

# David Thompson

## 2017/18 Annual Report



David Thompson  
Health Advisory Council

Healthy Albertans.  
Healthy Communities.  
**Together.**

## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



*Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn*

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.

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

### David Thompson Health Advisory Council



*Sandy Doze*

The role of the David Thompson Health Advisory Council (DTHAC) is to provide a link between community members in the DTHAC geographic area of Central Zone and provincial AHS leadership. Our major focus this year was building a team approach that would strengthen relationships between our communities and our DTHAC members and between our members and the Central Zone AHS leadership. Open and transparent communication between communities and AHS will support the delivery of effective, efficient and quality services to individuals across Central Zone.

Through informal and formal communications we heard many comments related to health services delivery in our area. Themes which occurred over and over were concerns with mental health and continuing care services, and issues with system navigation. An ongoing concern from our rural communities is the lack of transportation to and from urban areas for non-urgent health appointments.

We have shared the community views with Central Zone AHS leadership and with the Community Engagement Committee of the AHS Board through the Council of Chairs. Some examples of how our input made an impact include:

- Providing direct input into the Central Zone Health and Business Plan and the Central Zone Healthcare Plan ensuring your voices were heard.
- Discussing concerns related to navigation and primary health and the role of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) which resulted in a HAC member being appointed to the Central Zone PCN Board to provide a community perspective.
- Joining with the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) to establish community attraction and retention committees to help with recruitment and retention of physicians and health service professionals.

I would like to thank Central Zone AHS for including us in their planning activities and responding to our requests for information and/or clarification about health services in our Zone. Our Council members deserve a special thank you for their time and thoughtful, researched input into our Council work plan priorities, and in ensuring that we completed action steps that support our commitment to quality health service delivery for all individuals in Central Alberta.

We will continue to work on our community priorities in the next year and invite community input through public meetings, information sessions and municipal forums.

Sincerely,

Sandy Doze  
Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council



## Priorities and activities for our Council

### **Right service, right place, navigators, continuity of care, personal responsibility and community care**

- Council learned about four kinds of navigators: surgical, stroke, cancer, and PCNs.
- Council promoted various initiatives about personal responsibility: Choose wisely; Mental Health First Aid; Health Link; and MyHealth.Alberta.ca.
  - Council met with AHS about education materials to support personal responsibility for health.
  - Collaboration began with Yellowhead East HAC on personal responsibility initiatives.
  - Council learned about the seven PCNs and their services.
- Council learned about Connect Care (electronic health record) from Central Zone leadership and during the Advisory Councils' Fall Forum.

### **Equitable rural and urban access to addiction and mental health services, and reducing stigma**

- Council planned an interactive engagement session on addiction and mental health with Yellowhead East HAC to share information and support access, and share the list of mental health resources with the public.
- Mental Health First Aid – seven members of DTHAC took the Mental Health First Aid training.

### **Long term care: rural access, navigation across levels of care and infrastructure processes**

- Plans were developed together with AHS and Yellowhead HAC to hold a virtual information session at nine video conference sites in April to share information about continuing care, palliative care, and continuing care health service standards.

### **Timely access to physicians, nurse practitioners and other health professionals**

- Council learned about physician recruitment and nurse practitioner roles and opportunities.
- We also learned about the role of nurse practitioners with primary care networks and in other HAC areas.
- RhPAP shared information with us about attraction and retention.
- We attended community physician recruitment and retention committee meetings.

## Priorities continued

### **Provide feedback on or participate in emerging issues or initiatives**

- Council attended 29 sessions on Zone healthcare planning.
- Council met regularly with the Central Zone leadership, and our Chair met with the Chief Zone Officer monthly.
- Council began planning for a municipal leader's forum.
- A Council member was appointed to the Central Zone Primary Care Committee as a public member.
- Two Council members participated in AHS Connect Care as part of subject matter Councils, and as patient/family advisors.
- A Council member worked with AHS/public subcommittee related to hospital facility concerns and administrative changes.
- A Council member was part of the planning, implementation, and educational awareness committees for the Sylvan Lake Urgent Care Centre.

## **Key areas of concern for our Council:**

### **Mental Health services**

- Finding, accessing and receiving support through mental health treatment especially in the rural areas.

### **System navigation**

- Navigating through the system from general practitioner to hospital to specialists, and back to formal and informal community providers.

### **Continuing Care services**

- Lack of information about the breadth of services offered and how to access those services in the rural areas.

### **Transportation**

- Lack of transportation to and from urban areas for non-urgent health issues.

## Engaging the public

- Held four meetings in communities across the Council area and one meeting was held via video conference at numerous locations.
- 19 public members joined the meetings.
- Information was shared collectively by members with 18 networks.
- Council compiled a list of nine topics for engagement.
- Council planned two virtual sessions for the public.
- The RhPAP Community Consultant attended all general meetings.

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Different ways we provided feedback:

- Central Zone Health and Business Plan
- Central Zone Operation Plan
- Imagine/Alberta Health Primary Health Care Consultation
- Medical Affairs Committee
- Integrated Housing Health Services Strategy and Action Plan
- Opioid responses consultation
- Quality Summit
- Health Link
- Connect Care
- Advisory Council identity/branding initiative
- AHS Ethical Framework
- Met monthly with the Chief Zone Officer

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Council members participated in the Mental Health First Aid Program

## Topics on the minds of our Council and community members

Themes that surfaced during the year from Council and community input include:

- Nurse practitioners
- Physician recruitment
- Addiction and mental health
- Housing and health services for those with lower incomes and seniors
- Transportation to urban centres
- Equitable service
- Access to personal health information



*For more information about Health Advisory Councils, visit [ahs.ca](https://ahs.ca)*

## A look ahead

We built a very robust work plan for the year and that will keep us busy and productive. To conquer the work, various work plan subcommittees were created during the year.

As in previous years, we expect to continue to acquire knowledge about various areas in health and that will enable us to move forward.

We will continue to look for opportunities to share the knowledge we acquire with our communities. We feel it is very important to ensure the public is aware of information on topics such as of continuing care and addiction and mental health.

We want to continue to encourage people to take personal responsibility in managing one's own health and wellness and we anticipate Connect Care and the new electronic health record will enable and help all Albertans to manage their own care more effectively. With some of our members being active on the Connect Care Committees, we look forward to being a voice for our communities in the roll-out of Connect Care and providing updates and information on this exciting initiative to our communities.

Engaging with the public next year both in person and by virtual methods is something the Council members are looking forward to. There are plans for two virtual sessions using video conference technology and to have a booth presence at two community events across the Central Zone. We look forward to holding a Municipal Leaders forum and we hope to increase attendance at our meetings so the information we learn from AHS can be further shared. Our role is to provide a link between AHS and our communities. In addition to our formal engagements, we look forward to talking informally with our communities about health priorities.

# Learn more

- Visit [ahs.ca](https://ahs.ca) and search Advisory Councils
- Email [davidthompson@ahs.ca](mailto:davidthompson@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/](https://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.



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