

# Tamarack

# Health Advisory Council

2023-24 Annual Report



**Alberta Health  
Services**

Tamarack  
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

*It has been my pleasure to work with many of our North Zone Councils. Our Council members are dedicated, community builders who are committed to healthcare in the North. I am appreciative of the diversity of opinions and experience that our Council members share leading to rich dialogue and discussion on topics that truly matter to those of us living in the north.*

**Stacy Greening**  
Chief Zone Officer, North Zone



# WHO WE ARE



Top L-R: Tara Baker (Chair), Lorianne Edwards (Vice Chair), Karen Gariepy, Jeff Goebel  
Middle L-R: Donna Kristiansen, Linda Prokott, Maureen Schnirer,  
Bottom L-R: Rob Stafford, Janet Wilkinson  
Missing: Janet Jabush, Wendy Scinski

“Always available ... Response time with questions is great and communication is transparent. (anonymous, from annual Advisory Council Satisfaction Survey).



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Since their inception in 2009, Advisory Council members have share 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.

Tamarack Health Advisory Council (THAC) held three public meetings during the year. Presentation topics included a Whitecourt and area community resource guide from Tara Baker, Chair of the HAC, Cancer Support Services from Wellspring Alberta, AHS Alberta Health Living Program (AHLP), and the new Alberta Virtual Chronic Pain Program (AVCPP).

The Council hosted a virtual engagement event where participants heard from local AHS Talent Acquisition and Medical Affairs teams, as well as from Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), as they discussed recruitment and retention of health professionals, including:

- AHS's process of recruiting health professionals to rural areas.
- Physician recruitment strategies.
- Local RhPAP attraction and retention committee efforts.

Council attended a session with the Health Minister in November to learn about plans to refocus the health system, and subsequent changes to AHS and Health Advisory Councils. In March, Council met in Whitecourt with MLA Martin Long, Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health, and staff from Alberta Health, to discuss successes and opportunities for improvement as government began its planning for Regional Advisory Councils (RACs).

Topics of discussion throughout the year included:

- Workforce recruitment.
- Access to addiction and mental health services.
- Surgery wait times.
- Injury and illness prevention and healthy living.
- Connection with community services.

## BY THE NUMBERS

- 79 public attended meetings and events through the year.
- 4 meetings and events between July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024.
- 3 new members recruited.

# THANK YOU MEMBERS PAST AND PRESENT

Andrea Quick  
Andrew Hendricks  
Barbara Wilson  
Brian Schulz  
Christie Homeniuk  
Daniel Leis  
Daniel Pritchard  
Darlene Chartrand  
Denise Lambert  
Donna Kristiansen  
Douglas Fleming  
Douglas McDermid  
Douglas Heine  
Gail Dunn  
Garry Lorenz  
George Turk  
Gwendolyn Jones  
Janet Jabush

Janet Wilkinson  
Jeff Goebel  
Joan Charbonneau  
Karen Bouman  
Karen Marie Gariepy  
Lorianne Edwards  
Linda Prokott  
Maryann Chichak  
Maureen Schnirer  
Peggy Carty  
Randy Smith  
Rob Stauffer  
Ruth Martin-Williams  
Sheila McKeand  
Tara Baker  
Trevor Thain  
Wendy Scinski\*

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

