



Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021 /5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m./ Zoom

ATTENDEES & INTRODUCTIONS	
Members	Cyndy Heslin (Chair), Taneen Rudyk (Vice-Chair), John Erkelens, Agnes Hoveland, Deb McMann, Maya Rathnavalu
Regrets	Lesley Hansen, Stephanie Munro, Glenys Reeves, Leah Taylor
AHS	Sherie Allen, Maribela Arruda-Block, Maya Atallah, Tara Duhaney, Aaryn Lynham, Barb Melhorn, Debora Okrainetz, Brant Poirier, Lori Sparrow, Janice Stewart, Andrea Thain Liptak, Valerie Thompson
Public	Two
Welcome & Introductions	Cyndy welcomed all in attendance and went through introductions. Cyndy provided a land acknowledgment.
Approval of previous minutes	March 17, 2021 minutes were reviewed and approved by consensus.
STANDING ITEMS	
Action items from the previous meeting	<p>The following action items from the March 17, 2021 meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maya will share with Community Engagement the suggestion that another COVID-19 material is needed, such as a one-pager information page with graphics that community members can share on social media. Complete • Maya will follow up to ensure that HAC members are invited to the community conversation session on COVID. Complete • Deb will look into after-hours mental health services and the work underway to offer services through the Primary Care Network. Complete • Maya will share the names of the newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair with the AHS Board. Complete
Alberta Health Services Zone Update	<p>Janice Stewart, Chief Zone Officer, Central Zone, shared the following:</p> <p>Information on how leadership is planning and working with all Central Zone AHS sites to avoid service disruptions, by watching staffing levels as projected as a result of the AHS immunization policy. COVID-19 and its new variants have led to an increase in ICU admissions greater than in the past. A “risk score” is used to determine the level of care a patient needs in order to be placed on oxygen and transported for stabilization. Risk scoring also helps in managing bed capacity and staffing levels. For the most up-to-date data visit COVID-19 Alberta statistics. Janice gave kudos to all Central Zone staff and</p>



recognized it's been a team effort to support and manage the volume of admissions to ICU. Janice added the Red Deer Regional Hospital's (RDRH) business plan is now complete and will go to the Alberta Government for consideration of capital investment. Finally, a new contracted provider for Emergency Medical Services will be covering Alberta and Saskatchewan. There will be no gaps in service as this transition takes place.

Lori Sparrow, Senior Operating Officer Community, and Seniors Health, Central Zone:

Lori informed the council of the re-organizational changes to each of the Seniors Health Area Directors in the Central Zone and the respective areas they cover. Lori explained the criteria of an outbreak as either one patient or staff member testing positive. She adds all residents in designated and long-term living sites and lodges have received their third dose. Independent living facilities are scheduled to have residents immunized with the third dose in early November. To create capacity in Central Zone, some patients in acute care beds were moved to sites away from their hometown. Work is underway to move them back, or close to home as cases decline. Lori shared the work being done to avoid service disruptions and staffing levels resulting from the AHS immunization policy.

Debora Okrainetz, Area Director:

Deb announced that Vegreville will soon have COVID-19 testing sites. She shared the Bachelor in Nursing (BN) degree program at the Wainwright Health Centre is now underway. Deb provided an update on the transition of the Lloydminster Continuing Care and Dr. Cooke Extended Care centers, as well as vacancy management work proceeding in Lloydminster and Vegreville.

Andrea Thain Liptak, Senior Operating Officer, Rural Acute Care, Primary Care, Allied, and Indigenous Health:

Andrea shared Central Zone COVID-19 statistics and operational work underway to ensure all sites are supported across the province (bed huddles; load-leveling). She added that patient placement and surgical delays are temporary solutions to ensuring bed capacity is available for COVID-19 patients.

Valerie Thompson, Area Director, Acute Care Northeast:

Each area director spoke on the impact of COVID-19 in their specific areas, including surgical delays and service disruptions to departments and services, staffing levels and recruitment efforts to fill vacancies and closure to departments due to physician coverage. Communities and stakeholders are notified once a news release is publicly shared. For more information on the latest advisories visit [AHS.ca](https://www.alberta.ca/ahs-ca).



	<p>Sherie Allen, Senior Operating Officer, Addiction Mental Health and Public Health: Sherie shared information on the school vaccine program, as well as clarified that physicians are also included in the AHS immunization policy.</p>
Community Partners	<p>Colleen Lindholm, Rural Community Consultant with Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), shared updates with Council. Highlights include: upcoming virtual learning opportunities for rural community members; RhPAPs 30th anniversary celebration will include 30 for 30 videos, recapping their history and interviews they've conducted; the Rhapsody Community Award winner: Tofield, Ryley & Beaver County West.</p>
Council Round Table	<p>The following was shared by Council members in their communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors are expressing fear of going out as they are scared to get COVID-19, despite being vaccinated. This is affecting mental health as depression and loneliness occasionally leads to suicidal ideation. • There is increasing division within communities between those who are vaccinated and those who are not. • There is concern about losing more staff as a result of AHS' immunization policy. • Misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine and subsequent data continues, which is creating increased negativity and aggression in communities. Janice responded that AHS is addressing misinformation in a variety of ways, including hosting Community Conversations across Central Zone. AHS also shares information via its website and social media. • Frustration over vaccine requirements and the visitation policy at continuing care sites. Lori responded that each congregate-care facility has unique guidelines for visitors. For information on the visitor guidelines visit the Government of Alberta website. • One member shared information about the Camrose Open Door Association. • Work done by Vegreville and Ryley attraction and retention committees to show appreciation to local healthcare staff. • New classes now offered at the Camrose Primary Care Network include exercise specialist and dietitian classes.
NEW BUSINESS	
Presentation(s)	<p>Addictions and Mental Health Strategic Plan <i>Sherie Allen, Senior Operating Officer, Addiction Mental Health and Public Health</i> <i>Maribela Arruda-Block, Area Director, Central Zone, Community Addiction and Mental Health</i></p>



	In camera. AHS engaged with council members on the strategic plan.
Date of Next Meeting	Date: Thursday, January 27, 2021 – Engagement Event Time: 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Location: Online via Zoom. Contact community.engagement@ahs.ca for details

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