

Palliser Triangle

2017/18 Annual Report



Palliser Triangle
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 Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council

Two priorities – addiction and mental health and the aging population – provided the background and framework for much of the activity by the Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council (HAC) in 2017/18.



Reg Radke

The Palliser Triangle HAC felt it was important to start with an inventory of local resources when discussing strategies to deliver mental health services. This was complemented by collaborative work in both Medicine Hat and Brooks. HAC member Diane McNaughton is also a member of the Addiction and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council, and provides a strong voice for Southeast Alberta.

With a focus on the aging population in southeast Alberta, several Council members have been advocates for this segment of our communities' populations. Pat Dietrich serves on the AHS provincial Continuing Care Quality Committee and is another strong voice for southeast Alberta. Our Council has had many discussions on topics ranging from palliative care capacity in Medicine Hat, to staffing levels at care facilities and geriatric assessment capabilities throughout the southeast area.

The small rural voice is often a topic at our meetings. The proposed Bassano Continuing Care project is an innovative template for an 'aging in the community' hub, and for health and wellness care in rural Alberta.

Our Council has reminded local communities that our five regular meetings are open to the public. We reintroduced public information evenings in Medicine Hat and planned another for Brooks. We have been fortunate to have members from AHS' South Zone Executive Leadership attend our meetings to provide Council with operational information. We have arranged for formal presentations from allied health and delivery partners such as the Primary Care Network (PCN), HALO, Covenant Health, Rural Health Physicians Action Plan (RhPAP) and others. This all helps in providing factual information back into our communities.

In developing the annual work plan for 2018/19, a key goal is to raise the profile of our Council in our communities. We can help facilitate a stronger relationship between users and providers through regular, accurate and timely two-way conversation with the communities we serve.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to outgoing Chair, Dr. Ken Sauer, who has served AHS through his membership on the Palliser Triangle HAC. We look forward to having Ken continue to provide his wealth of connections and community insight as he serves out the remainder of his appointment as a member of our Council.

Sincerely,

Reg Radke, Chair
Palliser Triangle Health Advisory Council

**At time of report printing, Reg Radke was Chair*

About Our Council

2017/2018 Council Members

Current Members

Dr. Ken Sauer (Chair)	Medicine Hat
Reg Radke (Vice Chair)	Brooks
Dr. Sara Joan Armour	Medicine Hat
Ajit Atwal	Medicine Hat
Rudi Brockmann	Oyen
Pat Dietrich	Medicine Hat
Diane MacNaughton	Medicine Hat
Marjorie Moncrieff	Bow Island
Paul Nederveen	Medicine Hat
Heather Norris	Oyen
Blake Pedersen	Medicine Hat
Patty Rooks	Seven Persons
Stephanie Shaw	Medicine Hat

Past Members

Barry Morishita Brooks



Back row left to right: Blake Pedersen, Dr. Ken Sauer

Front row left to right: Stephanie Shaw, Pat Dietrich, Diane MacNaughton, Patty Rooks, Reg Radke, Dr. Sara Joan Armour

Missing: Ajit Atwal, Rudi Brockmann, Marjorie Moncrieff, Paul Nederveen, Heather Norris

Priorities for our Council

We identified four priorities of focus for our 2017/18 work plan:

- **Focus on Addiction and Mental Health**
 - We connected with local community organizations, took inventory of available resource materials, and collected 17 different sources to share with members and the public, as needed.
 - We accessed a resource guide from the Canadian Mental Health Association, “When You Need Help,” and a resource guide from the Community Assistance Network, “My Connections”.
- **Address the needs of the South Zone aging population**
 - We made plans to host public forums in local communities.
 - We made plans to learn about and understand local resources from prevention to treatment.
- **Greater emphasis on prevention and health promotion**
 - Council collected information about sexual health supports for schools within the area.
- **Enhance primary and community-based healthcare services and create coordination of services and integration of activities**
 - Council hosted a public forum in Medicine Hat where public feedback was collected and shared with AHS.

5

Public participants attended each of our meetings.

6

Public meetings were held in Medicine Hat, Bow Island, Oyen, Brooks and Bassano.

10

Presentations made from organizations such as AHS, RhPAP, HALO Rescue, Cypress View Foundation, Newell Foundation, and the PCN.



Engaging the public

- Community discussions that took place in Brooks on the availability of mental health resources and gaps in service (particularly among youth). This helped us provide solid feedback to AHS, and helped toward building strategies in the community for moving forward.
- We recommended RhPAP and Council work together in the future to ensure efforts in local communities are aligned and reduce overlap. We also recommended RhPAP consider:
 - Increasing efforts for rural attraction directly from Alberta universities through promotion within university medical student newsletters and Skills Days.
 - Continuing efforts with high school students through Careers Next Generation.
- Several of our members are involved with external health organizations and events which give us the opportunity to gather feedback and share AHS information on a larger scale. Some of these organizations and events include:
 - Covenant Health
 - Senior's Week events in Medicine Hat
 - Schizophrenia Society
 - Global Health Security Initiative
 - Community Collaborative Network
 - AHS Continuing Care Quality Committee
 - Sexual Assault Response Committee
 - Friends of Medicare
 - South East Fetal Alcohol Network
 - Oyen Activity Fair
- We began working with local pharmacists on communication about bringing unused medications to pharmacies for proper disposal.

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

Providing feedback and advice to AHS

- We participated in:
 - Three engagement sessions that were hosted by South Zone Operational Planning in Brooks, Taber and Medicine Hat.
 - The South Zone Operational Plan Steering Committee.
 - An engagement session with AHS' Community Engagement on AHS' Ethical Framework.
- We recommended:
 - More way-finders at the front entrance of Medicine Hat Regional Hospital.
 - Increased staff training on transparency when changes occur to facility services and processes.
- We shared our thoughts about the timing and flow of communication with AHS' Community Engagement and Communications department.
- We expressed our support for and helped to resurrect conversations between AHS and the Newell Foundation on the Bassano Continuing Care project.

Topics on the minds of our Council and community members

We shared the top health concerns and opportunities within our Council area with the AHS Board, including:

- Greater emphasis on:
 - Preventive measures and timely intervention/treatment in the area of addictions and mental health.
 - Prevention of serious health issues and health promotion.
 - Rolling out of Personal Health Record.
 - Integrated health care services, reduce wait times for appointments with specialists, and ensure better coordination between family physicians and specialists.
 - Compassion and caring for Palliative and Hospice Care.
 - Educating people to assume greater responsibility for good health.
 - Urgent care facilities in Medicine Hat.
- A more integrated system for care for seniors, and a review of the needs of the aging population.
- More effective relationships between family physician, patient and other medical care providers (specialists, hospital, etc.).
- Consideration for movement/location of palliative care beds.
- Need more info about the new Enhancing Care in the Community AHS plan/outlook.

A look ahead

We had a positive, engaging year, and were pleased that several members of the public attended each of our meetings. HAC members were diligent in spreading the word about our publicly held meetings and have continued to build connections within our respective communities.

In the coming year we plan to build on current momentum by broadening public awareness of our Council. We are particularly keen to have more face-to-face interaction with public in communities throughout our region. We will be reaching out to targeted stakeholders as well as using traditional and social media, connecting with local community organizations and hosting public forums with an educational component and opportunity for feedback.

We also look forward to increasing our understanding about health topics of relevance within our area. This may include addiction and mental health, seniors health and more.

An additional focus for our Council is to revamp our public meeting agendas to ensure ample time for South Zone leadership to share updates, as well as time to discuss progress on our work plan.



Learn more

- Visit ahs.ca and search Advisory Councils
- Email pallisertriangle@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.
- 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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