



Peace Health Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 15, 2022 / 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. / Zoom

ATTENDEES & INTRODUCTIONS	
Members	Barry Yaehne (Chair), Charlene Cavers (Vice Chair), Alison Cormack, Sandra Baker, Karen Egge, Carla Day, Krista Schuett, Danielle Commandeur and Marc Boychuk
AHS	Aaryn Lynham, Susan Given and Susan Smith
Regrets	Tammy Calliou, Maurissa Heitland, Maxine Elter and Kirti Sharma
Public	8
Media	N/A
Welcome	Barry welcomed all in attendance, provided introductions and provided a land acknowledgment.
Approval of minutes	The September 13, 2021 minutes were reviewed, and were approved by consensus.
STANDING ITEMS	
Action items from previous meeting	Christine Osunde sent out the updated Physician Recruitment Report drafted by Susan Smith. Complete.
Alberta Health Services Zone Update	Stacy Greening, Chief Zone Officer, North Zone Clinical Operations, alongside Susan Given, Executive Director, Addictions and Mental Health North Zone, and Dr. Tzeggai Berhe, Medical Director, Grande Prairie Regional Hospital, provided a written report with information about workforce recruitment, capital projects and major events and initiatives specific to the local area. Susan also provided highlights from the North Zone Operational Plan and performance measures and initiatives. An update on COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, was provided. Information on its impact and measures to reduce spread are changing daily. Visit www.ahs.ca/covid for the most up to date information.
Community Partners	Holly Handfield, Rural Community Consultant with Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), provided information on several free virtual learning opportunities available for rural community members. Visit the events page for more detail. Rhapsody Award nominations are now open. These awards recognize the individuals, teams and volunteers who make significant healthcare and civic contributions within rural Alberta communities. The 2022 Attraction and Retention Conference, “Put on Your Perspectacles” has been scheduled for October 4 – 6 in Drayton Valley.



	<p>RhPAP is now administering the RESIDE program (Rural Education Supplement and Integrated Doctor Experience) for the Alberta Government. Starting February 1, 2022, Alberta family medicine resident physicians seeking rural and remote practice in Alberta are eligible to apply in their final year of residency.</p> <p>RhPAP has developed a Rural VIP (Rural Information Panel) as a regular monthly feedback process using online surveys. All Health Advisory Council members and community champions of local health are encouraged to join. Sign up here using the password "RURALVIP". Email ruralvip@rhpap.ca with questions.</p>
<p>Physician Recruitment Report</p>	<p>Susan Smith, Physician Resource Planner, provided the following physician resource update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fox Creek, Peace River, Wembley, and Sexsmith are currently recruiting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seeking one physician to join Beaverlodge, Hythe, Wembly and Sexsmith with hospital privileges. • Fairview – one new physician coming and will begin by end of February 2022. • Grande Cache – two physicians have signed contracts and are incoming. Interviews for a third vacant position are ongoing. • Grande Prairie – one physician started full-time at the Grande Prairie Regional Hospital Emergency Department in September 2021. A new practice in Family Medicine opened November 2021 and is supporting the Bariatric Specialty Clinic. • Grimshaw – a new physician will be opening a new practice in March. • Manning – a new doctor will arrive in Canada in four to six weeks, and then will undergo a 3-month assessment. • McLennan – two new physicians have been recruited, and both have begun their 3-month assessment. • Spirit River – a new physician will be coming in April 2022. <p>Provincial Recruitment: currently seeking a medical oncologist and a radiation oncologist to join the Grande Prairie Cancer Centre. One new orthopedic surgeon started in December 2021. One new radiology hire will begin in August 2022. Two new physicians have been added to pediatrics. Currently recruiting for OB/GYN, pathology and psychiatry.</p>
<p>Presentation(s)</p>	<p>Grande Prairie Regional Hospital Update & Cancer Centre Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susan Given, Executive Director, Addiction & Mental Health North Zone • Winter Spence, Project Lead, Grande Prairie Cancer Centre



Highlights of the presentation:

- The December 4, 2021 opening date for GPRH was a huge success. Ongoing work to identify opportunities to improve operational efficiencies is happening, as well as evaluating the possibilities of bringing several community resources (i.e. Allied Health, Addictions & Mental Health, Homecare) into the building under one roof.
- A new service that is being provided by GPRH is mental health. The hospital has 18 psychiatry beds, plus geriatric and youth beds. There are five dedicated beds in the pediatric unit for mental health needs.

Questions from Council:

Q. Has the pandemic had a large impact on the opening of the Cancer Centre?

A. No, the only COVID-19 related delays involved the procurement of clinic equipment, which has since been resolved.

EMS Update

- Rob Barone, Associate Executive Director, EMS North Zone

Highlights of the presentation:

- The pressure facing EMS is not unique to Alberta. Across the country, EMS and healthcare systems are struggling with demand. EMS calls in Alberta have increased by approximately 30 per cent over the last year. Despite this historic increase in demand, EMS continues to respond to the vast majority of serious 911 calls quickly and appropriately.
- AHS EMS have embarked on a comprehensive 10-point plan for addressing the extraordinary increase in EMS calls received in the past months. The plan, which focuses on immediate actions that will help create capacity within the system, will ensure EMS remains available and safe for all Albertans. [Read the 10-point plan.](#)

Questions from Council:

Q. What will the future bring for EMS in the next year?

A. The formation of the [Alberta EMS Provincial Advisory Committee](#) is a positive step. This committee involves multiple municipal elected officials, EMS content experts, Alberta Health representatives and has already begun meeting.

Q. With the move to the provincial dispatch system, are EMS statistics and service integrity being maintained?

A. From discussions overseeing provincial dispatch, data demonstrates that the consolidation of dispatch into three centres is an



	improvement and a significant move forward. With call volumes being historically high, the data isn't as obvious, but if the transition hadn't been made, EMS would be in a worse situation to handle the volume of need.
Voices of the Community	<p><i>Q: Is it true that people have experienced a six to eleven hour wait for service at the new GPRH?</i></p> <p>A: Wait times for the emergency room depends on acuity, the volume of incoming cases and the triaging process. While AHS hasn't heard specifically about this being an issue, wait times can vary, as heard here, anecdotally.</p>
Chair Report	Barry Yaehne shared his written report, thanking and acknowledging his fellow Council members.
Council Round Table and Good News	<p>Councilor Cavers attended the Council of Chairs meeting in December 2021 on behalf of Peace HAC and reported back about her experience to Council. Councilor Egge shared an article from February 1 printed in the Spirit River Signal, <i>Rural Nurses Take on Rural Placement</i>, about two nursing students who were placed rurally and had positive experiences serving the community. Councilor Baker spoke to a new homelessness initiative that is moving forward steadily with government funding, thanking Councilor Boychuk for lending his experience to help develop the project.</p> <p>It was noted that the Festival of Trees engagement event will need to be re-evaluated for next year to determine the value of Council participating in future. As well, an observed drop in public participation at meetings was of concern to Council.</p>
Actions	Peace HAC has elected to move to a quarterly meeting schedule (two virtual, two in-person). Finalized public meeting dates for 2022 / 2023 to be posted publicly once determined.
NEW BUSINESS	
Date of Next Meeting	<p>Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2022</p> <p>Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.</p> <p>Location: TBD</p>

Our meetings are open to the public. Dates and locations are [available here](#).
[Find your Health Advisory Council here](#). Visit [Together4Health](#) (T4H) to engage with AHS online.