

Yellowhead East

2016/17 Annual Report



Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors

The health system belongs to over four million Albertans and, as such, their voices need to be heard — and considered — when Alberta Health Services is planning and making decisions about healthcare delivery. Our Health Advisory Councils, Provincial Advisory Councils and Wisdom Council bring the diverse voices of Albertans to the decision-making table, so health services can meet the unique needs of communities across the province.

Our councils are made up of people who are passionate about understanding what's working and where improvements can be made in how health services are delivered in their communities. Advisory councils demonstrate our true commitment to community engagement – their work is strategic and valued, shaping the future of healthcare and enhancing care in communities.



Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn

There was much growth over the past year. It was a year of renewed commitment from Alberta Health Services to ensure councils act as the voices of their communities, supported by extensive recruitment to strengthen the reach and diversity of council members. For the first time, Council Chairs collaborated to share their priorities and identify similar priorities across the province. This approach was valuable and created synergies and linkages between councils across Alberta. At the same time, the collaboration between councils also showed how their priorities clearly aligned with Alberta Health Services' strategic approach and how we are all working towards the same, very important goals.

On behalf of the Alberta Health Services Board of Directors, our leadership team and our workforce, I want to thank you for being our partners. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with councils and the strategic value they offer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn
Vice Chair, Board of Directors
Chair, Community Engagement Committee of the Board
Alberta Health Services

About community engagement

Alberta Health Services is committed to meaningful and authentic community engagement. Engaging with Albertans means patients, families and members of the public contribute to healthcare solutions and the betterment of our system. They can benefit by having their needs reflected in planning and decision making. Engagement aligns with the Alberta Health Services culture of caring and listening, which results in more patient-centred care, local decision making and more open and trusting relationships.

Role of Advisory Councils

Alberta Health Services values advisory council members as volunteers, leaders and partners in healthcare planning. They help build a stronger relationship between the people in their communities and those who work in the health system.

Members of Health Advisory Councils, Provincial Advisory Councils, and Wisdom Council are Albertans who care about health of their communities, and are connected to the public in many different ways. They provide a grassroots perspective and an understanding of their communities' health needs, and they're interested in listening to the people. They also:



- share their communities' priorities with Alberta Health Services
- give advice and help to inform the decision-making process
- host public advisory council meetings, in addition to promoting and participating in activities that enhance Albertans' health
- engage with and share information with the community, and follow up on commitments
- give feedback on public education materials, policies, or discussion topics
- share information on health services with the community and provide feedback and input to Alberta Health Services

Councils attend the annual Advisory Councils' Fall Forum to hear a variety of presentations and network with fellow council members, Alberta Health Services staff and members of the Board of Directors.

The Health Advisory Councils and the Provincial Advisory Councils are supported by the Alberta Health Services Community Engagement department, and report through the Council of Chairs to the Community Engagement Committee of the Alberta Health Services Board of Directors. The Wisdom Council reports to the AHS President and CEO.

12 Health Advisory Councils

Bring the voices of Alberta communities to healthcare services.

Each council represents a geographical area within the province.

2 Provincial Advisory Councils

Advise on provincewide services and programs for addiction and mental health, and cancer.

1 Wisdom Council

Provides guidance and recommendations to ensure Alberta Health Services develops and implements culturally appropriate and innovative health service delivery for Indigenous Peoples.

Albertans are represented by 12 Health Advisory Councils. Areas are determined by population and travel routes, and are detailed on [this map](#).

The two Provincial Advisory Councils and Wisdom Council operate provincially.
Their membership spans all of Alberta.

[View map of treaty areas and indigenous communities in Alberta](#)

For more information on membership:

[Health Advisory Councils](#)

[Addiction and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council](#)

[Cancer Provincial Advisory Council](#)

[Wisdom Council](#)



Council of Chairs

The Council of Chairs is made up of all advisory council Chairs, who meet five times a year to further the roles, responsibilities, and priorities of councils at a provincial level. The Council of Chairs determines themes or commonalities across different communities to bring forward to Alberta Health Services' leadership and Board of Directors.

Including the public voice in Alberta Health Services planning

In early 2016, Alberta Health Services' Strategic Planning Department met with Health Advisory Councils across the province to gather input for the [2017 - 2020 Health and Business Plan](#). Each council was asked to provide feedback on the plan to ensure the priorities of their communities were considered in the development of the strategic goals for the organization.

Members from various Health Advisory Councils participated in the following provincial committees:

- Apple Magazine Editorial Council
- Continuing Care Quality Committee
- [Health Link](#) and [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](#)
- Patient First Steering Committee
- Patient and Family Advisory Council
- Long range planning

Message from the Chair, Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council

As I enter into my second term as a member of the Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council, I look forward to my new role as Chair. I am very encouraged by the increased awareness of the councils' role and with the increasing opportunities being offered to provide public input into our health system.

Our members are building relationships with communities, members of the public and with Alberta Health Services to advise on health services within the Yellowhead East region. In addition, councils are becoming more results-focused and our membership has developed a strong work plan for 2017/18 that will help direct our actions over the next year.



Patricia Johnston

Individually, we share information with the public on Alberta Health Services initiatives, and we gather input from these communities to share with Alberta Health Services. Our council members attend and represent their communities at events where public input on matters pertaining to health is requested.

Council meetings are rotated to different communities throughout the Yellowhead East region to give the public in the area an opportunity to attend, and our members an opportunity to understand the unique challenges and issues within our service area. We welcome public participation at these events and hope to see increased attendance at future meetings.

The Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council will continue to be represented provincially at the Council of Chairs and will also, where practical, collaborate with other councils when common issues are identified.

Sincerely,

Patricia Johnston, Chair
Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council

About us

2016 -2017 Council Members

Current Members

Patricia	Johnston (Chair)	Camrose
Gary	Duffett (Vice Chair)	Metiskow
Elna	Eidsvik	Vermilion
Doug	Mackay	Camrose
Deb	McMann	Innisfree
Ken	McNeil	Wainwright
Glenys	Reeves	Lloydminster
Taneen	Rudyk	Vegreville

Past Members

Wendy	Bannister	Amisk
Patricia	Carey, former Chair	Vermilion
Andrei	Dolgrirev	Vegreville
Ellen	Lefsrud	Viking
Morris	Smith	Lloydminster
Martha	Waldorf	Daysland



Council members gather in Edmonton for Annual Fall Forum

5

new members
were appointed

5

public meetings in
Vermilion, Wainwright,
Bashaw and Viking
with participation from
zone leadership

Topics on the minds of our council and community members

- Long range planning – participation through membership on the core committee and in engagement sessions with stakeholders
- Member recruitment
- Increase collaboration with local resources - we are interested in connecting with local community groups, Primary Care Networks and municipalities to forge relationships with a broader range of Central Zone residents to help bridge gaps in service delivery
- Addiction and mental health – council is interested in understanding the services and treatment options available in Central Zone so that gaps can be identified and it can lend its support where appropriate
- Physician recruitment – this is of particular interest in some of the more rural communities in the region; members attended the annual Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) conference in Vermilion and look forward to participation at future conferences

What we are proud of

Engaging with the public

- We connected with staff at the Onion Lake Cree Nation Health Centre to share information about the council and invite them to participate in future meetings.
- We participated in community network meetings in Lamont, Daysland and Two Hills to discuss services at a local level and to identify gaps. Participants included Mayors, Reeves, Primary Care Networks, and program managers.
- We shared an overview of the role and direction of the council at the Town of Bashaw council meeting.
- We hosted and participated in long range planning engagement sessions, and provided feedback on the Alberta Health Services 15 year health plan.

Providing feedback and advice to Alberta Health Services

- Our members provided input which was incorporated into the Central Zone's long range plan.
- We advocated for increased hemodialysis services in the zone that helped in the resulting expansion of services at the Lloydminster Hospital.
- We supported looking at more ways to connect with Indigenous populations in the region.
- We supported discussions between Alberta Health Services and stakeholders in Provost to determine a solution for the physician medical building.
- Our members participated in Rural Community Awareness meetings, where local service providers share updates on health, emergency and social services in the area.
- We participated in a healthcare system privacy focus group to provide recommendations for areas of improvement and committed to an on-going focus on privacy issues.
- We expressed satisfaction of members and community members with the use of Wayfinders in our local hospitals to reduce stress on patients and families. Wayfinders help hospital visitors in need of navigation assistance, and give verbal instructions, walk them to their destinations and provide wheelchair assistance.

A look ahead

As we look ahead for the next year, our work plan is focused on ensuring members are educated about services available in Central Zone so we can relay information to the public. We also look forward to hosting a municipal leaders forum with stakeholders from throughout the northeast section of Central Zone.

Priorities

- An effort to rebalance resource allocation to a long-term view by learning the resources available in each local community to increase understanding of areas of need.
- Help to ensure access to mental health in schools, and better understand the needs in the areas of early recognition and proactive intervention for infants, children and youth. We will also engage with the Provincial Advisory Council for Addiction and Mental Health.
- Improve understanding of the levels of care and how they are defined in the areas of continuity of care and long term care.
- Provide feedback on or participate in emerging issues or initiatives, including supporting the move to online medical records.

Get involved

Think of the difference you can make to the health and well-being of your family, friends, neighbours and community by sharing your thoughts and ideas with Alberta Health Services. Get involved:

- Attend an upcoming [Health Advisory Council meeting](#).
- [Make a presentation at a council meeting](#) on a health area of interest or concern.
- Think about volunteering your time as a council member. Recruitment drives happen annually. Members are appointed for three-year terms.

Connect with us:

- [Info on Community Engagement](#)
- yellowheadeast@ahs.ca
- [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)