

# Peace

## 2017/18 Annual Report



Peace  
Health Advisory Council

Healthy Albertans.  
Healthy Communities  
**Together.**

## Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors



*Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn*

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.

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 Peace Health Advisory Council



*Lucille Partington*

Maybe it was the long winter and lots of time for email and such, but we were very successful in our Council area in collecting and providing feedback to AHS on a number of issues. We have especially focused on seeking more emphasis on services in the areas of mental health, continuing care, home care and other supports in our communities. The focus away from extended hospital stays to having services in our communities highlighted in the 2017/2018 AHS Health Plan and Business Plan really has impressed us.

It is more difficult to find qualified staff in the north but AHS is working hard to fill jobs as we see new dollars for services in the communities. As we travel to our communities, we always ask about changes in services and what is still needed and believe me, community members at the meetings and outside of meetings feel free to tell us. The spirit of the north is alive and well when it comes to information sharing.

At our Advisory Council Fall Forum we learned more about health in the Truth and Reconciliation Report and have included goals in our work plans to see equitable treatment of our Indigenous populations. We are aware that Health Canada is responsible for some of this work but applaud efforts by all staff to specialize and enhance services for rural and isolated populations in the Peace Country.

I have personally had the opportunity to serve on the Patient and Family Advisory Group. It is a formal collection of volunteer patients who share personal health experiences in order to provide more human and meaningful understandings to policies, practices and planning within AHS. This has also given me a chance to learn about the 15 Strategic Clinical Networks (SCN) set up to encourage the best possible services to Albertans. These groups could be called best practice groups, because they combine research and practicality. To give you an example, the Diabetes, Obesity and Nutrition SCN reports 300,000 diabetic patients with another 600,000 at risk because of lifestyle. They are training healthcare workers and physicians in the best way to help patients. Under the leadership of Dr. Yiu, AHS has become more progressive and forward thinking while being fiscally responsible.

In closing, I wish to thank our new and past Council members for their hard work and to thank community stakeholders, volunteers and AHS staff members for all their contributions to making our healthcare system the best in the land.

Sincerely,

Lucille Partington, Chair  
Peace Health Advisory Council

## About Our Council

### 2017/2018 Council Members

#### Current Members

Lucille	Partington (Chair)	Sexsmith
Yvonne	Rempel (Vice Chair)	Grande Cache
Kishor	Ojha	Grande Prairie
Helen	Neufeld	Grande Prairie
Cindy	Park	Grande Prairie
Sandra	Baker	Hythe
Gloria	Robertson	Peace River
Alison	Cormack	Grande Prairie
Laura	Hancharuk	Grande Prairie
Judy	Brown	Spirit River
Penny	Stone	Manning



*Back row left to right: Yvonne Rempel, Cindy Park  
Front row left to right: Gloria Robertson, Laura Hancharuk, Helen Neufeld, Sandra Baker,  
Lucille Partington, Judy Brown, Alison Cormack  
Missing: Penny Stone and Kishor Ojha*



## Priorities for our Council

Advocate for improved access to all kinds of care

- We were pleased to hear that addiction and mental health services will be available in the new Grande Prairie hospital when it is completed.
- We learned about health navigators including stroke, cancer and home care.

Educate the public about accessing the right service in the right place

- We toured the rural sites where they hold meetings to become aware of services offered in the community.
- We continued to support the implementation of the seven health recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and we learned more about the recommendations at our meeting in January 2018.

Advocate for increased access to mental health services in the Peace HAC area

- We investigated the mental health services available in the community and how the information is shared.
- One example of a handy resource council members discovered is a key ring that includes numerous cards outlining details for community mental health resources.
- AHS provided a list of mental health programs and services available in Grande Prairie.
- We heard from the Area Manager for Child and Youth Addiction and Mental Health services in Grande Prairie and area.

5

Council meetings were held through the year in Grande Prairie, and rural locations including Fox Creek and Manning.

19

Public members attended council meetings.



## Engaging the public

### **Manning**

We heard from 11 municipal leaders in the Peace River area about concerns with the process for the AHS air ambulance contract. We shared the report submitted by the municipal leaders with AHS Senior Leadership.

### **Fox Creek**

We heard from the Town of Fox Creek and the Municipal District of Greenview. We were pleased to learn the Town of Valleyview was opening a new Multiplex Centre as this supports healthy communities. The Town of Fox Creek predicts growth and increased activity in the area with the upturn of the economy. Community stakeholders asked about how fundraising supports equipment budgets at facilities.

### **Grande Prairie**

Six members of the public attended the three meetings in Grande Prairie. They asked about the length of shifts for Registered Nurses, physician privileges, the number of beds in the new Grande Prairie hospital, the Candy Striper Program and nurse uniforms. AHS senior leadership addressed the questions during the meetings.

### **Council Input**

Major themes derived from Council member feedback include:

- The need for easily accessible addiction and mental health resources.
- The outcome for Berwyn Lodge.
- Fentanyl addictions and the opioid crisis.

# Providing feedback and advice to AHS

**1** Member attended the North Zone Area Management meetings and learned how operational plans are developed for the area.

**3** Members attended Fentanyl information sessions to learn and ask questions about the crisis.

**3** Members attended the Patient Centred Care Film Festival in Grande Prairie that demonstrated how staff members are changing the culture from being task oriented to viewing the care through the eyes of the patient/resident with the idea “nothing about me, without me.”

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

- Transportation from rural to urban centres for medical services for those who do not have access to motor vehicles.
- More Telehealth use by specialists to reduce distances for patients who travel from the north to urban centres.
- The need for people to take accountability for their health.
- Enact the seven health recommendations from the Indigenous Health Truth and Reconciliation Report.
- Better understand the roles of navigators.
- The need for public knowledge of mental health programs and resources available in their communities.
- Address wait times for specialists, and gaps in mental health services and seniors and continuing care services.



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



## A look ahead

We have a very active and engaged Council. We were able to split up the priorities from our work plan and tackle them in committees. It helped us to learn more about various program areas as well as where there are gaps and opportunities.

We want to continue to connect with people in the various communities to spread awareness of our Council and to build relationships. We find that as people get to know us, we receive more calls with feedback.

As we look ahead, we appreciate there are limited resources and members of the public have to become responsible for their own health. Responsibility for one's health is one of the concerns we heard this past year in addition to many other concerns. We believe that if people take responsibility, it will help offset a tsunami of needs from the baby boomers as they age.

We also look forward to listening to the public to narrow the scope of concerns according to the most needed.

We are pleased the Alberta Government Ministry of Transportation is addressing the rural transportation issue through a related pilot project. We will provide feedback where possible and monitor the outcomes of the pilot project.

We are privileged as Council members to learn all about AHS and the many programs and services available. We are constantly expanding our knowledge by attending webinars and seminars. We will continue to share information we learn with the public and provide feedback to AHS when we hear of gaps and opportunities.

# Learn more

- Visit [ahs.ca](http://ahs.ca) and search Advisory Councils
- Email [peace@ahs.ca](mailto:peace@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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