

Tamarack Health Advisory Council

2023-24 Annual Report



**Alberta Health
Services**

Tamarack
Health Advisory Council

Message from Athana Mentzelopoulos & Dr. Lyle Oberg

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

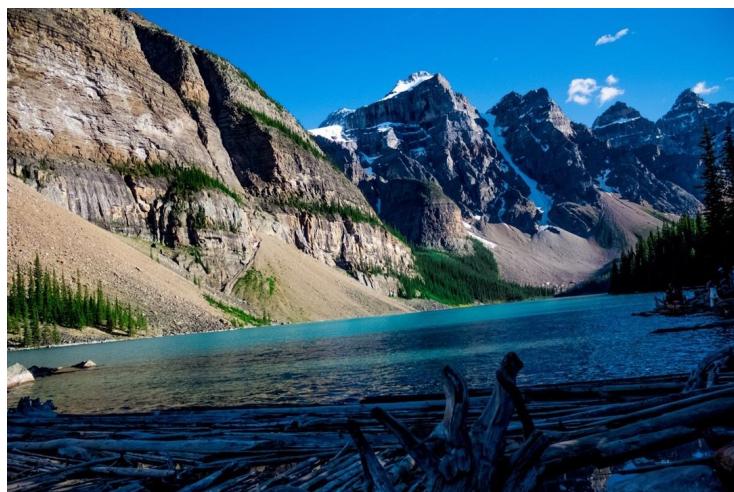
WHO WE ARE



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 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.

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.*

