

Greater Edmonton

2017/18 Annual Report



Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors

Healthcare is a people business and Alberta Health Services (AHS) alone cannot build a healthier province. Through the work of our Advisory Councils, all Albertans have an opportunity to have a say in what we do at AHS; and that's vitally important to our organization.



Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn

Council members bring the voices of Albertans to AHS whether through the geographically located Health Advisory Councils or the program-focused Provincial Advisory Councils and Wisdom Council. They build relationships with Albertans and keep the lines of communication open. They are our partners, and their feedback has helped us make the right decisions on how we care for Albertans and how we deliver health services. Their efforts continue to make a positive difference in people's lives every day.

As Chair of the Community Engagement Committee of the Board, I've had the pleasure to connect with many Council members and see their work evolve and expand over the past year. There are direct links between their efforts and the advancements we've made as a health system overall, and in communities across the province. Here are just a few examples:

- **Connect Care** - members offered insights about the system, and had opportunities to join three different committees to help shape what the system would look like.
- **Zone healthcare planning** - members participated in building Calgary and Central zone healthcare plans, and sharing specific needs for the communities they represent.
- **PCN governance committees** - members have been invited to join zone committees.
- **Continuing care** - through interviews, council chairs provided comments and suggestions to help build continuing care plans and solutions in the zones.
- **AHS Health Plan and Business Plan** – members offered perspectives and suggestions into the plan; their input shaped the goals, objectives and performance measures, particularly in the areas of long term care and mental health. They also actively shared the plan with communities across Alberta.
- **Special engagement meetings for Albertans** - many of the Councils had the opportunity to host engagement activities from Open Houses to forums to information sessions, both in person or by video conference.

Other milestones include adopting a new look and brand, carefully developed work plans, and attending the Annual Advisory Council Fall Forum to engage about healthcare issues and connect with each other.

On behalf of the AHS Board of Directors, our leadership team, and our workforce, thank you for all you do. We look forward to continuing to work with you on improving healthcare for Albertans.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn,
Vice Chair, Board of Directors
Chair, Community Engagement Committee of the Board
AHS

Message from the Chair Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council



Teresa O'Riordan

Over the past year, Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council (GEHAC), with the support of AHS Community Engagement staff, identified and scheduled meeting presentations that addressed and responded to the concerns identified by members of our communities. Interestingly, these concerns closely aligned with the priorities set out by AHS. We have been fortunate to have many meetings in venues that reflect the health theme of that meeting. This makes the presentations more concrete and relevant as we are hosted in a site where programming and services are offered. We extend many thanks to all the sites that showed us such generosity and hospitality.

Some of the themes we heard from communities include a need for:

- Mental health and addiction services to be accessible, culturally appropriate and a good fit for all people across the life span, regardless of where they are in their recovery journey.
- Communicating personal health information for continuity in healthcare service delivery.
- Updates on AHS infrastructure and capital projects.
- Coordination of health services between Primary Care Networks (PCNs) with AHS.
- Capacity building initiatives to address gaps that target increased complexity in children's health and mental health.
- Addressing the ongoing, chronic urgent needs of seniors:
 - Access to quality and affordable continuing care options; and
 - Waitlist for hip and knee replacements.

GEHAC promotes AHS' continued commitment to synergistic collaboration and system-level access and integration of knowledge. Working together with AHS and communities is a positive approach to address the complex health issues faced by Albertans and the complexity of a single healthcare system in our province. We are committed to supporting AHS with evidence-based, actioned innovations as "systems are relentless recruiters of the status quo" and the status quo does not address today's complex realities.

Thank you to our members for their personal and professional contributions. Members have been generous with their time, energy and expertise. I am humbled and graced by the invaluable insight and input of our members as they shared the perspectives of their communities.

On behalf of all our members, I extend our sincere appreciation to the Edmonton Zone Executive Leadership. Our members have important stories and community feedback to share. Deb Gordon, Dr. David Zygun and Dr. Chris Sikora have been exceptional listeners – respectful, reflective and responsive. As a leadership team, you have also been generous in sharing cutting edge information, providing operational updates, and responding to questions and concerns. We are indebted to each of you for your dedication and compassion. Special thanks to our Advisory Council Coordinator, Maya Atallah. You make this all possible!

Looking forward to continuing our work together,

Teresa O'Riordan
Chair, Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council

About our Council

2017/2018 Council Members

Current Members

Teresa	O’Riordan (Chair)	Morinville
Sheila	Raffray (Vice Chair)	Edmonton
Edith	Baraniecki	Edmonton
Sharon	Brintnell	Spruce Grove
Victor	Do	Edmonton
Fahim	Hassan	Edmonton
Anahi	Johnson	Edmonton
Alexander	Kuznetsov	Edmonton
Shirley	Munro	Fallis
Iqra	Nazir	Edmonton
Ryan	Payne	Edmonton
Fahim	Rahman	Edmonton
Lawrence	Tymko	Edmonton

Past Members

Marlene Pedrick Sherwood Park



Left to right: Sharon Brintnell, Edith Baraniecki, Sheila Raffray, Shirley Munro, Lawrence Tymko, Teresa O’Riordan, Victor Do, Ryan Payne, Marlene Pedrick, Anahi Johnson, Fahim Hassan

Missing: Alexander Kuznetsov, Fahim Rahman, Iqra Nazir

Priorities for our Council

Advocate/advise for right service, right place, and right language

Our Council held five meetings and the meetings were themed to address our priorities. We had engaging dialogue and provided feedback to presentors. Presentations included the following topics and information from these organizations:

- Stollery Children's Hospital
- Children's mental health services
- Translating Emergency Knowledge to Kids
- Primary care and PCNs
- Addiction and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council
- Misericordia Hospital – Covenant Health
- Southwest Hospital and Health Campus
- Alberta Bone and Joint Health Institute
- Enhancing Care in the Community
- Hub Lab project
- University of Alberta branding

Increase community engagement, promotion of Council, and member education

Our Council membership is comprised of representatives from various communities, populations and networks. Members respectfully share their perspectives regarding topics presented, bringing valuable insights and community feedback to AHS.

We recognize the importance of storytelling in connecting messages with people. Realizing the importance of the digital age and trending research, members of our Council attended a session with AHS President and CEO Dr. Verna Yiu called 'The Power of Storytelling to Improve Healthcare'. Dr. Yiu shared how the use of digital storytelling was helping AHS staff appreciate the power of relationships in promoting outstanding patient outcomes and experiences.

As a result we have elected to proceed with our own digital storytelling for increasing public awareness of our Council and to invite community members to consider applying to become a member during recruitment initiatives.



Left to right: Edith Baraniecki, Victor Do, Dr. Verna Yiu, Teresa O'Riodan and Maya Atallah at the Power of Storytelling to Improve Healthcare session.

Engaging the public

Our Council is well-represented across many areas of diversity - age, gender, culture, subject matter expertise and family life stages. We are connected to a multitude of networks both personally and professionally. These connections to networks provide a robust source of input during round table sessions at our meetings. However we are also aware that we are missing the first person voice(s) from Indigenous communities, persons with disabilities, the homeless and those who face multiple barriers.

Our Council members also attend seminars each year where they learn and gather additional perspectives. Some of the seminars we attended were Understanding Addictions, Medical Cannabis, and two seminars about the opioid crisis.

We also engaged with vulnerable populations this past year. We attended the May and October Homeless Connect sessions at the Shaw Conference Centre in Edmonton. The Homeless Connect session provides free goods and services plus information to the homeless and low income members of the public. We engaged with the public members in attendance, and also promoted awareness of our Council with the other organizations present. We feel this is an effective way to touch base with a population that may use health services more often. Some of the feedback gathered included:

- Individuals having bad experiences in emergency rooms, feeling judged because of appearance, and feeling intimidated.
- Lack of family physician or transportation to clinics.
- Struggling to get help, and not knowing how to seek help.
- Feeling intimidated, not being able to get help for sexual abuse and physical abuse, and being unable to get treatment and assessments.
- Requesting healthcare providers work in shelters and provide physical, mental health and addiction services for the homeless.
- Lack of information about services available and how they can be accessed.

Providing feedback and advice to AHS

We provided input to three examples of cases from the AHS' Ethical Framework during an engagement session with AHS' Clinical Ethics team and the Community Engagement department.

The Chair was asked to provide feedback about long term care services. This was part of a long term care audit which included a policy and protocol review. Public perspectives were gathered from 15 Chairs and considered in the audit.

We provided feedback to Edmonton Zone leadership about services and the future of healthcare at the proposed Southwest Hospital and Health Campus. We also shared ideas about other target audiences to engage with.

A Council member participated in a focus group to provide feedback on marketing concepts for messaging to address the opioid crisis.

Topics on the minds of our Council and community members

Through our experiences and learnings from our networks and the meaningful dialogues at our meetings, we developed a list of themes we heard throughout the year including:

- **Effective mental health services across the life span**
 - Special attention needs to be given to populations including immigrant/refugee, Indigenous, seniors, child/infant trauma exposed, medically complex.
- **Addictions**
 - Services related to prevention and intervention are needed, tailored for cultural diversity, dual diagnosis, harm reduction, and differing functioning ability.
- **Access to the right health services**
 - Provide care at the right time, in the right place; urban, rural, remote and on-reserve.
- **Coordination of research, education, information and services**
 - Ensure this is done across specialties, disciplines, and ministries.
- **Supportive housing that meets specific needs of specific adult populations**
 - Involve many, including those with early onset dementia, and low functioning, multi-barrier, dual diagnosis, and justice involved/street involved patients.



For more information about Health Advisory Councils, visit ahs.ca

A look ahead

This past year was very productive. We were pleased to have Deb Gordon, Vice President and Chief Health Operations Officer, Dr. David Zygun, Edmonton Zone Medical Director and Dr. Chris Sikora, Medical Officer of Health present at our meetings. The Edmonton Leadership Team listened respectfully, asked clarifying questions and provided timely follow up to questions and concerns. We are well-supported with their attendance and active participation in our meetings.

We built a relationship with Covenant Health when we held a meeting at the Misericordia Hospital in November. Covenant Health is interested in working with us to gather our public perspectives on a number of projects. We look forward to the opportunities.

We look forward to continuing our method of strategically hosting our meetings in locations that resonate with the theme of each meeting. We will focus on seniors' health, rural services, vulnerable populations, and heart health over the next year.

Our overarching goal for the next year is to make a meaningful contribution to moving the dial on the importance of including the community voice in decision making. Our Chair is providing this strong voice and also offering input into the development of the Advisory Councils' Fall Forum. We believe that the AHS liaison to our HAC, Deb Gordon, can also be a strong voice for these efforts with the AHS senior leadership.

In conclusion, we leave you with this quote from Leroy Hood:

“Don't underestimate the power of your vision to change the world. Whether that world is your office, your community, an industry or a global movement, you need to have a core belief that what you contribute can fundamentally change the paradigm or way of thinking about problems.”

Learn more

- Visit ahs.ca and search Advisory Councils
- Email greateredmonton@ahs.ca
- Check out our Twitter and Facebook accounts, by searching AHS Advisory Councils

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.
- Delivering a presentation at a Council meeting on a health area of interest or concern.
- Volunteering your time as a Council member. Recruitment drives happen annually. Members are appointed for three-year terms.



Greater Edmonton
Health Advisory Council

Healthy Albertans.
Healthy Communities.
Together.