeply indebted to the hundreds of volunteers who have served on the HACs and who have generously devoted their time and expertise, along with their unwavering support to improving healthcare in our province. Your efforts have helped to shape policies, drive innovations and ensure the voices of Albertans were heard by decision-makers.

While this marks the end of an era, we hope many of you are looking at new opportunities with Regional Advisory Councils, and have reached out to express your interest. The Health Advisory Councils may cease to exist in their current form but the bonds forged and the lessons learned will endure; the Regional Advisory Councils can benefit from their history and the commitment of those who have served.

On behalf of Alberta Health Services, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to each and everyone of the members who served on Councils over the past 15 years. Your contributions will continue to inspire us.

Athana Mentzelopoulos  
President and CEO, Alberta Health Services

Dr. Lyle Oberg  
Executive Board Chair, Alberta Health Services

### QUOTE FROM ZONE LEADERSHIP

*Our HAC members have been with us since the inception of AHS, sharing the views and perspectives of the communities they represent. We appreciate the conversations we've had, value their time as volunteers and are grateful for the relationships we've built along the way. Their input into shaping and supporting healthcare in the South Zone has been invaluable and we want to thank them for their hard work over the years.*

**Linda Iwasiw and Dr. Aaron Low**  
Chief Zone Officer and Zone Medical Director, South Zone

# WHO WE ARE



*Top L-R: Krista Weiss (Chair), Rachel Vossen (Vice Chair), Daphne Anstey-Martin, Jill Bernhart  
Row 2 L-R: Wanda Diakow, Gwendoline Dirk, Cathy Fox, Sasha Loewen  
Row 3 L-R: Michelle Miller, Wesley Paterson, Amanda Peterson  
Bottom L-R: Deborah Reid, Janine Tolhurst*

**“I am happy with our HAC, our accomplishments, and the excellent leadership and support we receive from the Community Engagement Team, especially our Advisor. (anonymous, from annual Advisory Council Satisfaction Survey).”**

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Since their inception in 2009, Advisory Council members have shared advice and feedback from their communities with Alberta Health Services (AHS). They've held public meetings and engagement activities virtually or in locations throughout their geographic area that further contributed to improving healthcare services in Alberta.

In 2023-24, the Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council (PTHAC) focused on providing information on engaging health topics of interest within their communities. This included: information about the new ambulatory care wing and changes to the service delivery model of care at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital; Health Link 811; Wellspring Cancer Support Alberta; Connect Care implementation; and South Zone Healthcare Planning.

A few members participated in working groups to provide input on South Zone Healthcare Planning in the following areas: primary care, continuing care, addiction and mental health, health promotion and the social determinants of health, and acute care sustainability.

In November, Advisory Council members met with Health Minister Adriana LaGrange to learn of the Government of Alberta's plans to refocus the health system; they later met with Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health, MLA Martin Long, to talk about their successes and potential opportunities for the new Regional Advisory Councils (RAC) being established by the Government of Alberta.

In January, Council met with Premier Danielle Smith, in her capacity as Brooks-Medicine Hat MLA, to share their thoughts on healthcare challenges in their corner of the province.

AHS South Zone leadership continued its support of the HAC. They provided timely and transparent dialogue with the HAC and public who attended its meetings and events. The Rural Health Professionals Action Plan (RhPAP) continued to bring updates to community as a valued partner of the HAC.

The Chair and Council Coordinator met monthly with AHS South Zone leadership bringing good news stories and community health-related concerns to their attention.

## **Community concerns shared with Zone leadership included:**

- Access to addictions and mental health resources.
- Lab services.
- Staffing shortage at Oyen Big County Hospital, and general workforce issues.
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS).
- Whooping cough outbreak.
- Medicine Hat Regional Hospitals breast feeding policy.

## **Council engaged with AHS on the following topics:**

- South Zone Healthcare Planning.
- Connect Care Implementation.
- Aging in Place – Engagement Session for Older Albertans and Caregivers/Partners.

Council hosted four meetings and events through the year with 111 public in attendance.

# THANK YOU MEMBERS PAST AND PRESENT

Amanda Peterson	Krista Weiss
Attalia Fikre	Kristine Russell
Audrey Wilcox	Linda Gale
Blake Pedersen	Margaret Kargard
Carol Lees	Marjorie Moncrieff
Catherine Fox	Martin Shields
Catherine Holland	Michelle Miller
Catherine McCulloch	Patricia Dietrich
Clifford Wright	Patty Rooks
Daphne Anstey-Martin	Rachel Vossen
Deborah Reid-Mickler	Ron Wickson
Diane MacNaughton	Rudi Brockmann
Dianna Jossa	Ruth Babcock
Gwendoline Dirk	Sara Joan Armour
Harley Endersby	Sasha Loewen
Heather Thacker	Sharon Reid
Heather Norris	Stephanie Shaw
Janine Tolhurst	Susan McElroy
Jean Pearcey	Terry Cooper
Jill Bernhart	Wanda Diakow
Jim Black	Warren Drefs
Kelly Christman	Wesley Paterson*
Kenneth Sauer	

*\*Apologies if anyone is missing from this list.*

