

# Yellowhead East

## 2017/18 Annual Report



Yellowhead East  
Health Advisory Council

Healthy Albertans.  
Healthy Communities  
**Together.**

## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors

Healthcare is a people business and Alberta Health Services (AHS) alone cannot build a healthier province. Through the work of our Advisory Councils, all Albertans have an opportunity to have a say in what we do at AHS; and that's vitally important to our organization.



*Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn*

Council members bring the voices of Albertans to AHS whether through the geographically located Health Advisory Councils or the program-focused Provincial Advisory Councils and Wisdom Council. They build relationships with Albertans and keep the lines of communication open. They are our partners, and their feedback has helped us make the right decisions on how we care for Albertans and how we deliver health services. Their efforts continue to make a positive difference in people's lives every day.

As Chair of the Community Engagement Committee of the Board, I've had the pleasure to connect with many Council members and see their work evolve and expand over the past year. There are direct links between their efforts and the advancements we've made as a health system overall, and in communities across the province. Here are just a few examples:

- **Connect Care** - members offered insights about the system, and had opportunities to join three different committees to help shape what the system would look like.
- **Zone healthcare planning** - members participated in building Calgary and Central Zone healthcare plans, and sharing specific needs for the communities they represent.
- **PCN governance committees** - members have been invited to join zone committees.
- **Continuing care** - through interviews, council chairs provided comments and suggestions to help build continuing care plans and solutions in the zones.
- **AHS Health Plan and Business Plan** – members offered perspectives and suggestions into the plan; their input shaped the goals, objectives and performance measures, particularly in the areas of long term care and mental health. They also actively shared the plan with communities across Alberta.
- **Special engagement meetings for Albertans** - many of the Councils had the opportunity to host engagement activities from Open Houses to forums to information sessions, both in person or by video conference.

Other milestones include adopting a new look and brand, carefully developed work plans, and attending the Annual Advisory Council Fall Forum to engage about healthcare issues and connect with each other.

On behalf of the AHS Board of Directors, our leadership team, and our workforce, thank you for all you do. We look forward to continuing to work with you on improving healthcare for Albertans.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn,  
Vice Chair, Board of Directors  
Chair, Community Engagement Committee of the Board  
AHS

## Message from the Chair Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council



*Pat Johnston*

This has been another very busy year for the Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council (HAC). Our Council now stands at nine members and recruitment is a priority as we move forward.

Council members have been very active on health related committees both within their communities and provincially. We have had representation on the Central Zone planning committee, the Primary Care advisory committee, the Lloydminster bi-provincial committee, and the Connect Care planning committees, as well as many local area programs and initiatives.

AHS has asked for Council input on many different areas including a new Council identity/brand, wait time concerns and Connect Care planning. We have also been invited and attended health related announcements and celebrations such as the new palliative care initiative with Emergency Medical Services and upgrades to the Wainwright Hospital Emergency Room.

Members of our Council have been provided opportunities for training and some attended the Mental Health First Aid course, as well as the recent Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) Conference.

Council shared thoughts with AHS leadership about the need for a new medical clinic in Provost. A resolution is now in the works.

This past year we have collaborated with the David Thompson HAC on health initiatives that are similar in our work plans. We have plans to host a Mental Health workshop for the public in the fall, after a successful joint AHS presentation on Continuing Care.

The chair from David Thompson HAC and I meet monthly with the Central Zone lead for AHS. The meeting is a time for us to share concerns and challenges from our areas directly with the senior leadership and to hear about AHS initiatives related to our communities.

Work continues by members of the Council to increase awareness of our roles, on strategies to hear our communities concerns and to provide information on AHS initiatives. We try to have one of our members attend all health related public meetings and are invited to local health service awareness meetings within our service area. We are planning to poll our communities to hear what they would most like to see presented at a municipal leaders forum to be held this fall. The agenda will be based on this information.

Council meetings are open to the public and they are rotated throughout the Yellowhead East area. We are making every effort to encourage members of the public to attend to share their local experiences and to hear what is up and coming from AHS.

Sincerely,

Pat Johnston, Chair  
Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council

## About Our Council

## 2017/2018 Council Members

# Current Members

|        |                      |              |
|--------|----------------------|--------------|
| Pat    | Johnston (Chair)     | Camrose      |
| Gary   | Duffett (Vice Chair) | Metiskow     |
| Elna   | Eidsvik              | Vermilion    |
| Sarah  | Hissett              | Wainwright   |
| Doug   | Mackay               | Camrose      |
| Deb    | McMann               | Innisfree    |
| Ken    | McNeil               | Wainwright   |
| Glenys | Reeves               | Lloydminster |
| Taneen | Rudyk                | Vegreville   |
| Elaine | Sorochan             | Two Hills    |

# Past Members

Ellen

Lefsrud

Viking



*Back row left to right: Taneen Rudyk, Sarah Hissett, Ken McNeil, Gary Duffett*

*Front row left to right: Elaine Sorochan, Glenys Reeves, Pat Johnston, Deb McMann, Doug Mackay*

*Missing: Elna Eidsvik*

## Priorities for our Council

We identified four priorities of focus for our 2017/18 work plan:

- **Rebalance resource allocation to a long-term view**
  - We heard presentations at each of our public meetings that focused on relevant health topics internal and external to AHS.
  - We began planning a Municipal Leaders Forum with a goal to execute early in the next fiscal year.
- **Access to mental health in schools; early recognition and proactive intervention for infants; children and youth**
  - We read the Mental Health Review to become familiar with and support recommendations found within.
  - We began Mental Health First Aid training through the Centennial Centre for Mental Health and Brain Injury and our Chair met with the Executive Director of Addiction and Mental Health (AHS) to discuss planning for future public information sessions.
- **Continuity of care and long term care**
  - We heard an extensive presentation about Connect Care at the Advisory Council Fall Forum in 2017 which included information on AHS' plans for moving it forward. We also met with the Executive Director of Seniors Health, AHS, to begin planning an upcoming information session.
- **Provide feedback on or participate in emerging issues or initiatives**
  - We met with Zone leadership to begin planning for an upcoming interactive Municipal Leaders Forum.

**5**

Public meetings were held in Innisfree, Vegreville, Provost, Camrose and via video conference.

**2**

New members were appointed by the Board.



**5**

Presentations were provided on topics such as mental health services, AHS' operational plan, primary care, and more.



## Engaging the public

- We hosted two community consultation sessions in Lloydminster with AHS, Alberta Health and local stakeholders to discuss plans for the old wing at the Dr. Cooke Extended Care facility.
- We participated in Bi-Provincial Health Services Committee meetings throughout the year. The committee was formed to ensure the unique health service needs of Lloydminster and area are met in collaboration with the Alberta and Saskatchewan governments.
- We connected with:
  - People in our communities and we shared the message of personal responsibility in one's own health. This includes self-advocating when interacting with the health system, ensuring all questions are answered and requesting additional time with a healthcare professional when needed.
  - RhPAP to discuss opportunities for attraction and retention of health professionals in some of our areas.
  - Local community organizations that provided information to the public on topics such as post traumatic stress disorder and addiction awareness.
- We attended Community Health Service Awareness meetings where community organizations and services come together to discuss the work each is doing.
- In collaboration with David Thompson HAC and AHS' Community Engagement Department, we are working to create strategies for gathering feedback from the public on health topics of interest/importance. Information gathered will help shape planning for our public information sessions and 2018/19 work plan objectives.

*For more information on Health Advisory Councils, visit [ahs.ca](http://ahs.ca)*

## Providing feedback and advice to AHS

- We recommended increasing:
  - Access to affordable addiction treatment centres for adults.
  - Access to mental health services for young children who are not yet eligible for school funding.

- We made recommendations for the new medical centre in Provost.
- We reminded AHS of the importance of consulting the public in the Health Plan so they continue to see themselves reflected in a meaningful way.

- We began work with the Central Zone Primary Care Network (PCN) Committee to share the community perspective on PCN care.
- We participated in senior operating committee meetings with Central Zone leadership where we shared key priorities from our work plan to discuss alignment with the zone's direction.



## Topics on the minds of our Council and community members

### Council profile

- We look forward to continuing to build the profile of our HAC within our communities and we will partner with our AHS Central Zone leaders, and AHS' Community Engagement department.

### Top issues Identified

We shared the top health concerns and opportunities within our council area with the AHS Board, including:

- **Shortage of physicians and long wait times**
  - There are long waits for regular appointments and for specialists, and after hours clinics are not enough to meet the demand.
- **Access and retention of rural specialists**
  - Rural community members have to travel long distances for x-ray and ultrasound.
- **Mental health**
  - Improvements need to be made on access to services, awareness of services available, and reducing stigma.
- **Transportation**
  - Transportation is needed for seniors to travel to medical appointments.
- **Placement of disabled/handicapped people**
  - Often young handicapped persons are placed in seniors care facilities.
- **Seniors care**
  - Share information about services for seniors in Central Zone.

## A look ahead

Our Council had a very interesting and productive year due to a robust and focussed work plan.

We also accomplished many strategies by planning and working together with the David Thompson HAC.

We look forward to contacting many of the municipalities in our Council area to develop relationships, promote our Council and gather feedback from them. We want to plan the municipal leaders forums together with David Thompson HAC based on the information we gather from the municipalities. We look forward to working with Central Zone leadership on the planning. We want to support their relationship building with municipalities by providing them opportunities to provide information relative to the municipal feedback as well as operational initiatives relative to the region.

Two challenges we hear about regularly in our Council area are mental health and continuing care. We look forward to collaborating with David Thompson HAC to host public information sessions on these topics. We want to try virtual sessions where AHS shares the information by video conference. We plan to have a Council member at each site to host, welcome the public and build awareness of our Council. We plan to measure our effectiveness.

We also hope to increase attendance at our meetings so the information we learn from AHS can be further shared. We plan to use personal connections and social media to encourage attendance at the meetings.

We would also like to promote awareness of our Council and engage with the masses by participating in at least two public events such as a trade fair or an agricultural event.

We look forward to continued involvement in Zone Healthcare Planning. We also look forward to providing feedback into many new health initiatives.

# Learn more

- Visit [ahs.ca](http://ahs.ca) and search Advisory Councils
- Email [yellowheadeast@ahs.ca](mailto:yellowheadeast@ahs.ca)
- Check out our Twitter and Facebook accounts, 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](http://ahs.ca).
- Delivering a presentation at a Council meeting on a health area of interest or concern.
- Volunteering your time as a Council member. Recruitment drives happen annually. Members are appointed for three-year terms.



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