

# David Thompson

## 2019-20 Annual Report



David Thompson  
Health Advisory Council

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

## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



*Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn*

Alberta Health Services values Advisory Council members as volunteers, leaders and partners in health care 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 health care system – and they advise AHS on our planning, programs and services.

We had 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.

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



*Carole Tkach*

What an exciting year of change, expectations and a new normal! We had to say farewell to members who made many wonderful contributions to our Health Advisory Council (HAC) and helped set the stage for the future. We welcomed new members who bring variety and fresh voices as we strive to stay in contact with our communities. The Advisory Council Fall Forum was an opportunity to meet fellow Council members from across the province and share our stories. We also became adept at meeting virtually which proved to be a successful means of connection.

Our Council had the opportunity to provide input to the HAC Review process and we're excited to continue to work on expanding our role and being a part of the planning and engagement process. We also truly appreciate the ongoing sharing opportunities and support from AHS senior leadership. Finally, we continue to provide the community information on AHS' work in Addiction and Mental Health, Seniors Health and workforce updates.

Sincerely,

Carole Tkach  
Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council

## Who we are

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council (DTHAC) is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members who reside in the geographic [region](#) surrounding Red Deer. Visit us online for a full list of [membership](#).



*L-R, back: Sandra Beaudoin, Dawn Konelsky, Carole Tkach, Janice Lockhart, Melanie Hassett  
L-R, front: Shelagh Slater, Sandy Doze, Deryl Comeau, Marie Cornelson, Gerry Greschner  
Missing: Gerry Johnston, Phyllis Loewen, Peggy Makofka, Debra Murphy, Faith Pilgrim, Selena Redel*

## Highlights

### Presentations

- End of Life and Palliative Care
- Mental Health Access
- Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) Your Health System (YHS)
- Medical Affairs - Physician Recruitment

### Location of Public Meetings

- Rimbey, Consort, Red Deer & virtually
- 27 members of the public in attendance

## Key achievements of 2019-20

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council (DTHAC) has worked intentionally to contribute to building stronger relationships between the people in its communities and AHS. It has done so by having frank and open conversations about health service delivery with AHS at its meetings.

In the fall, Council members attended the annual Advisory Council Fall Forum to hear a variety of presentations including learning about the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Expression Provincial Advisory Council (SOGIE PAC), HeartMath and Connect Care. We also got to participate in breakout sessions that focused on wellness. The Forum was a great opportunity to network with fellow Council members, Alberta Health Services staff and members of the AHS Board of Directors.

Some of our members have roles outside of the HAC that complement the work of our Council, including committee work with Primary Care Networks (PCN) and Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP). This helps connect our HAC with local community groups and creates more opportunity to discuss health needs more broadly.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) invited Council to attend special events:

- The grand opening of the Lacombe Hospital and Care Centre Emergency Department, following a major renovation.
- A tour of the Red Deer Regional Hospital with Tyler Shandro, Minister of Health.
- The opening of the new Protection of Children Abusing Drugs (PChAD) protective safe house in Red Deer. The facility expands access to detoxification and treatment options for youth to address substance use or concurrent disorders.

Council participated in the Shared Decision Making (SDM) focus group that was run by an AHS Improving Health Outcomes Together (IHOT) Team. The IHOT Team engaged front line health care providers, AHS Health Advisory Council members and AHS Patient and Family Advisors to better understand the current state, challenges, implementation opportunities of SDM and the role it plays in clinical appropriateness.

Throughout the year we shared Top Concerns from within our communities with the AHS Board. This helped contribute to a broad understanding of health service delivery issues across the province. Concerns shared include: access to addiction and mental health services and increasing opioid use, access to diagnostics services, navigation and integration of services, bed availability in seniors and continuing care, and wait times to see specialists and family physicians.

We held a Council meeting in Consort that was well attended by local community members. This resulted in the formation of a working group intended to address the need for mental health support for adults and children in the area.

Our Council was also invited to present to the Community Engagement Committee of the Board in May 2019 where we outlined our successes, challenges and opportunities.

## A look ahead

The implementation of the new direction of Health Advisory Councils (HAC 2.0) is something we are excited about. As part of HAC 2.0, we will host a minimum of two community events that are co-designed with AHS. This will be of great help as we seek to build more awareness of the Council. As a result of increased awareness, we hope to see an increase in public attendance at our meetings so we can gather more public feedback and provide more meaningful contributions to the health system.

As part of its goal to provide input to AHS healthcare programs, services or emerging initiatives, Council will participate in the following:

- Steering and Logistics Committee for the move into the new Community Health Centre space in Lacombe. The centre will house several community programs such as mental health, public health, community rehabilitation programs and home care.
- AHS Review Implementation Coordinating Committee.

The David Thompson Health Advisory Council is looking for geographic representation from the communities of Wetaskiwin, Drumheller, Hanna and Olds. Representation from across the zone will ensure a broad understanding of the needs in our area and will create more opportunity for communities to connect. See page six for information on how to apply.

*It has been a pleasure getting to know the members of the DTHAC over the last year. As a new Chief Zone Officer in the Central Zone, I have come to truly appreciate the wisdom and diversity the Health Advisory Council members bring to discussions about Health Care in the Zone. The members' deep commitment to their communities has enriched our understanding of local priorities and has helped us to build deeper, stronger and more collaborative relationships in the communities within the Zone.*

Janice Stewart  
Chief Zone Officer – Central Zone

Advisory Councils act in an advisory capacity to Alberta Health Services (AHS) as we share feedback with AHS leadership from our communities about health services. We hold public meetings at locations throughout our geographic area and participate in engagement activities that further contribute to health services in Alberta.

## Learn more

Visit [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils)

✉ [davidthompson@ahs.ca](mailto:davidthompson@ahs.ca)

☎ 1.877.275.8830

Check us out on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) or by searching AHS Advisory Councils.

## Get involved

You can make 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 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
- Provide input on various health care topics online, at [Together4Health](#)
- Apply to [become a member](#). Members are appointed for three-year terms.



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