



Tamarack Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 09, 2021 / 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. / Zoom

ATTENDEES & INTRODUCTIONS	
Members	Donna Kristiansen (Chair), Sherry Jefferies
AHS	Melony Cole-Zettler, Sandra Herritt, Shauna Wallbank
Regrets	Janet Wilkinson (Vice Chair), Debra Hagman, Kathy Steyck – Flynn, Candace Pambrun, Linda West, Liz Krawiec, Shannon Harris
Public	Two
Welcome & Introductions	Donna Kristiansen welcomed all in attendance and went through introductions.
Approval of minutes	May 17, 2021 minutes were reviewed and approved by consensus.
STANDING ITEMS	
Action items from previous meeting	Melony Cole-Zettler to put forward the names of Donna Kristiansen, Chair, and Janet Wilkinson, Vice Chair, to the Community Engagement Committee of the Board. Complete.
North Zone Update	Sandra Herritt, Senior Operating Officer, shared the following: A written report was provided with information about workforce recruitment, capital projects and major events and initiatives specific to the local area. She 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 is 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 virtual learning opportunities available for rural community members to take part in this fall. These include information on RhPAP U – a new online resource; Rural Community Capacity Building, a three-part series; an information session on COVID-19 and beyond; a ChooseWell information session. Sessions are free. Visit the events page for more details.



	<p>Rhapsody Award winners for 2021 were announced during Alberta Rural Health Week. Winners are highlighted on their website.</p> <p>RhPAP will administer a new Return of Service Agreement program for the Alberta Government that will help students pay the cost of medical school. In exchange, students will complete residency training in rural Alberta and agree to practise in a rural Alberta community when schooling is complete. Details are still being sorted and will be shared once confirmed.</p>
<p>Physician Recruitment Report</p>	<p>Shauna Wallbank, Physician Resource Planner, reported AHS is currently recruiting to the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrhead – Three postings: one for family medicine with anesthesia; one family medicine with enhanced surgical skills/obstetrics; one family medicine physician. • Hinton – One posting for a general surgeon. • Swan Hills – One posting for a family medicine physician. • Westlock – Three postings: one for family medicine with enhanced surgical skills/obstetrics; two family medicine physicians. • Whitecourt – One for family medicine with anesthesia.
<p>Council Round Table and Good News</p>	<p>Donna Kristiansen, Council Chair, shared the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Network has restricted access to online resources again with COVID-19 cases rising again. They are working on making phone resources available for those without internet access. She adds that she attended the HAC 2.0 listening session that discussed how things are going a year into the the new format.</p> <p>Sherry Jefferies shared she is grateful to AHS staff and leadership for all their hard work during the fourth wave of the pandemic.</p>
<p>NEW BUSINESS</p>	
<p>Presentations</p>	<p>Wellspring Cancer Services Angie Rice, Northern Alberta Team Lead, Wellspring Edmonton</p> <p>Highlights of the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellspring Edmonton is a non-profit organization serving Edmonton and Northern Alberta. It provides emotional, social, spiritual and informational support and services to those living with cancer and their loved ones. It also restores resilience and



	<p>confidence to those impacted by cancer and welcomes everyone, regardless where they live. Its vision is a future where no one has to face cancer alone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2020, through a partnership with the Alberta Cancer Foundation, Wellspring services expanded to rural and remote communities throughout Alberta. • Wellspring Edmonton offers over 40 programs designed to educate and empower individuals impacted by cancer. Programs are: non medical; evidence informed and evidence-based; facilitated by professional leaders; offered free of charge and without referral; available to anyone through online membership registration; accessible in-person, online and over the phone. • Programs include: individual support; group support; exercise and nutrition; expressive arts; meditation and relaxation; informational and coping skills. • To become a member complete registration at wellspringedmonton.ca. Registration is free and requires no referral. Anyone is welcome to join, regardless where they live.
	<p>HIV Edmonton Cierre Asis, Capacity Building Facilitator, HIV Edmonton</p> <p>Highlights of the presentation include a summary of services HIV Edmonton provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention and education • Workshops and presentations • Organizational capacity building • Peer educators • Community engagement and outreach • Partnerships and collaborations • Support and outreach • Individual support programming • Resources and information • HIV Edmonton is also a harm reduction/safe injection site <p>Cierre shared information on Alberta’s current syphilis outbreak, the worst outbreak since 1948:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s difficult to access testing and treatment in rural northern Alberta



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Alliance for Syphilis Testing (CAST) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifies communities highly represented ○ Engages partners meaningfully ○ Uses a strength-based approach ○ Incorporates creative outreach • The collective impact is a framework offering leaders a different way to work together beyond the scope of their individual organizations, to align their existing work and also develop, implement and scale systems-change strategies together • Symptoms of Syphilis Stage 1 (3 – 90 days) after exposure shanker (sore), Stage 2 is body rash, stage 3 (3 – 15 years) • Treatment consists of long-acting antibiotics. Patients need to be retested after • Substance use is one of the main causes of infectious syphilis • Social determinants of health contribute to some people not seeking testing and treatment, particularly among Indigenous women; women – maternal syphilis cases; gay/ bisexual/ men who have sex with men (GBMSM); people who use drugs; people living with HIV (undetected status of other infections) • Congenital syphilis has led to 135 infants diagnosed since the outbreak began in 2015. 30 cases resulted in infant deaths and six stillbirths occurred in the first six months of 2020 in Edmonton. <p><u>Questions from Council</u></p> <p>Q. What is AHS doing to support HIV Edmonton in combatting the syphilis outbreak in Alberta ?</p> <p>A. AHS is funding the Point of care test for Syphilis and HIV (POSH) Study, making testing more accessible across Alberta.</p>
<p>Date of Next Event</p>	<p>Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 Time: 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Location: Zoom</p>

Our meetings are open to the public. Dates and locations are [available here](#).
[Find your Health Advisory Council here](#). Visit [Together 4 Health](#) (T4H) to engage with AHS online.