

AHS COMPETENCIES

putting our values into action



- take responsibility
- eager to learn
- recognize my emotions



- show kindness
- communicate effectively
- work with others



- stand up for safety
- commit to quality service
- act with purpose



Click on one of the nine competencies to learn more

Our values are foundational to who we are—they inspire, empower and guide us in how we work together with patients, clients, families and each other. AHS values are part of the DNA of who we are as an organization.

Living our values of compassion, accountability, respect, excellence and safety is an important part of performance at AHS and our AHS competencies translate our values into actions. Together, our values and competencies give us a picture of what

we believe in and how we should act. Values can take shape in many ways, depending on each of our own personal experiences, and our competencies help clarify expectations on how we act across every role—staff, physicians and volunteers.

Our greatest strength, and the key to our success, is our people. Our AHS values and competencies guide us so we can all contribute to a safe, healthy, inclusive workplace, reach our full potential, and improve patient and family experiences.



Included in this guide:

- the nine AHS competencies
- examples of what they look like in action
- questions to help you reflect on your performance and areas of growth
- suggestions on how to put the competencies into practice

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Our people, patients and families have made it clear that it's not just about what we do, but also *how* we do it. Our behaviours affect how we work together, the care and services we provide, and our relationships with others.

AHS competencies are sets of behaviours that clarify expectations for performance across every role. They guide us by showing how we can act in three areas: knowing ourselves, caring together and contributing daily. There are three competencies under each area with three behaviours that describe the competency in action.

Competencies clarify expectations

Whether we're applying for a job with AHS, are new to the organization, or have been here for years, AHS competencies will be part of everything we do.

AHS competencies work hand-in-hand with other professional, occupational and leadership competencies that are needed to meet our job requirements. These requirements may vary depending on where we are and what we do. AHS competencies help to define expectations that are common to all of us.

In addition to AHS competencies, here are some examples of other competencies used within AHS:

- *LEADS in a Caring Environment* is the framework used to develop and strengthen leadership abilities.

- Professional and occupational competencies are the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform your job duties. *Professional Practice in Action* is another tool that helps AHS healthcare professionals create quality outcomes and positive patient and family experiences.

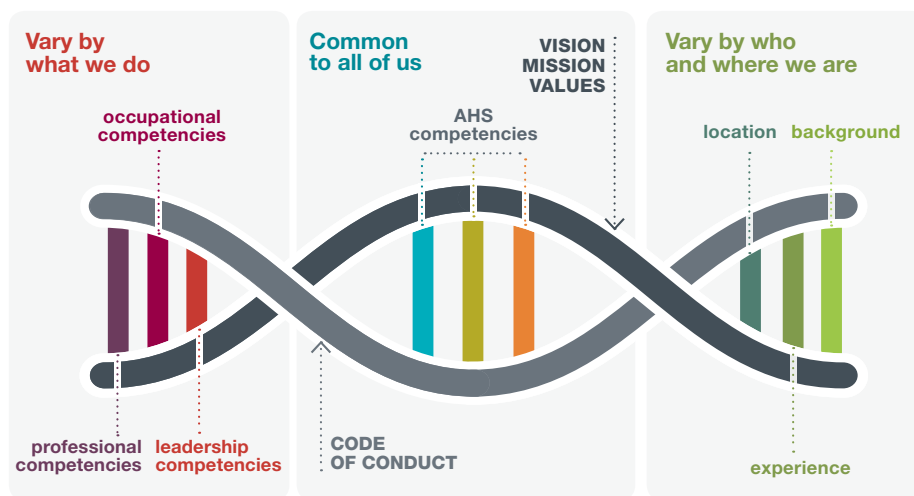
AHS competencies empower each of us to own our performance as we reflect, seek feedback and create plans for growth and development.

Competencies strengthen our ability to provide quality care and services

Identifying the behaviours that contribute to successful performance gives us a common language and shared understanding of what is expected when we provide care and services. Use our AHS competencies when:

- talking about growth and development
- recognizing success
- seeking or giving feedback
- looking for ways to enhance team culture
- making hiring decisions

Alongside our values, AHS competencies will be a common thread in the processes for how we hire, develop and recognize our people. This includes questions we ask in interviews, what we look for in candidates, the learning programs we design, how we coach people, and how we celebrate their successes.





AHS COMPETENCIES



know myself

how we reflect and look for opportunities to grow

take responsibility

- own my decisions and actions
- follow through on my commitments
- acknowledge and try to fix my mistakes

eager to learn

- own my growth and development
- seek and use feedback for self-improvement
- learn from my experiences

recognize my emotions

- notice how my emotions affect others
- stay calm and respectful in difficult situations
- focus on finding solutions



care together

how we treat others and work together

show kindness

- consider and respond to others' needs
- understand and respect others' differences
- be friendly, helpful and caring

communicate effectively

- seek others' opinions and perspectives
- provide timely, complete and appropriate information
- adapt to meet others' needs and to be understood

work with others

- build positive relationships
- work together to get things done
- encourage and appreciate others



contribute daily

how we make a difference and achieve our goals

stand up for safety

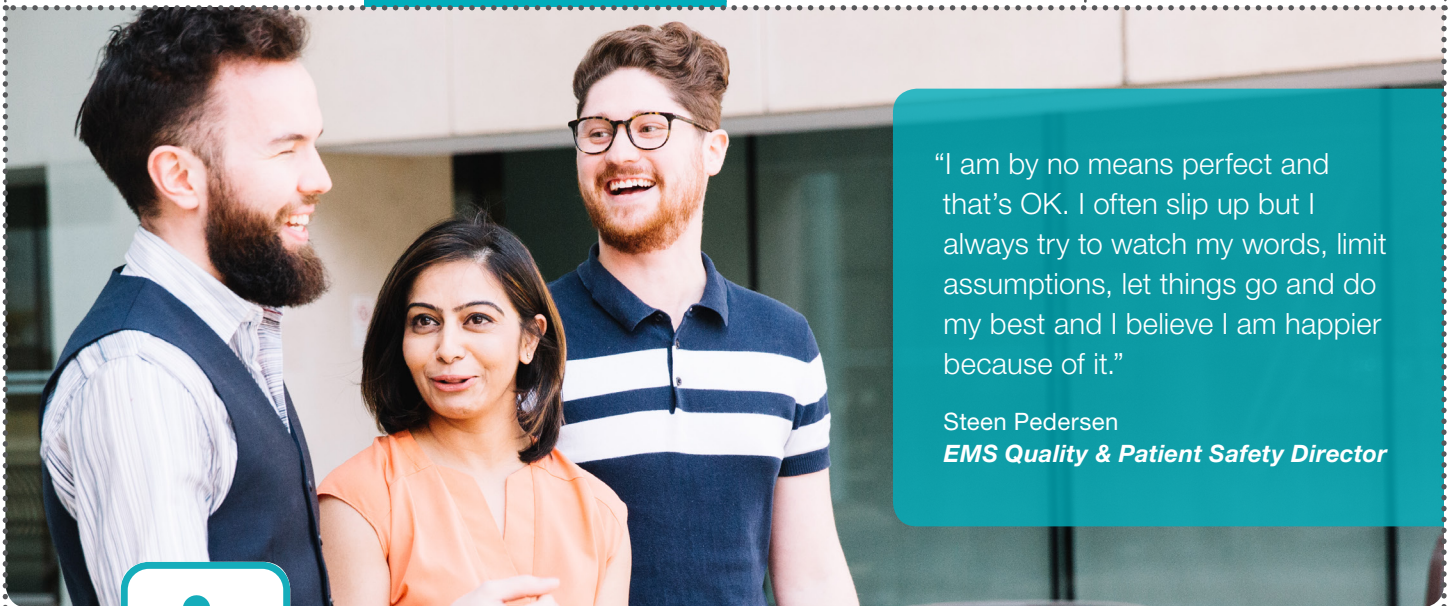
- follow safety protocols and standards
- be alert for hazards and speak up
- share safety knowledge with others

commit to quality service

- strive to understand clients' needs
- focus on what matters to clients
- look for ways to improve our services

act with purpose

- make decisions in a timely manner
- embrace new ideas and ways of working
- move forward and adjust as needed



“I am by no means perfect and that’s OK. I often slip up but I always try to watch my words, limit assumptions, let things go and do my best and I believe I am happier because of it.”

Steen Pedersen
EMS Quality & Patient Safety Director



take responsibility

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> own my decisions and actions 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I take responsibility for the things I do.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Denying that I did something.	<p><i>When have I acknowledged my decisions and actions? What holds me back?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow through on my commitments 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I do what I say and keep my promises.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Making excuses when I haven't completed a work assignment.	<p><i>Would others describe me as dependable? Why or why not?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledge and try to fix my mistakes 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I own up to my part when things go wrong.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blaming others when things go wrong.	<p><i>When I made a mistake, how did I respond? Did I own up to it and try to fix it?</i></p>



How I can grow

- Think about how I take responsibility for my own actions. What helps or hinders me?
- Ask for feedback from co-workers and my supervisor on how dependable I am.
- Access learning to enhance my personal accountability.



Putting this into practice

- Participate in regular conversations with your leader and co-workers about your performance.
- Discuss and report in the Reporting & Learning System all care-related adverse events and close calls.
- Use respectful workplace resources to help you address a workplace issue or conflict with a co-worker.

“Two of our NICU nurses presented education on skin-to-skin care to their Obstetrics colleagues. The team really jumped on board and have become extremely strong advocates for skin-to-skin care for our moms and babies. It’s now a standard of practice at our site.”

Candice Edey
Executive Associate



eager to learn

behaviours

What it can look like

What it doesn't look like

How am I doing?

- **own my own growth and development**

I keep up to date with leading/best practices.

Not making time for development activities.

What have I done recently to grow and develop?

- **seek and use feedback for self-improvement**

I ask others about how I am doing in communicating effectively.

Becoming defensive when given feedback.

How have I considered others' feedback so that I can grow?

- **learn from my experiences**

I think about my work and look at what went well and how to improve.

Making the same mistakes over and over.

How do I use my experiences as opportunities to learn?



How I can grow

- Think about ways I can grow and develop.
- Seek feedback on my strengths and where I can improve.
- Explore opportunities, and/or stretch assignments with my leader.



Putting this into practice

- Use multi-source feedback tools and informal conversations to help seek feedback.
- Develop a learning/development plan and review it regularly.
- Learn about Knowledge Resource Services to find resources on evidence-informed decision-making and quality patient care.

“We’re good at putting on a uniform and disguising how we feel. If we sit at that revved-up state and don’t give ourselves time to come down, our stress response is really affected. Having time to de-stress allows us to calm down the system—and tap into an area where we can make good judgment calls once we’re back on the job.”

Molly Varga
AHS peer support worker



recognize my emotions

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> notice how my emotions affect others 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I can describe how I am feeling.	<input type="checkbox"/> Allowing my emotions to negatively impact my actions.	<i>Am I aware of how I come across to others?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stay calm and respectful in difficult situations 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I use positive “self-talk” in difficult situations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Reacting in a way that makes a difficult situation even worse.	<i>What helps me stay composed? What causes me to lose composure?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on finding solutions 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I consider multiple options when problem solving.	<input type="checkbox"/> Assuming that there is always a right and wrong.	<i>How do I work toward finding solutions? How do I support my co-workers to do the same?</i>



How I can grow

- Take the time for quiet reflection to consider how my emotions and behaviours help or hinder me.
- Identify what causes me to have a strong reaction.
- Learn more about emotional intelligence in the workplace.



Putting this into practice

- Take advantage of the AHS resources that support health and wellness.
- Use the *Change the Conversation: Developing Self-Awareness* resource to help you understand how your actions impact others.
- Debrief with everyone involved following emotionally charged events.



“It’s connections. It’s hearing Blackfoot spoken. It’s learning about traditional practice or historical things...we ask participants to check in and we measure their happiness, anxiety and energy. Overwhelmingly people leave feeling happier.”

Heidi Davis
AHS Recreation Therapist



show kindness

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider and respond to others' needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I take the time to offer help to others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assuming you know what is best for someone. 	<p><i>How do I show that I am attentive to others' needs?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand and respect for others' differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I show interest in learning more about my co-workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Criticizing or judging others' behaviour. 	<p><i>What beliefs do I have about others who are different from me?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be friendly, helpful and caring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I greet patients and families in our facilities and assist with way-finding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responding to a request in an impatient, abrupt tone. 	<p><i>How do I contribute to a caring atmosphere at work?</i></p>



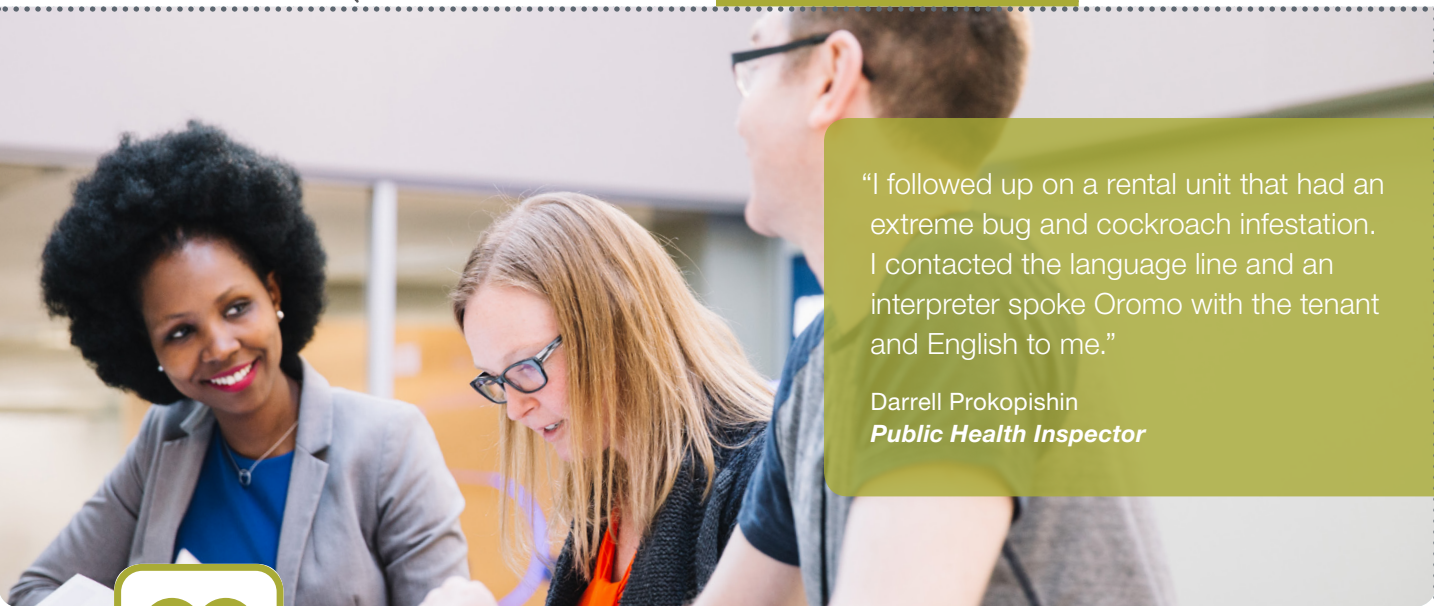
How I can grow

- Start noticing the kind acts of others. Look at what they do and how they consider others' needs.
- Notice how often I take the time to think about another person's perception before I make a judgement.
- Check out Change the Conversation and Diversity & Inclusion resources on Insite to learn how to recognize our differences.



Putting this into practice

- Ask co-workers, patients/clients and families what matters to them.
- Offer welcoming words and a smile.
- Be willing to examine my biases, including events or people that trigger certain feelings and how they influence my behaviour.



“I followed up on a rental unit that had an extreme bug and cockroach infestation. I contacted the language line and an interpreter spoke Oromo with the tenant and English to me.”

Darrell Prokopishin
Public Health Inspector



communicate effectively

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seek others' opinions and perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I listen and ask questions to understand what the other person is saying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interrupting others or stopping them from fully explaining. 	<p><i>Do I try to understand others before putting my ideas forward? How can I do better?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide timely, complete and appropriate information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I take the time to verify information is correct before sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being late or not giving regular updates. 	<p><i>How do I ensure I communicate in a timely manner?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adapt to meet others' needs and be understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I provide information in a variety of ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using slang, abbreviations or language which others may not understand. 	<p><i>What do I do to make sure others can understand me?</i></p>



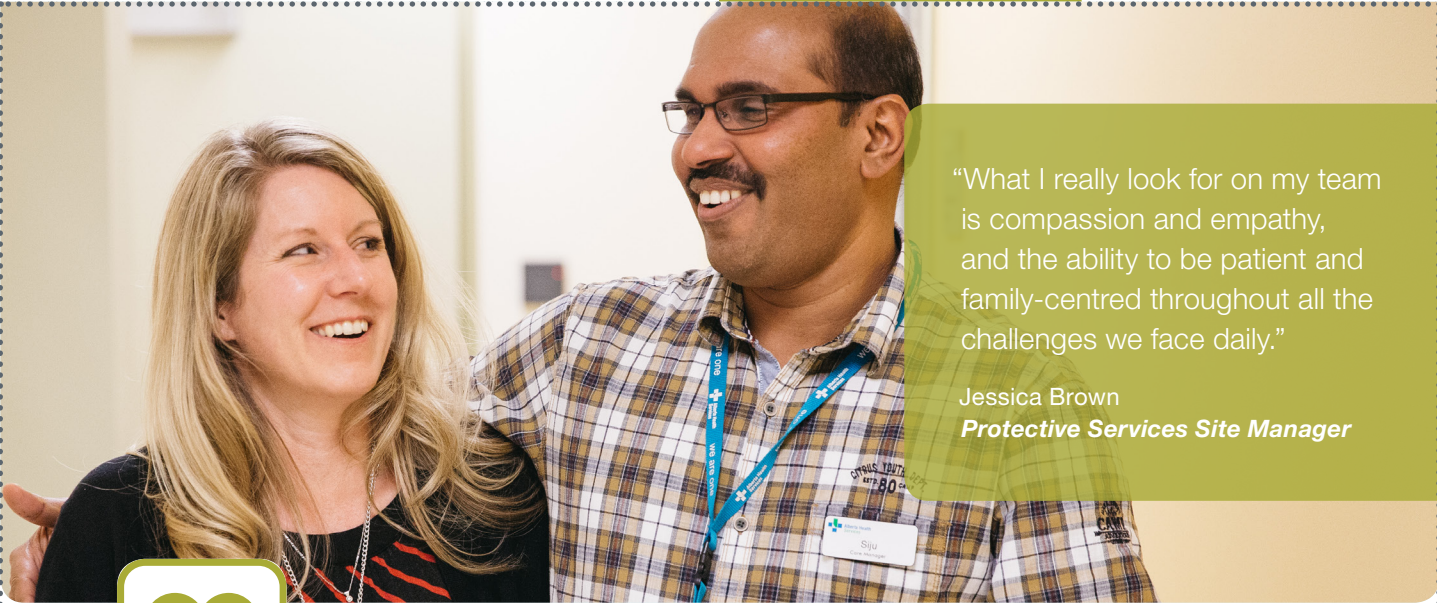
How I can grow

- Think about how effective I am in seeking others' opinions.
- Ask others how they like to provide and receive communication.
- Look for learning opportunities in the areas of communication styles, diversity and inclusion, and patient and family-centered care.



Putting this into practice

- Use the Change the Conversation resource on email communication for teams to help you send clear and respectful messages.
- Use “NOD” (name, occupation and duty) when you interact with a client.
- Use “check back/read back” to confirm understanding.



“What I really look for on my team is compassion and empathy, and the ability to be patient and family-centred throughout all the challenges we face daily.”

Jessica Brown
Protective Services Site Manager



work with others

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build positive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I try to get to know the people I work with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Participating in, encouraging or tolerating gossip. 	<p><i>What can I do to build better relationships at work?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work together to get things done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I contribute positively to the team and support others who might need help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Being overly competitive or needing to be right. 	<p><i>What are the things I do to contribute to our team's work?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage and appreciate others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I take time to tell others they are doing a good job. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Not seeing value in different perspectives. 	<p><i>What is something I do to encourage others to share their ideas or thoughts?</i></p>



How I can grow

- Think of someone I consider an effective team member. Notice what they do to develop good working relations.
- Seek feedback on how I am contributing to the team and what I could do better.
- Learn about communication techniques that help everyone feel included.



Putting this into practice

- Send an e-card or note to thank a co-worker.
- Take part in a team conversation about staff engagement and discuss the Our People survey.
- Take time to participate in team building activities.



“We really stressed to our people that, at AHS, our priority is fixing the problem, not pointing fingers. We wanted people to feel safe when they report an adverse event.”

Dr. Verna Yiu
AHS President and CEO



stand up for safety

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow safety protocols and standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I am aware of the emergency response codes and know how to respond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Feeling that standards are optional and are only for new or inexperienced staff. 	<p><i>What is my level of awareness of the safety protocols and standards in my area or work?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be alert for hazards and speak up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> When I see something that could harm others, I act or speak up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ignoring risks and hazards because it feels like it isn't my job. 	<p><i>What are some of the tools I use to speak up when I see a hazard or safety concern that could impact those around me?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share safety knowledge with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I take time to talk with clients and co-workers about risks and concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assuming everyone is aware of the risks associated with a task. 	<p><i>How do my actions reflect the importance of sharing/reporting hazards or safety concerns?</i></p>



How I can grow

- Notice the high-risk activities in my area. Then consider ways to keep myself, my team and clients safe.
- Have a conversation with a co-worker or leader about how to improve situations where safety protocols or standards are not being followed.
- Take Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) education in MyLearningLink.



Putting this into practice

- Offer to present a safety moment at a team meeting.
- Report worker and client hazards, near misses/close calls and incidents in MySafetyNet (MSN) or Reporting & Learning System (RLS).
- Comply with and advocate for hand-hygiene best practice.



“Having a positive impact on our system’s ability to deliver the right services in the right place at the right time. Being responsive to feedback and finding solutions that make things better for the people we serve keeps me jazzed.”

Edith Zuidhof-Knoop
Addictions and Mental Health Director



commit to quality service

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strive to understand clients' needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I seek information to understand my clients' needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assuming what is best for clients and failing to ask what matters to them. 	<p><i>What am I doing to understand how to best serve my clients' needs?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on what matters to clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I ask questions and offer choices to ensure I focus on what matters to my client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Developing plans without considering the clients goals. 	<p><i>What are some of the formal and informal ways I find out about the needs of my clients?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> look for ways to improve our services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I share ideas on ways to make services better or safer with someone in leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not being open to changing the way it has always been done. 	<p><i>How do I show my commitment to improving care/services to my clients?</i></p>



How I can grow

- Reflect upon how often I ask clients what matters to them, and how I respond.
- Have a conversation with my leader on the ways I can support innovation and quality in my area.
- Watch a video on the AHS YouTube channel to hear perspectives from patients, families and clients.



Putting this into practice

- Ask your leader about how you can participate in local improvement initiatives.
- Enroll in an Alberta Improvement Way (AIW) workshop to learn more about improving processes and problem solving.
- Ask your leader about patient/client experience data to inform improvements.



“It’s so exciting to be among the first to make this change. ConnectCare is going to be a big challenge that requires us all to work closely together.”

Cathy Osborne
Senior Operating Officer



act with purpose

behaviours	What it can look like	What it doesn't look like	How am I doing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make decisions in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I am able to balance the need for more information against the need to take action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Avoiding making decisions. 	<p><i>How comfortable am I in making decisions? Do I jump to decisions too quickly or do I stall?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> embrace new ideas and ways of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I actively support efforts to improve processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Giving up and going back to the old way if the new way presents an obstacle. 	<p><i>How do I respond when a new idea or way of working is implemented or suggested?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> move forward and adjust as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I participate in change initiatives and can be flexible if there are challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Acting impatient or frustrated during times of uncertainty or ambiguity. 	<p><i>How might I support my team when they seem to be stuck or unsure of what to do?</i></p>



How I can grow

- Notice how I feel when an idea for improvement is suggested and take notice of how others react.
- Have a conversation with someone about a big change that is happening and discuss how we can support each other.
- Learn more about the AHS improvement way and other improvement practices.



Putting this into practice

- Take action when a client or co-worker may be at risk.
- Learn more about Connect Care and support this change.
- Use the change management best practice and/or the PROSCI methodologies.