

Yellowhead East

2018-19 Annual Report



Yellowhead East
Health Advisory Council

Healthy Albertans.
Healthy Communities.
Together.

Message from Alberta Health Services Board of Directors

Alberta Health Services values Advisory Council members as volunteers, leaders and partners in healthcare planning. With every year that passes, I see how our Councils continue to grow and expand. They challenge us and ask really great questions, they share the AHS story with their communities, their families and neighbours – helping Albertans everywhere to better understand our complex healthcare system – and they advise AHS on our planning, programs and services.



Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn

We have a number of long-time members leaving Councils in 2019-20 and we would like to acknowledge their hard work, dedication and passion. While we will miss them, we also know it's important for new voices to join the conversation and we look forward to building new partnerships, relationships and connections. We hope our departing members will continue to share their advice as members of the public and share their knowledge of the healthcare system.

This year, we added 23 new members to the Advisory Council family, and we also added a new Council. We were pleased to support and nurture the development of the Sexual Orientation Gender Identity & Expression (SOGIE) Provincial Advisory Council.

Members have made many contributions in their local areas, and you'll learn more about them in this report. Here are a few general examples from across the province over the past year:

- **Evolution of the Wisdom Council:** new Terms of Reference will guide the work of the Wisdom Council and includes creation of an Elder Circle which gives an enhanced role to Elders in helping to advise AHS on programs and services to best meet the needs of Indigenous people.
- **Connect Care:** a number of members have joined the patient advisory committees.
- **Supporting more addiction and mental health services:** many Councils held information sessions and highlighted the importance of services; their efforts helped support the development of Edmonton's new Access 24/7 Addiction and Mental Health Clinic and enhance awareness on services and access.
- **Expanding relationships:** connecting with the LGBTQ2S+ community through the new SOGIE PAC, meeting with municipal leaders, and holding meetings at Métis Settlements.
- **Connecting with Albertans through [Community Conversations](#):** Health Advisory Councils partnered with AHS to host 12 events across the province, where Albertans shared their views about challenges and solutions to healthcare issues.
- **Highlighting top concerns:** based on feedback from their communities, all Councils advised us on local concerns. AHS tracks and responds to concerns at each Council meeting.
- **Participation in Community Engagement Committee of the Board meetings:** various Council Chairs joined the conversation and shared ideas.

Member satisfaction is important to us, and it was gratifying to learn through the Annual Satisfaction Survey that our members are feeling generally satisfied in their roles. They've also said there's a need for more clarity on their role, and we're listening. We have begun work on an overarching Health Advisory Council review to address some of the gaps, and to ensure all our members fully understand their role.

On behalf of the AHS Board of Directors, our leadership team, and our workforce, thank you for your passion and time. We look forward to continuing to work with you on improving healthcare for Albertans.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brenda Hemmelgarn
Vice Chair, Board of Directors; Chair, AHS Community Engagement Committee of the Board

Message from the Chair, Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council

The end of my last term on the Alberta Health Services Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council (HAC) is fast approaching. I am leaving my position with a sense of satisfaction and achievement. I have had the privilege of working with a very solid group of volunteers whose interest and passion for healthcare cannot be underestimated.



Patricia Johnston

Council has worked hard to bring the community perspective to AHS and to share AHS initiatives and local services with our communities.

Recruitment for members is an ongoing challenge in Yellowhead East. We are still actively recruiting and encourage community members with a passion for healthcare to consider applying for a position on Council.

Our work plan is ambitious, and we are committed to connecting with our communities. The meeting format has changed with an emphasis on public input. We are working hard to encourage the public to attend the meetings, when they are held in their areas, to learn about AHS initiatives, emerging healthcare challenges and to share their concerns and questions with us.

Meeting presentations are selected based on priority healthcare concerns identified by members of our communities. Locations for the meetings are rotated throughout the Yellowhead East area to ensure members of all our communities will have an opportunity to attend a meeting in their area periodically. All Council members are also accessible to the public between the meetings. Contact information is available on the AHS Health Advisory Council [website](#).

Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council continues to work with AHS staff towards the AHS vision of Healthy Albertans. Healthy Communities. Together.

Sincerely

Patricia Johnston
Chair, Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council

About our Council

2018 -2019 Council Members

Current Members

Pat	Johnston (Chair)	Camrose
Gary	Duffett (Vice Chair)	Metiskow
Cyndy	Heslin	Ryley
Deb	McMann	Innisfree
Doug	Mackay	Camrose
Elaine	Sorochan	Two Hills
Glenys	Reeves	Lloydminster
Sarah	Hissett	Wainwright
Taneen	Rudyk	Vegreville

Past Members

Elna	Eidsvik	Vermilion
Ken	McNeil	Wainwright



*Back row left to right: Pat Johnston, Taneen Rudyk, Sarah Hissett, Doug Mackay
Front row left to right: Cyndy Heslin, Deb McMann
Missing: Gary Duffett, Elna Eidsvik, Ken McNeil, Glenys Reeves, Elaine Sorochan*

Promoting awareness of our Council

We were very active promoting the Council this year. A variety of strategies we used were:

- Promotion of our five Council meetings
- Invitations to the public to two virtual information sessions
- Attendance by members at their local community events or organizational meetings
- A presentation at a regional municipality session

We promoted our Council meetings by advertising our meetings in the local newspaper, sending out Public Service Announcements to all of the Council area media, posting the meeting dates and locations on social media and sending invitation to local stakeholders. We had a total of 11 members of the public attend our meetings.

We partnered with AHS and the David Thompson Health Advisory Council to hold two virtual information sessions for the public by video conference. The first session was held on April 25th and focused on AHS Seniors and Continuing Care. There were 50 people in attendance at nine locations. The second session, held by video conference was held on Sept. 11th and the topic was AHS Addiction and Mental Health services. A total of 33 members of the public attended at the 11 sites.

A representative from our Council joined a member from the David Thompson Health Advisory Council and attended the Central Rural Municipalities of Alberta (CRMA) meeting in Ponoka on Oct.13, 2018. They provided an overview of the demographics and role of the Council and invited feedback from the Councilors at the meeting. The feedback was used to inform the Top Concerns document for the Community Engagement Committee of the Board.

50

People attended the virtual information session about Seniors Health and Continuing Care hosted by the Council

13

Counties and Municipal Districts were represented at the CRMA meeting in Ponoka

33

People attended the virtual information session about addiction and mental health services



Listening to our communities and sharing feedback with AHS

We were very active in listening to our communities over the past year. We were fortunate to acquire feedback from multiple sources, including our public meetings, at the virtual information sessions, at local community events and at the presentation to the CRMA.

Concerns heard at the meetings were:

- Temporary closure of Mary Immaculate Hospital in Mundare
- Need for a Nurse Practitioner for Kaylyna Country Primary Care Network
- Need for mental health services in Lloydminster
- Need for another bi-provincial health meeting in Lloydminster
- Indigenous women facing racism when accessing the health system
- An explanation for the neonatal differences between Alberta and Saskatchewan
- Recruitment and retention of physicians and professionals, and losing three doctors in Provost
- Process of changing Mannville laboratory services
- Mobile MRIs in Central Zone
- EMS transfer from municipality to AHS in Vermilion

The questions asked at the Seniors and Continuing Care virtual session were about the following topics: home care, levels of continuing care in communities, beds for disabled young adults, respite services, restorative beds, and support groups.

The questions asked at the Addiction and Mental Health virtual session were about the following topics: rural services, cannabis, the cost of services, use of telehealth, mobile services, outreach to First Nations, barriers to recruitment of staff, resources allocation and services for children with complex needs in schools.

Feedback received at CRMA meeting (in priority order) included the following: continuing care, enhancing care in the community, addiction and mental health, zone healthcare planning, healthcare for babies and children and primary care networks. They also had concerns about: EMS, hospice support, palliative care, zone boundaries and the recruitment and retention of physicians.

Our Council members participate on AHS committees to provide feedback to AHS. Committees include:

- Central Zone Primary Care Network
- Central Zone Patient Flow Conference

Members attended the following events:

- Covenant Foundation Fundraiser
- Opening of the renovated Wainwright Emergency Department
- 18th Annual Health Gala in Wetaskiwin
- Camrose/Wetaskiwin Community Paramedic media event
- AHS Saskatchewan Health Authority Strategic Priorities meeting in January

Working with AHS to share information with our communities

AHS leadership from the Central Zone participated in each Council meeting and provided us with a regular report including information on the Central Zone Health Plan and Business Plan, the Central Zone Healthcare Plan, the operational plan as well as information on zone programs and initiatives:

- We learned about new programs and initiatives in advance of our meetings, so we could share information with the public.
- When we had questions or required information on specific topics, we invited AHS representatives to present. Council received the following presentations last year:
 - Cannabis legalization
 - Provincial Advisory Council on Cancer
 - Rural Elder Abuse Prevention
- We received feedback from our Council as well as stakeholders and determined we could play an important role of being an information conduit from AHS to the people. The feedback provided a base for the two information sessions we held on Seniors Health and Continuing Care and Addiction and Mental Health.

We partnered with AHS to host a [Community Conversation](#) in Viking in November. There were 21 participants at the event from the municipalities, the school division, non-profit organizations and Family and Community Support Services in our Council area.

Participants discussed healthcare successes, identified top healthcare challenges and considered existing and new community partnerships to address the challenges. They suggested ideas for transportation systems and partnerships, mobile screening services, the coordination of mental health services among organizations and collaborative community groups to promote injury prevention.

The Viking Community Wellness Society was featured as a key contributor to wellness through its success of championing healthy eating and active living by helping to develop environments where healthy choices are easier, sustainable and accessible to everyone.

An evaluation by participants reflected there was an increased understanding of AHS' focus on wellness, prevention and community care. A report was shared back with participants and with the Central Zone leadership for review and consideration in their operational plan.

"It is a great opportunity to have communities share their challenges and successes related to healthcare with AHS. We look forward to hearing how AHS will use this information, to work with us, to affect positive changes and promote healthy lifestyles."

Pat Johnston
Yellowhead East Health Advisory

A look ahead

We look forward to a busy year ahead. We welcome many new members to the Council and say good bye to members with a wealth of knowledge and experience. We wish them well.

We have established our meeting dates and locations and have established our priorities for our work plan.

We look forward to meeting the new Central Zone Chief Operating Officer and thank the interim leader with whom we've been working. We want to be able to provide continuous real time feedback to programs and services through contact with Zone leadership. We look forward to ongoing dialogue about the AHS Health Plan and Business Plan and the Central Zone Healthcare Plan.

We wish to continue to nurture the relationship with the municipalities in the Yellowhead East Health Advisory Council area by:

- Attending the Central Regional Municipalities Association meeting again this year to have formal and informal interactions
- Contacting the individual municipalities and have discussions and offer presentations to their Council meetings
- Continuing to invite key stakeholders to our regular meetings, and having an in-person engagement session with them
- Planning a municipal leaders' forum in partnership with the Central Zone Executive leadership. We plan to have the forum in Provost in 2019/2020, and focus on Zone priorities of interest to our stakeholders including Connect Care, addiction and mental health services, enhancing care in the community and the recruitment of professionals. The forums raise our profile, promote relationship building and provide a venue for Central Zone leadership to share and engage this audience.

We learned about a mental health initiative sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association in partnership with Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) offices across Alberta. We are supportive of building capacity in the rural communities and we plan to monitor the outcomes of the initiative.

We were pleased to have the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) provide "Skills Days" for medical professionals in a community in our Council area. We hope another community will be able to host this important event. It provides exposure for medical professionals to rural sites and this increases the chance to recruit these students.

We plan to continue to be active in the communities in our Council area. We look forward to meaningful dialogues with our communities as well as the AHS leadership.

Learn more

- Visit ahs.ca/advisorycouncils
- Email yellowheadeast@ahs.ca
- Check out our Twitter and Facebook accounts, by searching AHS Advisory Councils

Get involved

You can make to the health and well-being of your family, friends, neighbours and community by sharing your thoughts and ideas with Alberta Health Services. You can get involved by:

- Attending an upcoming Health Advisory Council 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.

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



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