

# Patients & Citizens Help Design the Future of Surgery in Alberta

Article by Ovsanna Najaryan, Senior Planner, Surgery SCN

Alberta Health Services' Surgery Strategic Clinical Network™ (SCN) is a community of people who want to improve surgical care for all Albertans. In the summer of 2017, we began development of a new plan to guide our work for the next three years. We needed a plan that was short, clear and easy for anyone to read.

It was important to involve Albertans in the process, so we designed a detailed consultation plan that included a wide range of stakeholders including patients, citizens, physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, administrators, and policy makers. The consultation process included online videos and a survey, a social media campaign, visits to 16 hospitals, a postcard mail-out, and a series of focus groups and in-depth phone interviews.

*“Having Patient Advisors at a strategic planning and decision making table is a relatively recent occurrence at AHS. I believe it demonstrates the sincere desire for a quantum cultural shift towards patient and family centred care for all Albertans.”*

*Phil Bobawsky, Surgery SCN  
Patient & Family Advisor*

*“As a Patient Advisor who has worked with the Surgery SCN for the past 18 months, it has been a breath of fresh air to be actively involved in such an exciting project such as our Transformational Roadmap (TRM).*

*By working together as peers, together we can change how surgery is viewed, understood and embraced by all Albertans.”*

*Garry Laxdal, Surgery SCN  
Patient & Family Advisor*

We reached over 1500 members of our community, including 136 citizens and 110 patients and family members. The median satisfaction rating for our plan was 8 on a 10-point scale and the approval rating for our key objectives was 98-100%.

Our community consultation process was successful and confirmed strong community support for our plan. The community also provided invaluable advice on implementation.

The Alberta Surgery Plan can be downloaded [here](#) or from the [Surgery SCN website](#).



(left to right)

**Front row:** Garry Laxdal, Tracy Berryman, Ovsanna Najaryan, Tim Baron, Sanjay Beesoon, Paule Poulin

**Back row:** Dr. Jonathan White, Bryan Atwood

**Front row (seated):** Alison Nelson, Stacey Litvinchuk, Jill Robert