

# Yellowhead East

## 2021-22 Annual Report

(July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022)





## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



*Vicki Yellow Old Woman*

It's been another remarkable year for health services in Alberta. While the COVID-19 pandemic carried on, vaccines became available which has been monumental in slowing the spread of the virus and preventing severe illness. Through it all, AHS Advisory Councils remained connected with their communities and have demonstrated an incredible spirit of volunteerism through their engagement activities.

Through Advisory Councils, AHS has received feedback on a number of important initiatives which are outlined in each of these reports. We are grateful for the involvement of our Councils in advising AHS on a range of matters of importance to all Albertans.

On behalf of the AHS Board, I extend my sincerest gratitude to all Advisory Council members for continuing to foster relationships with stakeholders across Alberta. These grassroots connections have been vital to AHS' ability to make well-rounded decisions on health services that impact so many of us. Your commitment is greatly appreciated and we look forward to the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Vicki Yellow Old Woman,  
Chair, Community Engagement Committee, AHS Board



## Message from the Chair, Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council



*Cyndy Heslin*

Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council (YEHAC) met four times in 2021, including two community engagement sessions; one in January on social wellness dimensions, and one in May with a presentation of Greg's Wings. We held our regular Council meetings in March and October where we learned more about Caregiver-Centred Care and Addictions and Mental Health Strategic Plan.

Our main goal this past year was to build awareness of the HAC with the public. We concentrated on who YEHAC is, what we do, how to connect with us and how we can help.

We were very active in educating our communities on health while bringing the voices of the community to AHS. We strived to build relationships with our communities, with other Advisory Councils and with AHS and were grateful for multiple learning opportunities from AHS on a wide variety of webinars, learning sessions, support sessions and information sharing.

We look forward to meeting again in person, hopefully in the near future, so new and returning members can connect face-to-face and continue building on the great work of the HAC.

Sincerely,

Cyndy Heslin  
Chair, Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council



## Who we are

The Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council (YEHAC) is comprised of up to 15 volunteer members who reside in the geographic [area](#) from Provost in the east to Camrose lthe west. Visit us online for a full list of [membership](#).



*Top L-R: Agnes Hoveland, Allen Dietz, Cyndy Heslin, Deborah McMann, John Erkelens  
Bottom L-R: Judy Arces Leah Taylor, Maya Rathnavalu, Stephanie Munro, Taneen Rudyk  
Missing: Glenys Reeves, Lesley Hansen  
Term ended in 2021-22: Sarah Hissett*



*Deborah McMann and Allen Dietz at the Advisory Council Spring Forum. May 2022.*



# Key achievements of 2021-22

Our capacity to engage remained virtual through the year and yet we were very pleased to have 147 community members attend our meetings and events. Thus, we remained committed to our role in ensuring the voice of our communities remained present.



We partnered with AHS to host two Community Conversations. One was on suicide prevention where we learned about current statistics and services available to local residents. We also learned tactics to prevent suicide which is invaluable knowledge for the broader community.

Our second Community Conversation was on Connect Care in Central Zone, where we learned about the new central access point for more complete, up-to-date patient information and best practices. This session also provided an opportunity for attendees to learn about [MyAHS Connect](#).



During our general meetings we had a presentation on cancer screening programs in Alberta and another on the Addiction and Mental Health (AMH) Strategic Plan. We learned what is available and how to access cancer screening, followed by understanding how the addiction and mental health strategy fits into the AHS ten-year vision. Attendees also provided feedback on AMH planning to ensure it is reflective of communities, based on key points we've heard from previous engagement.



As COVID-19 continued to be a priority across the province, Council received ongoing updated via participation in virtual COVID-19 Community Conversations pertaining to Central Zone. Resources were provided that we shared among our communities. We also participated in discussion about temporary service disruptions that occurred at various facilities within the Zone.



In addition to general meetings and engagement events, Council provided feedback to AHS initiatives, including:

- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Dispatch Consolidation
- A seat on a bi-provincial committee with AHS leaders and representatives of the Saskatchewan Health Authority where we review and discuss planning of strategic health priorities for the border city of Lloydminster
- Transition progress at Lloydminster Continuing Care and Dr. Cooke Extended Care Centres
- Status update on the Galahad Health Centre
- Grateful Patients consultation with AHS Foundation Relations

Many of our members belong to their local Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) Attraction and Retention Committee, where they helped organize appreciation events in local communities to acknowledge healthcare professionals for their work during the pandemic.

AHS Community Engagement held its annual Advisory Council Forum in May 2022. The event was held in Edmonton over two days. Themed as 'Bridging Communities,' sessions included AHS experts and award-winning external speakers on timely topics such as Indigenous health, mental wellness, virtual health, opioid resources, and allyship in healthcare.



## A look ahead

As we plan for the year ahead, Council will focus on connecting with communities in our Zone as we plan for meetings and engagement events in 2022-23. Our meetings will continue to encourage community members to attend and share their insights on health service delivery, and they will be an opportunity to hear from health experts and local stakeholders on topics of interest.

It is through this diverse membership that our Council is able to continue being a great resource to AHS. We will continue connecting with local communities so the dialogue with AHS remains meaningful, and so information continues to be disseminated broadly into our communities.

Plans for the coming year include:

- Focusing on mental health and addiction resources by connecting with various community leaders and organizations to learn their perspectives, understand gaps in service, promote programs, and share resources. Council has a particular interest in connecting with schools, younger adults and adolescents through a partnership with AHS' Addiction and Mental Health team.
- Continued work with health partners, such as RhPAP, Primary Care Networks (PCN), and Family and Community Support Services (FCSS).
- Sharing of information about seniors and continuing Care programs and services, and learning of the needs of communities in the Council area.
- Collaboration with neighboring Central Zone HAC, David Thompson, and other Advisory Councils on health topics impacting Albertans.

Lastly, YEHAC was pleased to welcome two new members in 2022. Allen Dietz and Judy Arces each bring a unique expertise and community connection to our Council table, and we look forward to their contributions in the years to come.



*It has been a pleasure working with the Central Zone HAC Chairs and Advisory Councils over the 2021-22 year. Their ability to keep us connected to the communities we serve and to provide feedback and advice on services within the zone has been invaluable. We truly appreciate all the time and effort the members have committed to engaging with their communities and speaking on their behalf.*

**Janice Stewart**

Chief Zone Officer, Central Zone

Advisory Council members share advice and feedback from their communities with AHS. Councils hold public meetings and engagement activities virtually or in locations throughout their geographic area that further contribute to improving healthcare services in Alberta.

## 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/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils).
- Delivering a presentation at a Council meeting on a health area of interest or concern.
- Provide input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#).
- Apply to [become a member](#). Members are appointed for three-year terms.

## Learn more

Visit [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils)

✉ [yellowheadeast@ahs.ca](mailto:yellowheadeast@ahs.ca)

☎ 1.877.275.8830

Check us out on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) or by searching AHS Advisory Councils.

