

Primary Health Care Integration Network FAQs

What is the Primary Health Care Integration Network (PHCIN)?

The Primary Health Care Integration Network (PHCIN) is a customized Strategic Clinical Network™ (SCN), focused on improving transitions of care between primary care providers (including Primary Care Networks and member clinics) and acute care, emergency departments, specialized services and other community services. Over time, the scope will expand to address other PHC integration priorities.

Who does the PHCIN work with?

Placed within the AHS Provincial Primary Health Care Program, the PHCIN works closely with several key partners, including patient/family advisors, AHS zones and provincial programs, Alberta Medical Association, PCNs, the Primary Care Alliance, SCNs, Alberta Health and academic partners. All integration initiatives will align with provincial and zone priorities to help enhance success in achieving improvements across the health system.

What does the PHCIN do?

Core functions of the PHCIN include:

1. Actively “broker” connections between PCNs, AHS zones and provincial programs, SCNs and other parties with need, expertise or resources related to care coordination and transitions in care.
2. Champion innovative solutions that will enhance care coordination and improve transitions in care for Albertans at risk of avoidable hospital admissions and emergency department visits.
3. Advance initiatives that improve care coordination by providing support resources and partnering with AHS zones and programs, PCNs and SCNs so that all available resources are leveraged and aligned.
4. Participate in PCN Evolution and other planning activities to ensure that care coordination and transitions in care initiatives are aligned with provincial priorities and Community and Primary Health Care Policy.
5. Coordinate the reporting of progress and impact of care coordination initiatives across Alberta.

What is the Coalition for Integration?

A Coalition for Integration was established to stimulate innovative thinking and solutions to integration challenges faced in Alberta. It provides advice on difficult integration challenges being addressed through the PHCIN, reviews and makes recommendations on how to strengthen proposed integration solutions from SCNs, informs and engages stakeholders across the broader PHC community on topics related to care coordination and improved transitions in care, and participates in the co-creation of emerging integration solutions.

The Coalition includes representatives of patients and families, health professions, community-based organizations, PHC delivery organizations, AHS zone operations and provincial programs, Alberta Health, Alberta Human Services and universities.

Provincial, zone and organizational committees are responsible for establishing priorities, while the Coalition provides advice on challenges and opportunities related to integration to achieve objectives. The Coalition does not make decisions regarding allocation of resources for the PHCIN.

How will Albertans benefit from the work of the PHCIN?

- Patients, families, caregivers and community members will be actively engaged with care providers and other partners to co-create innovative solutions for care coordination challenges.
- Community-based healthcare and social services are available when needed and more coordinated, resulting in less need for emergency department and hospital visits.
- Faster access to specialist care when needed.
- More proactive and coordinated follow-up care when leaving hospital.

How do we contact the PHCIN for more information?

Visit our website at: www.ahs.ca/phcin

Email us at PHC.IntegrationNetwork@ahs.ca