

Oldman River

2016/17 Annual Report



Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors

The health system belongs to over four million Albertans and, as such, their voices need to be heard — and considered — when Alberta Health Services is planning and making decisions about healthcare delivery. Our Health Advisory Councils, Provincial Advisory Councils and Wisdom Council bring the diverse voices of Albertans to the decision-making table, so health services can meet the unique needs of communities across the province.

Our councils are made up of people who are passionate about understanding what's working and where improvements can be made in how health services are delivered in their communities. Advisory councils demonstrate our true commitment to community engagement – their work is strategic and valued, shaping the future of healthcare and enhancing care in communities.



Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn

There was much growth over the past year. It was a year of renewed commitment from Alberta Health Services to ensure councils act as the voices of their communities, supported by extensive recruitment to strengthen the reach and diversity of council members. For the first time, Council Chairs collaborated to share their priorities and identify similar priorities across the province. This approach was valuable and created synergies and linkages between councils across Alberta. At the same time, the collaboration between councils also showed how their priorities clearly aligned with Alberta Health Services' strategic approach and how we are all working towards the same, very important goals.

On behalf of the Alberta Health Services Board of Directors, our leadership team and our workforce, I want to thank you for being our partners. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with councils and the strategic value they offer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn
Vice Chair, Board of Directors
Chair, Community Engagement Committee of the Board
Alberta Health Services

About community engagement

Alberta Health Services is committed to meaningful and authentic community engagement. Engaging with Albertans means patients, families and members of the public contribute to healthcare solutions and the betterment of our system. They can benefit by having their needs reflected in planning and decision making. Engagement aligns with the Alberta Health Services culture of caring and listening, which results in more patient-centred care, local decision making and more open and trusting relationships.

Role of Advisory Councils

Alberta Health Services values advisory council members as volunteers, leaders and partners in healthcare planning. They help build a stronger relationship between the people in their communities and those who work in the health system.

Members of Health Advisory Councils, Provincial Advisory Councils, and Wisdom Council are Albertans who care about health of their communities, and are connected to the public in many different ways. They provide a grassroots perspective and an understanding of their communities' health needs, and they're interested in listening to the people. They also:

- share their communities' priorities with Alberta Health Services
- give advice and help to inform the decision-making process
- host public advisory council meetings, in addition to promoting and participating in activities that enhance Albertans' health
- engage with and share information with the community, and follow up on commitments
- give feedback on public education materials, policies, or discussion topics
- share information on health services with the community and provide feedback and input to Alberta Health Services



Councils attend the annual Advisory Councils' Fall Forum to hear a variety of presentations and network with fellow council members, Alberta Health Services staff and members of the Board of Directors.

The Health Advisory Councils and the Provincial Advisory Councils are supported by the Alberta Health Services Community Engagement department, and report through the Council of Chairs to the Community Engagement Committee of the Alberta Health Services Board of Directors. The Wisdom Council reports to the AHS President and CEO.

12 Health Advisory Councils

Bring the voices of Alberta communities to healthcare services.
Each council represents a geographical area within the province.

2 Provincial Advisory Councils

Advise on provincewide services and programs for addiction and mental health, and cancer.

1 Wisdom Council

Provides guidance and recommendations to ensure Alberta Health Services develops and implements culturally appropriate and innovative health service delivery for Indigenous Peoples.

Albertans are represented by 12 Health Advisory Councils. Areas are determined by population and travel routes, and are detailed on [this map](#).

The two Provincial Advisory Councils and Wisdom Council operate provincially.

Their membership spans all of Alberta.

[View map of treaty areas and indigenous communities in Alberta](#)

For more information on membership:

[Health Advisory Councils](#)

[Addiction and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council](#)

[Cancer Provincial Advisory Council](#)

[Wisdom Council](#)



Council of Chairs

The Council of Chairs is made up of all advisory council Chairs, who meet five times a year to further the roles, responsibilities, and priorities of councils at a provincial level. The Council of Chairs determines themes or commonalities across different communities to bring forward to Alberta Health Services' leadership and Board of Directors.

Including the public voice in Alberta Health Services planning

In early 2016, Alberta Health Services' Strategic Planning Department met with Health Advisory Councils across the province to gather input for the [2017 - 2020 Health and Business Plan](#). Each council was asked to provide feedback on the plan to ensure the priorities of their communities were considered in the development of the strategic goals for the organization.

Members from various Health Advisory Councils participated in the following provincial committees:

- Apple Magazine Editorial Council
- Continuing Care Quality Committee
- [Health Link](#) and [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](#)
- Patient First Steering Committee
- Patient and Family Advisory Council
- Long range planning

Message from the Chair, Oldman River Health Advisory Council

It is my pleasure to present the 2016-2017 Annual Report of the Oldman River Health Advisory Council.

Following a time of uncertainty, this year we were reassured that council would continue in our present role and begin reporting to the Alberta Health Services Board through its Community Engagement Committee. This was very good news and has resulted in renewed enthusiasm among our council members. Community members can more easily bring their concerns directly to us and know they have been heard. In many cases, local issues may be solved by the council and Alberta Health Services administration working together. We also act as the eyes and ears of Alberta Health Services for challenges arising locally.



Dr. Barbara Lacey

This past year has been a busy one for the committee. We needed to re-establish our connection with the communities in the area to show how much we value their input and that their views will be reflected in the future planning for the area. An important part of our work in the past year was collaborating with Alberta Health Services administration on a series of workshops held across the region including on local reserves to hear concerns. The results have been used in our work plan for the coming year.

One of the highlights in 2016 was the smudging ceremony we had the honour of attending in the newly built Ceremonial Room at the Chinook Regional Hospital.

We were sorry to have two long term members from our council step down this year and I would like to thank Susan Koots and Helen McMenamain for their hard work on our behalf. Fortunately, we were able to select seven excellent new members for the coming year. They represent the diversity of our area and we look forward to working together. We were also able to attract two new members of our Indigenous population which is important because we have missed their input in the last few years.

We certainly would not be able to function without the support of our local Alberta Health Services administration. We valued our relationship with our Chief Zone Officer Sean Chilton and we will sorely miss his presence at our meetings. We wish him well in his new position and look forward to working with the new Chief Zone Officer.

With consideration, I decided not to run for Chair this term but I was delighted when Brad Gillespie was elected and I wish him success in the role. A special thank you to Lorraine Neal, our Vice Chair, for being so willing to take over the Chair's duties, sometimes at short notice, and always doing a great job. I want to give heartfelt thanks to the council members for all their support and unfailing willingness to participate in our activities. The other group that really makes the system work is our Community Engagement Officers. We were very sorry that Maura Beaton left us during the year but were also very happy to welcome Bailey Quaitie as her replacement. Great thanks to both of you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Barbara Lacey, Chair
Oldman River Health Advisory Council

About us

2016 -2017 Council Members

Current Members		
Dr. Barbara	Lacey (Chair)	Lethbridge
Lorraine	Neal (Vice Chair)	Lethbridge
Fred	Bosma	Lethbridge
Dick	Burnham	Pincher Creek
Gerri	Eagles Speaker	Cardston
Ryaan	El-andari	Lethbridge
Clifford	Elle	Pincher Creek
Georgette	Fox	Cardston
Brad	Gillespie	Lethbridge
Brian	Hammond	Pincher Creek
Henry	Heinen	Picture Butte
Sanowar	Hossain	Lethbridge
Emma	Hulit	Coutts
Wilma	Mulder	Lethbridge
Past Members		
Helen	McMenamin	Lethbridge
Susan	Koots	Fort MacLeod

Topics on the minds of our council and community members:

- Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)
- Seniors health
- Immunizations/influenza
- Fentanyl and opioid crisis
- Capital projects and re-developments in the zone
- Mental health



Oldman River Council members gather at Annual Fall Forum in Edmonton

5 public meetings were held

7 new members were appointed

4 engagement sessions were hosted for South Zone 2017-2020 Operational Plan

What we are proud of

Engaging with the public

- We provided on-going support for the South Zone 2017-2020 Operational Plan including hosting engagement sessions and distribution of surveys into members' communities. Sessions were hosted in Lethbridge, Pincher Creek, Piikani, and Standoff with a member providing the welcome and opening remarks.
- In partnership with Alberta Health Services, we addressed public members' concerns on topics such as aging population and access to specialists.

Providing feedback and advice to Alberta Health Services

- One of our council members participated on South Zone Operational Plan working group to help design the community engagement strategy.
- Council members attended a joint engagement session with Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council in Taber in June 2016 to provide council input into the South Zone Operational Plan.
- We supported and participated in the successful recruitment of seven new council members in fall 2016.
- Our Chair participated in key informant interviews through the Action Learning Project which focused on developing an approach to introduce and enhance the family presence in care across the organization.

Enhancing the health of community members

- We shared a letter of support for Ronald McDonald House's plan to establish family rooms in South Zone hospitals.
- We toured the new wing and renovated site of the Chinook Regional Hospital which they supported in partnership with Alberta Health Services. It was an honour to attend the Smudging Ceremony in the Ceremonial Room.
- Support from council helped with the addition of flexible care beds in Milk River.

Key learnings

- Council members attended the Rural Physician Action Plan conference in Vermillion in September 2016, resulting in a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities in rural physician recruitment.

A look ahead

As we look ahead for the next year, we will be focused on four key priority areas:

- Increasing awareness and understanding of addiction and mental health services in the South Zone. As mental health is a priority across the province, council will look to collaborate with other Health Advisory Councils in the South Zone, and the Addiction and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council.
- Looking at seniors' health and the aging population of the South Zone, including transportation and mental health for seniors.
- Supporting improved delivery and design of healthcare services at the local level by continuing to support the Alberta Health Services South Zone 2017-2020 Operational Plan with a focus on promoting primary care.
- Increasing awareness of health promotion and prevention, including a focus on immunizations.

Get involved

Think of the difference 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. Get involved:

- Attend an upcoming [Health Advisory Council meeting](#).
- [Make a presentation at a council meeting](#) on a health area of interest or concern.
- Think about volunteering your time as a council member. Recruitment drives happen annually. Members are appointed for three-year terms.

Connect with us:

- [Info on Community Engagement](#)
- oldmanriver@ahs.ca
- [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)