

# David Thompson

## 2018-19 Annual Report



David Thompson  
Health Advisory Council

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

## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors

Alberta Health Services values Advisory Council members as volunteers, leaders and partners in healthcare planning. With every year that passes, I see how our Councils continue to grow and expand. They challenge us and ask really great questions, they share the AHS story with their communities, their families and neighbours – helping Albertans everywhere to better understand our complex healthcare system – and they advise AHS on our planning, programs and services.



*Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn*

We have a number of long-time members leaving Councils in 2019-20 and we would like to acknowledge their hard work, dedication and passion. While we will miss them, we also know it's important for new voices to join the conversation and we look forward to building new partnerships, relationships and connections. We hope our departing members will continue to share their advice as members of the public and share their knowledge of the healthcare system.

This year, we added 23 new members to the Advisory Council family, and we also added a new Council. We were pleased to support and nurture the development of the Sexual Orientation Gender Identity & Expression (SOGIE) Provincial Advisory Council.

Members have made many contributions in their local areas, and you'll learn more about them in this report. Here are a few general examples from across the province over the past year:

- **Evolution of the Wisdom Council:** new Terms of Reference will guide the work of the Wisdom Council and includes creation of an Elder Circle which gives an enhanced role to Elders in helping to advise AHS on programs and services to best meet the needs of Indigenous people.
- **Connect Care:** a number of members have joined the patient advisory committees.
- **Supporting more addiction and mental health services:** many Councils held information sessions and highlighted the importance of services; their efforts helped support the development of Edmonton's new Access 24/7 Addiction and Mental Health Clinic and enhance awareness on services and access.
- **Expanding relationships:** connecting with the LGBTQ2S+ community through the new SOGIE PAC, meeting with municipal leaders, and holding meetings at Métis Settlements.
- **Connecting with Albertans through [Community Conversations](#):** Health Advisory Councils partnered with AHS to host 12 events across the province, where Albertans shared their views about challenges and solutions to healthcare issues.
- **Highlighting top concerns:** based on feedback from their communities, all Councils advised us on local concerns. AHS tracks and responds to concerns at each Council meeting.
- **Participation in Community Engagement Committee of the Board meetings:** various Council Chairs joined the conversation and shared ideas.

Member satisfaction is important to us, and it was gratifying to learn through the Annual Satisfaction Survey that our members are feeling generally satisfied in their roles. They've also said there's a need for more clarity on their role, and we're listening. We have begun work on an overarching Health Advisory Council review to address some of the gaps, and to ensure all our members fully understand their role.

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

Sincerely,

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

## Message from the Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council



*Sandy Doze*

As Chair of the David Thompson Health Advisory Council, I enjoy connecting with community members regularly to learn more about what matters to them when it comes to healthcare. Whether it's at the grocery store, at the hockey rink, at regular Council meetings, or structured information sessions hosted by Council, residents share their ideas with me and other members of the Council.

One of our goals this year was to support open and transparent communication between communities and AHS. Our successes included holding two virtual health engagement sessions, one on addictions and mental health, and one on continuing care across seven sites in our Council area. The purpose of these sessions was to engage the public and AHS in conversations about issues that were a concern across our Council area. The focus was understanding how to access services and navigation between providers and care sites.

We enjoyed partnering with AHS to co-host a Community Conversation in Wetaskiwin on November 27, 2018, and were joined by community groups, area residents, healthcare professionals, and partners. We talked about healthcare challenges and how we could work together to address those challenges. The information will be used in Zone planning.

Concerns from our communities have remained the same over the last few years and have been shared with AHS leadership -- availability of addiction and mental health services; Continuing Care; lack of transportation to and from urban areas for non-urgent health appointments; wait times for surgeons and specialists; assistance with navigation through the health system and other social and community services; and wait times and over capacity issues at Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre.

Another major focus has been building relationships with community and allied groups who support healthy communities and a strong healthcare system. Some of these include Primary Care Networks; Rural Health Professions Action Plan for recruitment and retention of physicians and healthcare professionals; municipal leaders; Family and Community Support Services; Health Foundations; and community organizations.

On behalf of our Council, I would like to thank AHS Central Zone for including us in their Zone Healthcare planning activities and responding to our requests for information and/or clarification about health services in our Zone, and attending all of our public meetings. Our communities want to be more involved and engaged during the planning phase of changes to services or implementation of new services, as each change has an impact on communities as well as the residents who reside in the communities. We look forward to continuing to co-design a structured way of engaging communities with Zone leadership during planning and implementation of services.

It has been my pleasure to work with my Council members over the last three years. They deserve a special thank you for their enthusiasm, time and dedication to ensuring our Council is listening to our communities and supporting our commitment to quality health service delivery for all individuals within our Council area.

Sincerely,

Sandy Doze  
Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council

## About our Council

### 2018 -2019 Council Members

#### Current Members

Sandra	Doze (Chair)	Westeros
Phyllis	Loewen (Vice Chair)	Rocky Mountain House
Carole	Tkach	Coronation
Debra	Murphy	Bluffton
Deryl	Comeau	Norglenwold
Faith	Pilgrim	Rimbey
Gerry	Johnston	Red Deer
Gerry	Greschner	Sundre
Janice	Lockhart	Wetaskiwin
Marie	Cornelson	Drayton Valley
Melanie	Hassett	Stettler
Sandra	Beaudoin	Hanna

#### Past Members

Heather	Donald	Sylvan Lake
Kim	Kornylo-Walton	Sundre
Robert	Long	Three Hills
Terry	Johnston	Hanna



Back row left to right: Carole Tkach, Janice Lockhart, Faith Pilgrim, Heather Donald  
 Front row left to right: Gerry Greschner, Sandra Doze, Marie Cornelson, Sandra Beaudoin  
 Missing: Phyllis Loewen, Deryl Comeau, Gerry Johnston, Terry Johnston, Melanie Hassett, Robert Long, Debra Murphy, Kim Kornylo-Walton

## Promoting awareness of our Council

We were very active in promoting our Council this year. We used a variety of strategies including:

- promoting our five public Council meetings
- sending invitations to the public for two virtual information sessions
- ensuring our Council members attended local community events or meetings
- presenting at a regional municipality session
- co-hosting a Community Conversation in Wetaskiwin

We promoted our meetings by advertising in the local newspaper, sending out Public Service Announcements to all of the Council area media, posting the meeting dates and locations on social media and sending invitations to local stakeholders.

We have many Council members that sit on local Health Foundations, or on Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Boards or participate on their local Rural Health Professional Attraction and Retention Committee. Their efforts with multiple community organizations help them to draw rich feedback from their communities for our meetings.

We partnered with AHS and the Yellowhead Health Advisory Council to hold two virtual information sessions for the public. 50 members participated in the first session held on April 25<sup>th</sup> about AHS Seniors and Continuing Care via video conference. The presenter was at one location and members of the public joined the session from nine video conference locations. 33 public members from 11 sites attended the second session on addiction and mental health services on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The Executive Director with Addiction and Mental Health Services in the Central Zone provided an overview of services. We also invited the Canadian Mental Health Association to the meeting to share information about the rural health project they launched in partnership with FCSS offices across the province. The evaluations indicated high satisfaction with both sessions.

A representative from our Council joined a member from the Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council and attended the Central Alberta Rural Municipal Leaders meeting in Ponoka on October 13, 2018. We presented information about the Council and gathered feedback from the municipal councillors present.

Our Council members were very active in their communities. Members of the Council attended the following events:

- Women's Conference in Rimbey
- Central Rural Municipalities of Alberta
- Sundre Hospital 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Sylvan Lake Advanced Care Services Grand Opening
- Medical Marijuana Conference
- Helped host Skills Days in partnership with RhPAP in Rimbey

## Listening to our communities and sharing feedback with AHS

We were fortunate to receive feedback at our meetings, virtual forums and at a rural zone municipal meetings. Some of the concerns we heard at the meetings and the events were:

- A need for Nurse Practitioners to work in rural settings
- A need for dialysis services in Drayton Valley
- Physician recruitment, and waitlists to see specialists and for surgery
- More awareness of the Sylvan Lake Advanced Ambulatory Care Centre and the criteria to use it
- More information about medical specialists in Innisfail
- Homelessness
- Seniors care information and wait times for family physician follow up
- Improving relationships between AHS and the local Housing Foundation in Lacombe

Members of Council also sit on AHS committees to provide feedback. They are:

- Patient and Family Advisory Committee
- Society for the Hospital Expansion in Central Zone
- Central Zone Primary Care Governance Committee
- System Flow meetings

The Community Engagement Committee of the AHS Board expressed an interest in the top health-related concerns from across the province. We provided the following:

- Addiction and mental health services (access and way-finding)
- Continuing care: understanding the levels of care and placement processes
- Transportation: an issue across rural AHS
- Wait times: for specialists and surgeries
- Primary Care Networks: consistency in the availability of services
- Navigation/communication: for primary to specialty care and for hospital to home
- More community involvement: in planning at the Zone and local level

**50** People attended the virtual information session about Seniors Health and Continuing Care hosted by the Council

**33** People attended the virtual information session about addiction and mental health services.



**13** Counties and Municipal Districts were represented at the CRMA meeting in Ponoka



## Working with AHS to share information with our communities

AHS leadership from the Central Zone participated in each Council meeting and provided us with a report at each meeting including information on the Central Zone Healthcare Plan, the operational plan, as well as information on Zone programs and initiatives:

- We learned about the openings of some new facilities, and shared information about them with our communities including:
  - Sylvan Lake Advanced Ambulatory Care Centre
  - Wetaskiwin Points West Living
  - New Valley View Manor in Rimbey
- When we had questions or required information on specific topics, we invited AHS representatives to present. Council received the following presentations:
  - Cannabis Legalization
  - EMS transportation information
  - Primary Care Network Central Zone Committee
- Central Zone restorative care beds  
We received feedback from our members as well as stakeholders, and determined two areas where we felt there were gaps in knowledge by the public. The noted gaps provided a base for the two information sessions we held on Addiction and Mental Health and Senior's Health and Continuing Care.

We partnered with AHS to host a [Community Conversation](#) in Wetaskiwin in November. There were 62 participants at the event from across our Council area, including representatives from First Nations, municipalities, the school division, non-profit organizations and Family and Community Support Services.

Participants discussed health care successes, identified top health care challenges and considered existing and new community partnerships to address the challenges. They suggested integrating community partnerships, offering cultural sensitivity training, addressing transportation barriers, mental health stigma, and supports for seniors and safety in communities.

The [Hope Mission](#) was featured as a key contributor to wellness through its success with food programs, summer day camps, the Kids in Action program and the Horses of Hope program.

An evaluation by participants reflected there was an increased understanding of AHS' focus on wellness, prevention and community care. A report was shared back with participants and with the Central Zone leadership for review and consideration in their operational plan.

## A look ahead

We had a very busy year and we expect to be just as busy in 2019/20. We have established our meeting dates and locations, and have set priorities for our work plan.

We plan to continue our close relationship with Central Zone Executive Leadership. We want to be able to provide continuous real-time feedback to programs and services. We look forward to ongoing dialogue about the AHS Health Plan and Business Plan and the Central Zone Healthcare Plan.

We will continue to nurture the relationship with the municipalities in the David Thompson Council area by:

- Attending the Central Zone Mayors and Reeves meeting again this year to have formal and informal interactions
- Contacting individual municipalities, having discussions and offering presentations to their Council meetings
- Continuing to invite these key stakeholders to our regular meetings, and having an in-person engagement session with them
- Planning a municipal leaders' forum in partnership with the Central Zone Executive leadership. We plan to have the forum in Hanna and focus on Zone priorities of interest to our stakeholders including Connect Care, addiction and mental health services, enhancing care in the community and the recruitment of professionals. The forums raise our profile, promote relationship building and provide a venue for Central Zone leadership to share and engage this audience.

We want to continue to support the Central Zone to support access to information. We held two interactive virtual information sessions last year and would like to hold those again this year. We held the session by video conference (telehealth) and a member from the Council was a host at each site. We feel we can draw more people out to attend again this year and further the provision of knowledge. We plan to hold the information sessions on the same two topics: addiction and mental health and seniors' health and continuing care.

We plan to continue to be available to provide advice about emerging issues and projects of importance such as Connect Care. We will continue to be a part of a number of AHS committees and report back the status to our Council membership.

We want to increase the number of public in attendance at our meetings. We plan to invite groups to meetings where they might have an interest in presentation topics.

We look forward to the busy year and to making a difference in health service planning.

# Learn more

- Visit [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils)
- Email [davidthompson@ahs.ca](mailto:davidthompson@ahs.ca)
- Check out our Twitter and Facebook accounts, by searching AHS Advisory Councils

# Get involved

You can contribute to the health and well-being of your family, friends, neighbours and community by sharing your thoughts and ideas with Alberta Health Services. You can get involved by:

- Attending an upcoming Health Advisory Council 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.

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



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