

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the role of the Wisdom Council?

The Wisdom Council will provide guidance and recommendations to Alberta Health Services on service delivery, program design and evaluation for province-wide, culturally appropriate Aboriginal health services across Alberta.

What will Wisdom Council members be expected to do?

The primary functions of the Wisdom Council include:

- Review and provide guidance on Alberta Health Services - wide priorities and strategies to improve health and wellness for First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban-based Indigenous people.
- Provide guidance on how Alberta Health Services programs/services can be adapted to meet the health needs of Indigenous people and to ensure services support traditional healing in primary, secondary and tertiary health service delivery.
- Identify issues, gaps and barriers to Indigenous people receiving equitable access to health services across the province and identify strategies to address them.
- Identify social, cultural and environmental determinants of health that facilitate and support improvements in Indigenous health and how these can be addressed.
- Provide guidance on health planning, implementation and evaluation through community engagement strategies that maximize effective internal and external stakeholder relationships and increase Indigenous community involvement with Alberta Health Services.
- Consider workforce development issues and make recommendations with respect to Indigenous workforce development and sustainability.
- Provide guidance and recommendations on Alberta Health Services workforce development to include improved cultural competence and cross-cultural relationships with health service delivery.

The Wisdom Council is also expected to:

- Develop an Annual Work Plan for its activities for review and approval of the Alberta Health Services Executive Committee; and
- Submit an Annual Report of their activities to the Alberta Health Services Executive Committee.

Will the Wisdom Council be responsible for dealing with patient complaints?

The Wisdom Council is not responsible for resolving patient care concerns. Alberta Health Services has well established processes and a Patient Relations Department which works with individuals and families to address concerns. Concerns, feedback or complaints about patient care should be directed to the Patient Relations Department.

Why was the Indigenous Wisdom Council established?

The Indigenous Wisdom Council was established as a strategy to ensure engagement and relationship building with Indigenous people to review and provide feedback on the development and ongoing implementation of priorities and actions to improve health outcomes for Indigenous people in Alberta. The Wisdom Council was set up to provide direct inputs into decision making in AHS through a reporting relationship with the Chief Executive Officer, AHS. The Wisdom Council, once established, will provide guidance and recommendations on the design, delivery and evaluation of province-wide, innovative, and culturally-appropriate health programs and services for Indigenous people in Alberta. Council members, who will be comprised of Indigenous people living in Alberta from the First Nations, Métis Nation/Settlements, and Inuit communities, will draw upon their traditional and cultural knowledge and practices in making recommendations for improvements in health equity, health service quality, access and delivery.

Who is eligible to become a Wisdom Council member?

Wisdom Council membership will include 20 individuals, who will be comprised of Indigenous people living in Alberta and selected to ensure a fair and equitable distribution across the province.

Representation can include:

- First Nation Elders, Traditional Knowledge Holders, Traditional Healers (includes on and off-reserve, status and non-status).
- Métis Elders, Traditional Knowledge Holders, Traditional Healers (includes on and off-settlement)
- Inuit Elders Traditional Knowledge Holders, Traditional Healers (includes those living in their community and beneficiaries of a land claim).

Stakeholder representation can include:

- Community and specifically youth representation, from Indigenous people living in Alberta.
- Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), for example Indigenous Friendship Centres.

How did AHS go about selecting Wisdom Council members?

The Aboriginal Health Program (Now the Provincial Indigenous Wellness Core) worked in conjunction with Indigenous communities in Alberta to recruit members. Each Treaty area in

Alberta was consulted, as was the Metis Nation of Alberta, the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs, Elders and others to establish the membership over the past 12 months.

Members were recognized and named by the respective First Nations, Métis Nation/Settlements, and Inuit Communities they represent. Ceremonial practices, blessings and appropriate protocols were used to support the council's development and implementation.

Are Council members paid?

Members of the Wisdom Committee serve in an advisory capacity and are entitled to remuneration for acting as members. Members will be reimbursed for pre-approved travel costs and ancillary costs related to meetings. All members of the Indigenous Wisdom Council will be eligible to receive an honorarium as approved by Alberta Health Services based on their exclusive and distinct expertise.

Why don't you have a representative from each Treaty? Or someone from Fort Chipewyan and other areas where Indigenous people have raised health concerns?

Health service delivery for Indigenous people requires targeted engagement to meet the complex, tradition based, culturally unique and multijurisdictional needs of the population. To adequately impact the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people, as outlined in research evidence, best practice and health outcome indicators, the strategy requires a collaborative approach that engages the diversity of Indigenous people in Alberta.

The Indigenous Wisdom Council was developed to provide advice and guidance to Alberta Health Services and not have a role in advocating for any one group or cause. Several bodies already exist to advocate and for areas where health gaps exist and AHS is involved and engaged in these endeavours along with Alberta Health and other federal and provincial bodies. Treaty Areas, Métis Settlement General Council and the Métis Nation of Alberta were advised and recommended to submit names to the council for possible appointment. Establishing a clear connection to the Provincial Indigenous Wellness Core) and the hiring of an Indigenous Health Engagement Advisor is in place to ensure ongoing engagement with all communities in Alberta.

Is the general public made aware of the recommendations of the Advisory Council?

The minutes, work plans and annual reports of the

Wisdom Council will be made available to the public as is practiced by other AHS advisory councils. The council will need to determine the process for opening their meetings to the public over the next few months.

What value is placed on the input of the Wisdom Council?

Alberta Health Services is committed to engagement and is developing a comprehensive community engagement strategy. Engaging Albertans is an integral part of health service delivery and allows for planning and delivery of health care to better respond to the needs of the community. Consequently, health care leaders will work closely with the Wisdom Council to ensure transparency and accountability in how cancer services are planned and delivered.

Where and how often do Wisdom Council meetings occur?

The Wisdom Committee shall meet at a minimum of twice per year but no more than four times per year. Location of the meetings will alternate between Calgary and Edmonton but other locations may be chosen if deemed necessary.

Where can more information be found about the Wisdom Council?

For more information, please visit <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/about/communityrelations.aspx> or contact Wisdom.Council@albertahealthservices.ca