

Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council

2022-23 Annual Report



Message from the Official Administrator Dr. John Cowell



It has been a great pleasure to reconnect with Alberta Health Services (AHS) Advisory Councils since I was appointed to the role of AHS Official Administrator in November 2022. Soon after my appointment, I had the opportunity to meet with Council Chairs and our conversation informed the development of my 90-Day Plan to achieve rapid improvements in four priority areas of AHS:

- Improving emergency medical services (EMS) response times.
- Decreasing emergency department wait times.
- Reducing surgery wait times.
- Improving patient flow and continuity of care.

There has been marked improvement in all these areas, not just over my first 90 days as OA, but sustained improvements made possible, in part, by the invaluable advice and perspectives provided by our Councils.

Through our partnership with Advisory Councils, we're seeing EMS response times improving despite sustained increases in call volume across the province. Emergency department wait times are also coming down. Fewer people are waiting longer for surgery than clinically recommended. And we're seeing evidence of improved patient flow with the addition of acute care, intensive care and continuing care beds. We need to continue building on this momentum, while also addressing our organization's serious workforce issues. This is all challenging and complex work, and AHS will continue to involve our Advisory Councils as a key stakeholder for advice and real-time feedback on how we're doing in our efforts to serve all Albertans.

I understand and appreciate the value that Advisory Councils bring to AHS, and look forward to expanding and deepening our partnership. I'll continue to reach out to Council Chairs, and meet with Council members throughout the year, including at the 2024 Advisory Council Forum.

I'd like to express my gratitude for the work of all Advisory Council members. Although AHS still has much work ahead, I look to the future with optimism knowing we'll move forward and navigate our challenges with our valued and steadfast Advisory Council partners.

Message from the Chair Kavis Reed, Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council



Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council (GEHAC) had an outstanding year engaging the communities that we represent and serve. This past year, Council hosted two community outreach sessions that addressed a critical health topic: mental health. In the fall of 2022, GEHAC hosted a hybrid event that had a panel of experts representing many social groups, speak on the status of mental health in the Greater Edmonton area. Mental health experts representing rural Albertans, the LGBTQ2S+, visible minorities, the Indigenous community and seniors presented in person and via video conference. These experts smartly gave updates on mental health in their respective communities. In addition, they listed the many avenues that people could engage to get information and help in their communities.

Following our Fall 2022 hybrid event, Council hosted an in-person panel presentation on post-COVID youth mental health. The downtown Edmonton event was a success in attendance, content and interaction. Information by the panel and the audience engagement were informative and achieved positive discussions. We are preparing for another year of gainful conversations around the health issues that people in our community feel are important. Our expectation is to smartly represent and inform members of our area.

OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS



Top L-R: Kavis Reed (Chair), Shakib Rahman (Vice Chair), Shelley Biermanski, Maria Melizza Carino, Towunmi Coker
Row 2 L-R: Donalda Farwell, Ben Gronberg, Floyd House, Maryana Kravtsenyuk, Vincent Liu
Row 4 L-R: Austin Mardon, Noah Martin, Leahann McKinnon, Andrea Petryk
Missing: Nazret Russon

“On behalf of the Edmonton Zone leadership team, we thank the GEHAC for providing your passion for the health and wellness of our community, your time, advice, thought provoking questions and spirit of collaboration throughout the 2022-23 year. The GEHAC keeps us connected to the people we serve and provides invaluable feedback and guidance on numerous topics and has broadened our understanding through the very successful public meetings that were held. We look forward with anticipation to our work with you in 2023-24.

Carol Anderson and Dr. Kirstie McLelland
Chief Zone Officer and Acting Zone Medical Director, Edmonton Zone

FACTS AND FIGURES



Council Member Representation

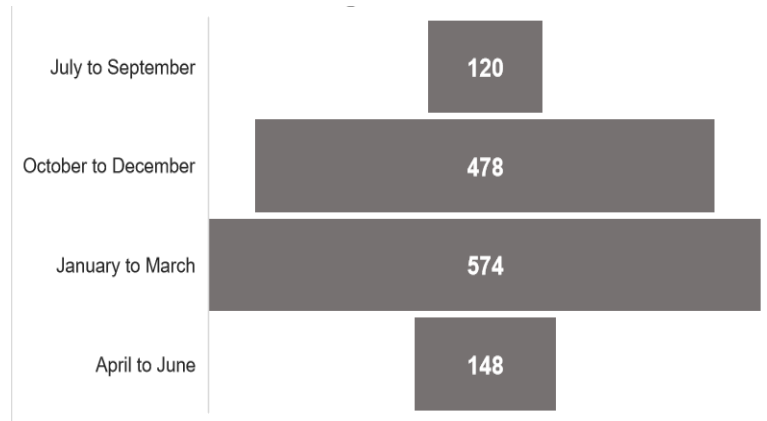
Devon
Edmonton

Leduc
St. Albert

By the numbers
Participation at GEHAC meetings & events:

- 2** public meetings
- 47** public attended
- 2** engagement events
- 90** public attended
- 7** new members

Provincial participation at Advisory Council meetings & events*



*Reflective of the number of public that attended all HAC and Provincial Advisory Council meetings and events between July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

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.

- ✓ Addiction and Mental Health was a top priority for GEHAC. Council sought to partner with AHS and community services providers to gain a broader understanding of the resources available to those seeking help for mental health and addictions. We exceeded our expectations with two expert panel presentations that attracted over 120 members of the public and elicited invaluable information sharing.
- ✓ GEHAC gained information about AMH supports for the homeless populations in rural and urban centres and subsequently spread this information to their networks.
- ✓ Council hosted an information session to share information, resources and have a conversation about emerging youth mental health topics. A panel of professionals included Kickstand, Child and Adolescent Services Association (CASA) and John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, who spoke about the impact of cyberbullying, self-harm and loneliness on youth and their mental health.
- ✓ In November 2022, Council hosted a panel of experts that addressed mental health issues faced by immigrant populations, youth, Indigenous peoples, rural Albertans and seniors. To present information Council invited experts from:
 - University of Alberta Faculty of Nursing
 - Plains Cree Helper from James Smith Cree Nation
 - Westend Seniors Activity Centre / WESeniors Strathcona County Community Hub
 - The Do More Agriculture Foundation
 - Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Rainbow Refuge Program
 - Executive Director, Addiction and Mental Health Edmonton Zone

Attendees learned about addiction and mental health and were provided with community resources.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE INPUT (ALL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS)



Newcomer Engagement Patient & Experience

AHS sought input on how AHS can communicate, support, and enable Albertans to become active partners in their care.



2022-23 Influenza Immunization Campaign

Members reviewed draft AHS influenza campaign materials and provided input toward the provincewide campaign that informed Albertans about the flu shot.



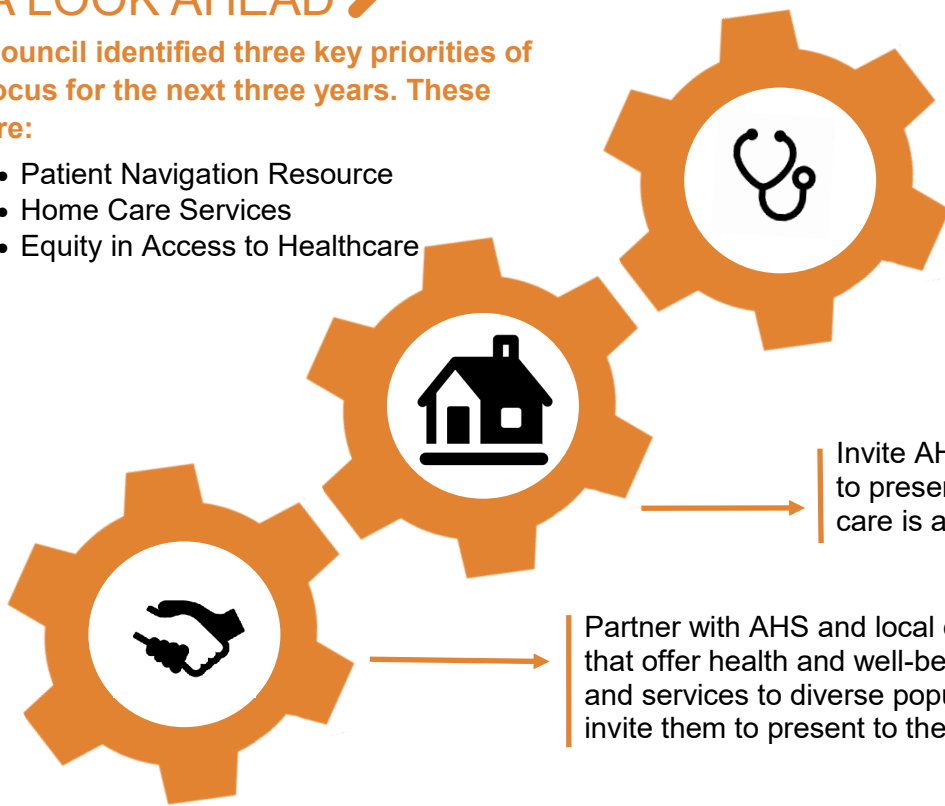
Spiritual Care Policy

Councils were invited to provide feedback to the AHS Community Spiritual and Religious Providers Access Policy.

A LOOK AHEAD

Council identified three key priorities of focus for the next three years. These are:

- Patient Navigation Resource
- Home Care Services
- Equity in Access to Healthcare



GEHAC commits to:

Invite presentations from various AHS departments (e.g., Health Link, Seniors and Continuing Care, Palliative Care) on how to access different healthcare services.

Invite AHS home care staff to present on what home care is and how to access it.

Partner with AHS and local organizations that offer health and well-being programs and services to diverse populations, and invite them to present to the Council.

GET INVOLVED

Make a difference to the health and well-being of your community by sharing your thoughts and ideas with AHS.

- Email: greateredmonton@ahs.ca
- Phone: 1.877.275.8830
- Attending an [upcoming meeting](#)
- Provide input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#)

APPLY

