

# Lakeland Communities

## 2019 -20 Annual Report



Lakeland Communities  
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 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.



*Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn*

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, Community Engagement Committee of the Board

## Message from the Chair, Lakeland Communities Health Advisory Council

On behalf of the Lakeland Communities Health Advisory Council, I would like to provide you with a report of our 2019 activities.

Our Council held meetings in three communities as well as virtually, all of which were open to the public. In Cold Lake a Community Conversation was held in June, which helped address physician recruitment in the area. In September, we held an information session in Lac La Biche on Enhancing Care to the Community. In November, our Council requested area residents of Redwater share their thoughts on local health care delivery and an update on health services within the Zone was presented.



*Robert Deresh*

The Lakeland Advisory Health Council would like to thank the public for expressing their suggestions, concerns and success stories. I thank the Council for reaching out in their communities and for attending and assisting at events.

Sincerely,

Robert Deresh  
Chair, Lakeland Communities Health Advisory Council

## Who we are

The Lakeland Communities Health Advisory Council (LCHAC) is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members who reside in the geographic [region](#) from Cold Lake in the east to Athabasca in the west. Visit us online for a full list of [membership](#).



*L-R: Robert Deresh, Brad Eamon, Patricia Palechuk, David Beale and Brydon Ward.*

*Missing: Alyson Fox, Amy Warren, Glen Andersen, Kathy Lepine, Janet Stone, Joanne Williams and Zicki Eludin.*

*The AHS North Zone team provides service to a large geographical area with a diverse population. We place a very high value on the information and advice we receive from a broad range of stakeholders in our communities. The HACs give us a regular forum to share ideas, receive input and refine our ways of working so that our strategies and operational priorities are aligned with provincial and local priorities.*

Gregory Cummings  
Chief Zone Officer

## Highlights

### Presentations

- Protective Services
- Enhancing Care in the Community
- Public Health Services
- E-Mental Health
- HAC 2.0

### North Zone Sector Meeting

- A combined meeting with all six North Zone Health Advisory Councils
- Connection with multiple AHS North Zone leaders
- Members shared top health priorities from their region

### Location of Public Meetings

- Cold Lake, Lac La Biche, Redwater & virtually
- 38 members of the public attended

## Key achievements of 2019-20

We had a very busy year creating awareness of the Council and it proved to be worthwhile as 38 members of the public attended our meetings. Meetings were hosted in different communities in the area represented by the LCHAC and we invited community stakeholders to participate. This included municipalities, local First Nations, Family and Community Health Services (FCSS), Chambers of Commerce, Healthcare Auxiliaries and Foundations.

We partnered with AHS to host a [Community Conversation](#) in Cold Lake in June, where participants learned about Cold Lake Family and Community Support Services (FCSS). We networked during the event and shared health care successes and challenges in our communities. The event provided opportunity to consider existing and new community partnerships and stakeholders were pleased to share their thoughts and ideas in a productive way.

We partnered with AHS to host an information session in September in Lac La Biche. 42 people attended the session where Dr. Richard Lewanczuk, Senior Medical Director, provided information on Enhancing Care in the Community and the importance of connectedness in the community. He also spoke about wellness as it relates to overall health care. This information session resulted in the formation of the Lac La Biche Action Committee for Loneliness.

Throughout the year Council shared our Top Concerns with the AHS Board, for its broad understanding of issues across the province. These include: addiction and mental health (access for rural communities); Indigenous relations (increase representation on Council) seniors and continuing care (education/awareness); transportation from rural communities; wait times for specialists and surgeries; recruitment and retention of health professionals; access to allied health services in rural and remote communities; increasing security in rural sites; acute care bed availability in rural facilities and Enhancing Care to the Community.

We said goodbye to several members who served on Council for many years. We wish them the very best and hope they will continue to participate at our meetings as members of the public. We also welcomed four new members to Council this year and look forward to their input.



*L-R: David Beale, Cindy Harmata, Brydon Ward, Robert Deresh, Zicki Eludin at the opening of the CT scanner grand opening in Lac La Biche*

## A look ahead

We have big plans for the coming year. We'll continue to promote awareness of our Council and our meetings and will promote engagement events we have planned. There are a few vacancies on Council so we will continue recruitment efforts with an aim to bring additional diversity to our Council.

Council is looking forward to 2020-21. Implementation of the new direction of Health Advisory Councils (HAC 2.0) is expected to begin in the fall, where community events will be embedded into our annual planning cycle. Events will be co-designed with AHS and will be a partnership with Zone leadership. Work is underway to determine the nature of these events. As well, we've identified topics of interest to learn more about including the Alberta Healthy Communities Initiative, public health and seniors and continuing care.

Building on the success of our information session in Lac La Biche, we will continue to focus on partnering with AHS to share information with communities in our Council area. We look forward to planning two engagement sessions - one on addiction and mental health services in September and another on Enhancing Care in the Community in 2021. These sessions help to promote awareness of our Council, provide relevant information to the community and support relationship building with community stakeholders. They also help us nurture our relationship with AHS staff and leadership.

We look forward to continuing to build relationships with other AHS Advisory Councils by sharing information through member involvement at upcoming meetings and events. We also look forward to our continued partnership with AHS and the opportunities to progress together.

Through recent recruitment we're excited to hear more from the communities of Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Redwater and St. Brides. We seek representation from Athabasca, Boyle, Smoky Lake and Thorhild to help represent our large geographic region. See page six for the link to apply.



*Enhancing Care in the Community information session*

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 geography and participate in engagement activities that further contribute to health services in Alberta.

## Learn more

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

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

☎ 1.877.275.8830

Check us out on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) or 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
- 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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