

David Thompson

2020-21 Annual Report





Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors

Since my appointment to the AHS Board in the fall of 2020, it has been my pleasure to become familiar with the work of the Advisory Councils. By all accounts, Councils have persevered through the COVID-19 pandemic and have found success in connecting with stakeholders as they adapted to virtual meetings well through 2021.



Vicki Yellow Old Woman

Advisory Councils continue to be tremendous partners in health. They have been instrumental as a conduit of information from AHS to local communities, a task of particular importance during an extraordinary period of time. Through innovation and determination, each Council has remained committed to its role of advising AHS, and to bringing forward the voices of their communities.

I look forward to working with Advisory Councils in the years ahead and watching as they continue to evolve. Thank you to each member for your ongoing dedication to improving health services for all Albertans.

Sincerely,

Vicki Yellow Old Woman,
Chair, Community Engagement Committee; AHS Board



Message from the Chair, David Thompson Health Advisory Council

Despite the year of uncertainty we have faced, the David Thompson Health Advisory Council (DTHAC) has continued to meet virtually and provide community engagement successfully, reaching out to more community members than ever!



Carole Tkach

Although we have not met in person, we continue to hear from members about their communities - not surprisingly, on how the pandemic and the downturn in the economy has affected people in so many ways. As a result, the continued rise in addiction and mental health needs continues to be a top concern for our Council.

Thank you to DTHAC members for your ongoing commitment and passion for healthcare - someday soon we will be together socially to shake hands or give a hug! Also a big thank you to our Coordinator and the Community Engagement team, as well as our Zone Leadership for your ongoing support! We couldn't do this without you.

I wish Gerry Greschner all the best as Council's new Chair, and thank everyone for their support over the past two years. I will still be here and will continue to be an active member of the DTHAC!

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 [area](#) surrounding Red Deer. Visit us online for a full list of [membership](#).



Top L-R: Carole Tkach, Derly Comeau, Gerald Johnston, Gerry Greschner, Michelle Narang

Bottom L-R: Phyllis Loewen, Shelagh Slater, Selena Redel, Melanie Hassett

Missing: Al Campbell, Dawn Konelsky, Marie Cornelison, Peggy Makofka



Highlights



Presentations

- AHS COVID-19 Psychosocial Supports
- Virtual Health Conversations
- Supports for Family Caregivers
- Home Care in Central Zone



Public Participation

- 15 community members attended regular HAC meetings
- 183 community members attended community engagement events



Key achievements of 2020-21

Despite its challenges, 2020-21 came with many great achievements for the DTHAC. Namely, a total of 198 community members attended our meetings and events, a substantial increase from prior years due primarily to increased access via virtual means.



We partnered with AHS to host two successful community engagements. In January we hosted a session on Virtual Health Services and in May a session on Homecare in Central Zone.



A notable presentation from Council's general meeting was Transform Your Stress: the Resilience Advantage. This session on strategies for managing stress in challenging times and supporting family caregivers was well-received and deemed practical for anyone to use.



Council was pleased to receive ongoing COVID-19 updates throughout the year, as well as participating in virtual COVID-19 Community Conversations for Central Zone, and to engage in dialogue about our experiences with COVID-19 testing sites. These sessions provided an opportunity to address questions and concerns and equipped us with resources to share within our communities.

Council provided input on a variety of initiatives, including:

- The Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre (RDRHC) project
- Government Order (CMOH Order 29-2020) mandating that Designated Support Living, Long Term Care, and Hospice services have a family presence and visitation process to ensure access to loved ones as safely as possible
- Participated in an Alberta Health Facility-based Continuing Care focus group
- Participated in facilitated dialogue on EMS Dispatch Consolidation between EMS leadership and HAC members who lived in impacted communities.

As part of our professional growth, we participated in an education session on Unconscious Bias. This informative session guided members through the basics of Unconscious Bias, how it manifests itself in our daily lives, and AHS' work towards diversity and inclusion in healthcare.

On April 26, Carole Tkach, parting Council Chair, Gerry Greschner newly elected Council Chair, and Peggy Makofka, Vice Chair attended a Council of Chairs meeting with the Honourable Tyler Shandro, Minister of Health. Minister Shandro provided health service updates and engaged in conversation with Chairs from across the province.

2020-21 has been an extraordinary year. As we all had to make adjustments to our lives through the pandemic, I would like to thank all my staff and the Health Advisory Council for their help promoting safety. It is through your support in AHS and commitment to ensuring the voice of your communities is heard that we can move through the pandemic. I look forward to more discussions about healthcare in the Zone and meeting soon, face-to-face.

Janice Stewart

Chief Zone Officer – Central Zone



A look ahead

As we plan for the year ahead Council will focus on connecting with the communities in our Zone as we plan for meetings and engagement events in 2021-22. Our meetings will continue to encourage community members to attend and share their insights on health service delivery from their communities. This will also be an opportunity to hear from health experts and local stakeholders on topics of interest.

In the year ahead, Council will co-host two community events in collaboration with AHS. Community stakeholders will be invited to participate in engagement and learn more about health initiatives across our Zone.

Plans for the coming year include:

- Focus on mental health and addiction resources – connecting with various community leaders and organizations to learn their perspectives, understand gaps in service, promote programs, and share resources. We have a particular interest in connecting with schools, younger adults, and adolescence through a partnership with AHS' Addiction and Mental Health team
- Continued work with health partners, Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), Primary Care Networks (PCN), and Family and Community Support Services (FCSS).
- Sharing of information about Seniors and Continuing Care programs and services, and learning of the needs of communities in our area
- Continuing to build relationships with other AHS Advisory Councils by sharing information through member involvement at Council meetings and events

Our Council membership is diverse and members are great representatives of their local communities. We hope to enhance that diversity through recruitment efforts to fill vacancies.



Advisory Council members share advice and feedback from their communities with AHS. Councils hold public meetings and engagement activities virtually or in locations throughout their geographic area that further contribute to improving healthcare services in Alberta.



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/advisorycouncils.
- Delivering a presentation at a Council meeting on a health area of interest.
- Providing input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#).
- Applying to [become a member](#). Members are appointed for three-year terms.



Learn more

Visit ahs.ca/advisorycouncils

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☎ 1.877.275.8830

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

