

# Tamarack

## 2021-22 Annual Report

(July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022)





## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



*Vicki Yellow Old Woman*

It's been another remarkable year for health services in Alberta. While the COVID-19 pandemic carried on, vaccines became available which has been monumental in slowing the spread of the virus and preventing severe illness. Through it all, AHS Advisory Councils remained connected with their communities and have demonstrated an incredible spirit of volunteerism through their engagement activities.

Through Advisory Councils, AHS has received feedback on a number of important initiatives which are outlined in each of these reports. We are grateful for the involvement of our Councils in advising AHS on a range of matters of importance to all Albertans.

On behalf of the AHS Board, I extend my sincerest gratitude to all Advisory Council members for continuing to foster relationships with stakeholders across Alberta. These grassroots connections have been vital to AHS' ability to make well-rounded decisions on health services that impact so many of us. Your commitment is greatly appreciated and we look forward to the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Vicki Yellow Old Woman,  
Chair, Community Engagement Committee, AHS Board



## Message from the Chair, Tamarack Health Advisory Council



*Donna Kristiansen*

Another year has passed, and we have continued to discover opportunities to communicate and share information. This year we had the opportunity to explore the versatility of a hybrid model of engagement, which enabled us to come together in person for the Spring Forum, in addition to providing several training and information sharing opportunities virtually. This model has increased the options for communities to come together.

As local community representatives, our Council members have continued to bring health challenges and successes to the attention of AHS – both through AHS North Zone leadership and the Community Engagement team. As well, our Council members have provided updated information on new initiatives from AHS into their respective communities.

I would like to thank all our Council members and AHS staff who have been so giving of their time and energy in reaching out in our communities, and for attending virtual meetings.

Sincerely,

Donna Kristiansen  
Chair, Tamarack Health Advisory Council

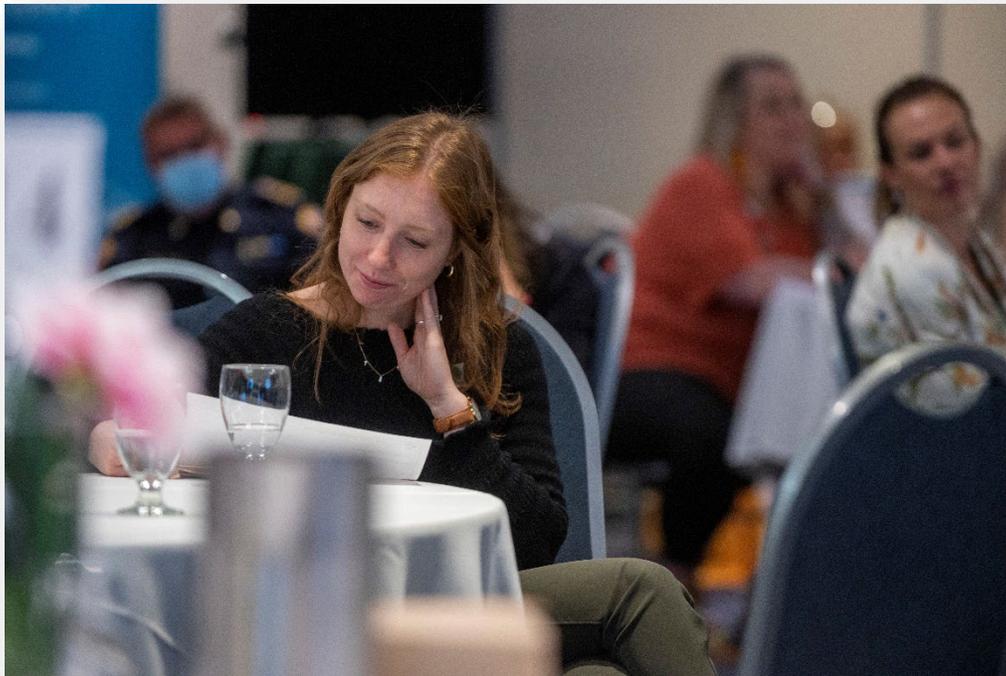


## Who we are

The Tamarack Health Advisory Council (THAC) is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members who reside in the geographic [area](#) from Westlock in the east through Hinton and Jasper in the West. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to obtain photos of our membership. The following members sat on Council in 2021-22:

Donna Kristiansen (Chair)	Gunn, AB
Janet Wilkinson (Vice Chair)	Edson, AB
Tara Baker	Whitecourt, AB
Lorianne Edwards	Barrhead, AB
Jessica Fortin - Lacombe	Jasper, AB
Debra Hagman	Mayerthorpe, AB
Shannon Harris*	Barrhead, AB
Janet Jabush	Mayerthorpe, AB
Sherry Jeffreys	Sangudo, AB
Elizabeth Krawiec*	Swan Hills, AB
Candace Pambrun	Hinton, AB
Maureen Schnirer	Busby, AB
Wendy Scinski	Westlock, AB
Katherine Steck-Flynn	Westlock, AB
Linda West	Westlock, AB

*\*departing members through the year*



*Jessica Fortin-Lacombe at the Advisory Council Spring Forum. May 2022.*



# Key achievements of 2021-22

Tamarack HAC continued to be a strong voice for local communities. We had members of the public in attendance at each of our meetings and we look forward to seeing more as we diversify and broaden awareness of our Council in the year ahead.



We partnered with AHS to host a community conversation about understanding grief and loss. This event had 27 community members participate and helped build understanding and awareness of what grief is, types of loss and tools and resources to build resilience. Participants reported an increased understanding of the impact of emotions on the body and how to develop an action plan to address their own grief. The presenters, certified grief recovery specialists, helped participants decrease fear of the misunderstood process of grief.



Council held three virtual public meetings and one virtual engagement event. In addition to topical presentations, at each meeting we received an update from AHS North Zone leadership, a physician recruitment report from AHS Medical Affairs, an update from our community partners with the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) and held dedicated time to hear from the community.



In May, Council members attended the annual Advisory Council Forum in Edmonton. This year saw opportunity for participation in an Indigenous Workshop, learning about asset-based community development and participation in several information sessions. We used this opportunity to network with Councils from across the province, to gather new ideas and find new ways to partner with others.



We were fortunate to recruit new members from Barrhead, Busby, Jasper, Mayerthorpe, Westlock and Whitecourt. We're very excited to hear more from these communities and will continue seeking representation from additional rural and Indigenous communities to help represent our large geographic area. See page six for information on how to apply.



## Presentations:

- Wellspring Cancer Supports
- HIV Edmonton/Alberta Syphilis Outbreak
- Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) Rural Mental Health Project
- Alberta Farm Safety Centre
- Understanding Grief and Loss



## Public Participation:

- 8 Community members attended our regular public meetings
- 27 Community members attended our community engagement events



## A look ahead

We have big plans for the coming year. We will continue promoting awareness of our Council and will host three public Council meetings across the area. We will also work hard to encourage members within our communities to attend our community event so we can share insights on healthcare topics of interest. As well, we will continue recruitment efforts to fill vacancies with the goal of broadening diversity to our membership.

Plans for the coming year include:

- Increasing public attendance and participation at HAC meetings through connections made at community events, promotion and invitations to local stakeholders.
- Supporting the AHS Addiction and Mental Health portfolio to promote programs and services.
- Sharing information about seniors and continuing care programs and services.
- Learning about Health Link services across the province and sharing accurate information with our communities.
- Continuing to build relationships with other AHS Advisory Councils.
- Recruiting to fill Council vacancies. We look forward to bringing in broader diversity to better represent our communities.

We will continue building relationships with the numerous local community health partners through our meetings and events. Key stakeholders include Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), Primary Care Networks (PCN) in the Zone, attraction and retention committees and local hospital foundations/ auxiliaries. We will also continue connecting with municipal leaders, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and other local community groups.

*Over the past year, Alberta's six North Zone Health Advisory Councils have contributed immeasurably to our pandemic response while also sharing key information with our communities. The Councils have also successfully engaged hundreds of Albertans while shifting to virtual community events. I applaud their ongoing efforts to remain connected.*

*It has been my personal pleasure to work with many of our North Zone Councils. I have always found Council members to be dedicated, true community builders, and strong voices for healthcare throughout the North. They are passionate and bring a diversity of opinions and experiences, which makes for rich dialogue and discussion. We are grateful for their time, advice and collaboration with AHS North Zone leaders.*

*We look forward to continuing to partner with the True North, Wood Buffalo, Peace, Lesser Slave Lake, Lakeland Communities and Tamarack Health Advisory Councils.*

**Stacy Greening**

Chief Zone Officer, North Zone

Advisory Council members share advice and feedback from their communities with AHS. Councils hold public meetings and engagement activities virtually or in locations throughout their geographic area that further contribute to improving healthcare services in Alberta.

## Get involved

You can make a difference to the health and well-being of your family, friends, neighbours and community by sharing your thoughts and ideas with AHS. You can get involved by:

- Attending an [upcoming meeting](#). Agendas and notices are posted on the Advisory Council webpage: [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils).
- Delivering a presentation at a Council meeting on a health area of interest or concern.
- Provide input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#).
- Apply to [become a member](#). Members are appointed for three-year terms.

## Learn more

Visit [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils)

✉ [tamarack@ahs.ca](mailto:tamarack@ahs.ca)

☎ 1.877.275.8830

Check us out on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) or by searching AHS Advisory Councils.

