

Lesser Slave Lake

2021-22 Annual Report

(July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022)





Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



Vicki Yellow Old Woman

It's been another remarkable year for health services in Alberta. While the COVID-19 pandemic carried on, vaccines became available which has been monumental in slowing the spread of the virus and preventing severe illness. Through it all, AHS Advisory Councils remained connected with their communities and have demonstrated an incredible spirit of volunteerism through their engagement activities.

Through Advisory Councils, AHS has received feedback on a number of important initiatives which are outlined in each of these reports. We are grateful for the involvement of our Councils in advising AHS on a range of matters of importance to all Albertans.

On behalf of the AHS Board, I extend my sincerest gratitude to all Advisory Council members for continuing to foster relationships with stakeholders across Alberta. These grassroots connections have been vital to AHS' ability to make well-rounded decisions on health services that impact so many of us. Your commitment is greatly appreciated and we look forward to the year ahead.

Sincerely,

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



Message from the Chair, Lesser Slave Lake Health Advisory Council



Susan Giesbrecht

On behalf of the Lesser Slave Lake Health Advisory Council, I am pleased to submit our annual report for 2021-22.

Due to the pandemic, Council hosted meetings and engagement events virtually. Despite this challenge, we made positive contributions. A particular health challenge in our area is the above-average diabetes rates in First Nations and Metis settlement areas. To broaden education and awareness, we hosted community presentations on diabetes prevention and the Alberta Healthy Living program, which can help Albertans manage their diabetes.

Highlights include our work with the Slave Lake Homeless Coalition, which partnered with AHS to provide safe isolation spaces and medical staff for houseless people who acquired COVID-19. We also championed a new emergency medical services station for Slave Lake to deploy resources in critical situations. Finally, we are pleased that High Prairie has opened a dialysis unit, so people don't need to travel far for treatment.

I look forward to seeing our Council continue to bring awareness to these and other healthcare issues arising in our communities within our advisory role.

Sincerely,

Susan Giesbrecht
Chair, Lesser Slave Lake Health Advisory Council



Who we are

The Lesser Slave Lake Health Advisory Council (LSLHAC) is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members who reside in the [geographic area](#) surrounding Slave Lake, High Prairie and Wabasca-Desmaris. [Visit us online](#) for a full list of membership.



Top L-R: Susan Giesbrecht (Chair), Lindsay Davies (Vice Chair), Robin Guild, Norman Wang
Bottom L-R: Fay Cardinal, Lorraine Muskwa, Calvin Badger, Ernie Grach
Missing: Edna Boucher, Lindy Fors, Joyce Dvornek (past member)





Key achievements of 2021-22

Lesser Slave Lake HAC continued to be a strong voice for local communities. We had members of the public in attendance at each of our meetings, and we look forward to seeing more participation as we broaden awareness of our Council in the year ahead.



Partnered with AHS to host a community engagement event. 28 community members attended a virtual Community Conversation about Patient and Family-Centered Care. Participants were invited to learn how AHS is redefining relationships in healthcare by placing an emphasis on collaborating with patients and families to improve experiences in all healthcare settings.



Council hosted two presentations at our February meeting: an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) update from AHS about services in the area, and a presentation from HIV Edmonton about the Alberta-wide syphilis outbreak: this presentation highlighted the exceptionally high case rates in the HAC area.



In May 2022, members attended the annual Advisory Council Forum in Edmonton. The forum provided an opportunity to participate in an Indigenous Workshop and learn about asset-based community development, virtual health, AHS opioid resources and allyship. Council used this opportunity to network with other Advisory Councils from across the province, to gather new ideas and establish new partnerships.



At the May 2022 meeting, the Alberta Healthy Living Program presented on its free workshops designed to help Albertans better manage chronic conditions. Programming topics included: diabetes, heart and stroke education, weight or stress management, chronic pain or chronic conditions management, supervised exercise and COPD education.



Council continued building relationships with AHS via strategic planning meetings among the Chair, Vice Chair, AHS North Zone leadership and the Advisory Council Coordinator. These touchpoints ensured consistent and open communication throughout the year.



Council continues to seek members from rural and Indigenous communities in the area to help represent its large geographic region. See page six for information on how to apply.

A look ahead

In the coming year, Council is focused on continuing its connection with community members. We encourage the public to attend our meetings and share insights on healthcare services in their community. Meetings are also an opportunity to hear from health experts and local stakeholders on topics of interest. In addition, we will invite community stakeholders to participate and learn more about health initiatives through a community engagement event, hosted in collaboration with AHS.

Plans for the coming year include:

- Increasing public attendance and participation at HAC meetings through connections made at community events, promotion and invitations to local stakeholders.
- Focusing on mental health and addictions resources by connecting with community leaders and organizations to learn their perspectives and share resources.
- Increasing connections with local Indigenous communities through invitation to HAC meetings and engagement events; and, through partnership, where opportunity allows.
- Continuing to build relationships with other AHS Advisory Councils by sharing information through member involvement at Council meetings and events.
- Recruitment to fill vacancies. Representation is needed from rural and Indigenous communities to ensure diverse perspectives of our Council area.

Our community health partners, including the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), Primary Care Networks (PCN) in the Zone and local hospital foundations/auxiliaries are essential connections. We appreciate our connection with various municipal leaders, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and other local community groups. These relationships help us to execute our role as an Advisory Council in a meaningful way.

 *Over the past year, Alberta's six North Zone Health Advisory Councils have contributed immeasurably to our pandemic response while also sharing key information with our communities. The Councils have also successfully engaged hundreds of Albertans while shifting to virtual community events. I applaud their ongoing efforts to remain connected.*

It has been my personal pleasure to work with many of our North Zone Councils. I have always found Council members to be dedicated, true community builders, and strong voices for healthcare throughout the North. They are passionate and bring a diversity of opinions and experiences, which makes for rich dialogue and discussion. We are grateful for their time, advice and collaboration with AHS North Zone leaders.

We look forward to continuing to partner with the True North, Wood Buffalo, Peace, Lesser Slave Lake, Lakeland Communities and Tamarack Health Advisory Councils.

Stacy Greening

Chief Zone Officer, North Zone

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 or concern.
- Provide input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#).
- Apply to [become a member](#). Members are appointed for three-year terms.

Learn more

Visit ahs.ca/advisorycouncils

✉ lesserslavelake@ahs.ca

☎ 1.877.275.8830

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

