

# Wisdom Council



## 2019-20 Annual Report



Wisdom Council

Healthy Albertans.  
Healthy Communities.  
**Together.**

## Message from Alberta Health Services President & CEO

The Wisdom Council continues to be a valued partner in health to AHS. Its newly developed Terms of Reference has allowed for improved representation of the health needs of Indigenous peoples across Alberta. The creation of an Elder Circle has also been instrumental as it's ensured a more fulsome role for Elders in advising AHS.



*Dr. Verna Yiu*

These are exciting times in health services. As implementation of the AHS Review rolls out we'll look to the Wisdom Council for advice and guidance to ensure the voice of Indigenous peoples are factored in along the way. We look forward to an active year of engagement and important dialogue as we continue to make improvements in health services.

On behalf of AHS, thank you to all members for your passion and continued commitment.

Sincerely,

Dr. Verna Yiu  
President and CEO, AHS

## Message from the Chair, Wisdom Council

On behalf of the Wisdom Council I would like to take this opportunity to provide encouragement and support to our Indigenous people of Alberta. March, 2020 has been unprecedented in the history of the Wisdom Council. We have witnessed a pandemic that has caused devastation on the entire world. Loss of life is never easy and heartbreaking.



*Casey Eagle Speaker*

We commend Dr. Vern Yiu, President and CEO for Alberta Health Services (AHS) on her leadership during this trying time. Thank you to AHS Executive, Physicians, Nurses and all health service staff who provided and continue to care for those affected by COVID-19. We, the Wisdom Council continue to hold our Indigenous people and AHS in our prayers. Remember we are a strong resilient people and will overcome this latest challenge.

We have not held as many meetings as in previous year due to budget constraints but have continued to provide support to Dr. Verna Yiu and AHS. We continue to provide recommendations where needed to continue improving health outcomes for the Indigenous, Métis and Inuit people we serve.

We look forward to continuing this journey of partnership and representation with Alberta Health Services on behalf of all Indigenous people of Alberta.

In Spirit of Health and Reconciliation (Reconciliation),

Casey Eagle Speaker (Sorrel Horse, Kainai Nation)  
Chair, Wisdom Council

## Who we are

The Wisdom Council (HAC) is comprised of up to 17 members who represent the Indigenous people of Alberta. Visit us online for a full list of our [membership](#).



**Left to Right Back Row:** Cheryl Sheldon, Noreen MacAteer, Connie Morin, Cassandra Ayoungman, Danika Little Child (former member), Emil Durocher (Elder Advisor, Indigenous Health Program) Donna Fayant, Calvin Badger, Meeka Otway

**Front Row:** Casey Eagle Speaker, Wally Sinclair, Frank Daniels, Beatrice Little Mustache, Paul Daniels, Adelaide (Dolly) Creighton

**Missing:** Charles Weasel Head, Carola Cunningham, Patsy Campbell, Tysun Tallman

## Highlights

### Presentations

- Establishing the Grandmother's Network on Maternal & Child Health
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Homeward Trust

### Opportunity for Participation

- AHS Indigenous Health Strategy
- Calgary Zone Indigenous Health Action Plan
- Edmonton Hospital planning

### Location of Public Meetings

- Calgary, Edmonton and virtual sessions

## Key achievements of 2019-20

### **Wisdom Council Elders Circle:**

In December, the Wisdom Council modified the terms of reference to recognize their knowledge keepers as distinct members within the Wisdom Council Elders Circle. Elders can now opt to continue to serve after their membership term ends by providing guidance to all AHS Advisory Councils, including the Wisdom Council.

### **Orientation for New Wisdom Council Members:**

An orientation was held for new Wisdom Council members which was well received as it covered the history of the Wisdom Council and role of being a Council member.

### **Indigenous Health Strategy**

Alberta Health Services approved the Indigenous Health Strategy in Jan 2020. The Wisdom Council ensured that the Strategy was built on relationships, was culturally focused, permeated AHS's structures, and was holistic in nature. Next step is to be action oriented.

### **Calgary Zone Indigenous Health Action Plan**

The Wisdom Council also participated in the creation of the Calgary Zone Indigenous Health Action Plan. This plan stems from the Calgary Zone Health and Business Plan.

### **Blessing Ceremony for New Edmonton Hospital:**

The Wisdom Council led a Blessing Ceremony March 1, 2019 on land where the future Edmonton hospital will be build. This ceremony brought together participants from the former Papaschase First Nation as it is acknowledged that the new hospital will be built in the area of the former reserve. Members of AHS, AH and the Indigenous communities participated in this important event.

### **Fred Eagletail Commemorative Celebration:**

Wisdom Council hosted a commemorative celebration for respected Elder Fred Eagletail who shared his cultural teachings with Alberta Health Services and was an original member of the Wisdom Council.

### **Recruitment of new Wisdom Council Members:**

The new membership continues to reflect a high level of diversity to ensure the voices of Indigenous peoples from across Alberta are represented, including First Nation, Métis and Inuit, on/off reserve, Métis settlements, urban, rural, Elders and youth.

## A look ahead

The Wisdom Council continues to provide guidance and recommendations on the development and implementation of culturally appropriate and innovative health service delivery for Indigenous Peoples.

The Wisdom Council will continue to provide guidance to increase cultural competency to improve access to culturally competent care for the Indigenous people of Alberta.

The Wisdom Council will continue to provide feedback and advice to Alberta Health Services to improve health care service delivery and integration of services for Indigenous people.

## Saying farewell



The Wisdom Council said farewell to three long-term members in 2019. At left, Andrea Pritchard-Kennedy; above, Debbie Coulter; and below Rob Camprie. In a special ceremony, each were presented with a blanket. The prayer and presenting of a Pendleton blanket to outgoing Wisdom Council members is to Honour and recognize a significant achievement in one's life. These three former members represented the Indigenous people with respect, humility and compassion.

# Learn more

- Visit [ahs.ca/advisorycouncils](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils)
- Email [community\\_engagement@ahs.ca](mailto:community_engagement@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 through one of our Advisory Councils. 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.
- Volunteering your time as a Council member.

For more information about the Wisdom Council and all Advisory Councils, [visit \[ahs.ca/advisorycouncils\]\(https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils\)](https://ahs.ca/advisorycouncils)

