

Addictions and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council

2022-23 Annual Report



**Alberta Health
Services**

Addiction & Mental
Health Provincial
Advisory Council

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

Tyla Savard, Addictions and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council



It's amazing how fast this past year has flown by, there's been so many changes to society, Alberta Health Services (AHS) and of course each of us in our own way as we have emerged from the impact of the pandemic and embracing this new way of life that has emerged. The Addiction and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council (AMH PAC) has maintained a full schedule of meetings, engagement, relationship building and communication. We maintain focus on building relationships and communication with other community partners.

The AMH PAC and AHS team have an awesome working relationship where we can be open, honest, have the hard conversations but always with the intention to collaborate and learn from one another to make all the work that collectively takes place have a greater positive impact for Albertans. We have some PAC members who have maximized their terms of service who I'd like to personally thank for all their work, contributions and passion. I wish each of them all the best in their next adventures but to remember we are always friends and colleagues and community ambassadors, and just a message away to stay in touch. I'd also like to welcome some new members to our PAC. It's wonderful to see the interest and enthusiasm from all over the province to engage and learn together. We have a diverse team where everyone's viewpoints are welcome and seen as an opportunity to learn and grow while ensuring we remain dedicated to an addiction and mental health system that meets people where they are and supports them in their wellness journey.

OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

North Zone

Lindy Fors
Rhonda Robinson
Tyla Savard
Wally Sinclair

Central Zone

Sandra Badry
Darrin Thompson
Chantel Walker

Calgary & Edmonton Zones

Ed Brown
Terry O’Riordan
Susan L. Blanchard
Sarthak Singh
Sandra Sjogren

South Zone

Nasra Omar
Tracy Osterbroek,
Wesley Paterson

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

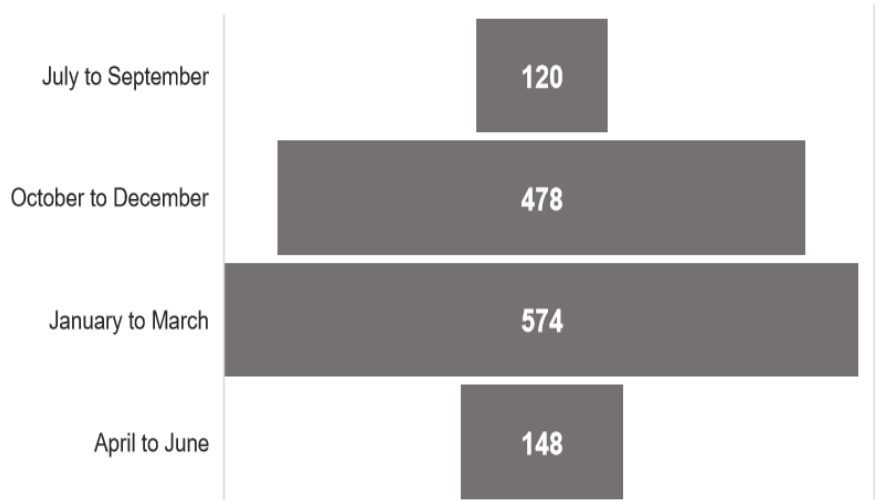
Councils were invited to provide feedback to the AHS Community Spiritual and Religious Care Providers Access Policy.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Membership Representation



Participation at Advisory Council Meetings & Events*



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

“Following

the pandemic and its impacts, there continues to be an increased focus on the mental health and wellbeing of our communities. The Addiction and Mental Health Provincial Advisory Council partners to provide the voice of Albertans with lived and living experience, of family members and friends, and of consumers of the healthcare system as we work together on policy actions and priorities. Their commitment to their work in improving the mental health and wellness of Albertans is an essential guidepost. Thank you for all that you bring and all that you give!”

Dr. Nick Mitchell

Senior Medical Director, Provincial Addiction and Mental Health and Correctional Health Services

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The AMH PAC is advisory in nature and provides a way for Albertans to identify existing and emerging addiction and mental health issues from the addiction and mental health community service users' perspective. We advise the AHS Official Administrator, CEO and the Executive Leadership on service delivery, system coordination, standardized program delivery approaches, policy and procedures to improve quality, access and sustainability of addiction and mental services for Albertans. We do this by demonstrating the importance of family/patient lived experience, ensuring a strong collaboration around all healthcare activities in the area of addiction and mental health. Our key achievements include:

- ✓ **Participated in a variety of addiction and mental health related activities, including:**
 - Interview panel for the AHS Addiction Medicine Lead, Provincial Addiction and Mental Health
 - Alberta Recovery Conference – 2023.

- ✓ **Represented addiction mental health system-access perspective, including:**
 - AHS Provincial Addiction and Mental Health Core Committee
 - AHS Provincial Addiction Counselling Practice Group
 - AHS Provincial Youth Addiction & Mental Health Advisory Council
 - Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Health System (PRIHS) VI.

- ✓ **Reducing inpatient readmission rate for patients discharged from acute psychiatric care in Alberta using peer and text message support**
 - Respite House for the Region
 - The Healing Hub – Lloydminster
 - The Yellowhead Regional Meetings.

- ✓ **Presentations:**
 - Grande Prairie Community Opioid Response Task Force
 - PAC resources, awareness and collaboration invites in all conversation where applicable in the North Zone, provincially and nationally.

- ✓ **Engagement:**
 - Attended the North Zone Indigenous Support Line Town Hall
 - Participated as a member of the AMH PAC providing lived experience in a Community Conversation with Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council
 - Adjudicated and participated in Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Health System (PRIHS) grant projects - reducing inpatient readmission rate for patients discharged from acute psychiatric care in Alberta using peer and text message support
 - Attended various Health Advisory Council meetings
 - Information and resources shared with the members of HACs on addiction and mental health and AMH PAC initiatives.

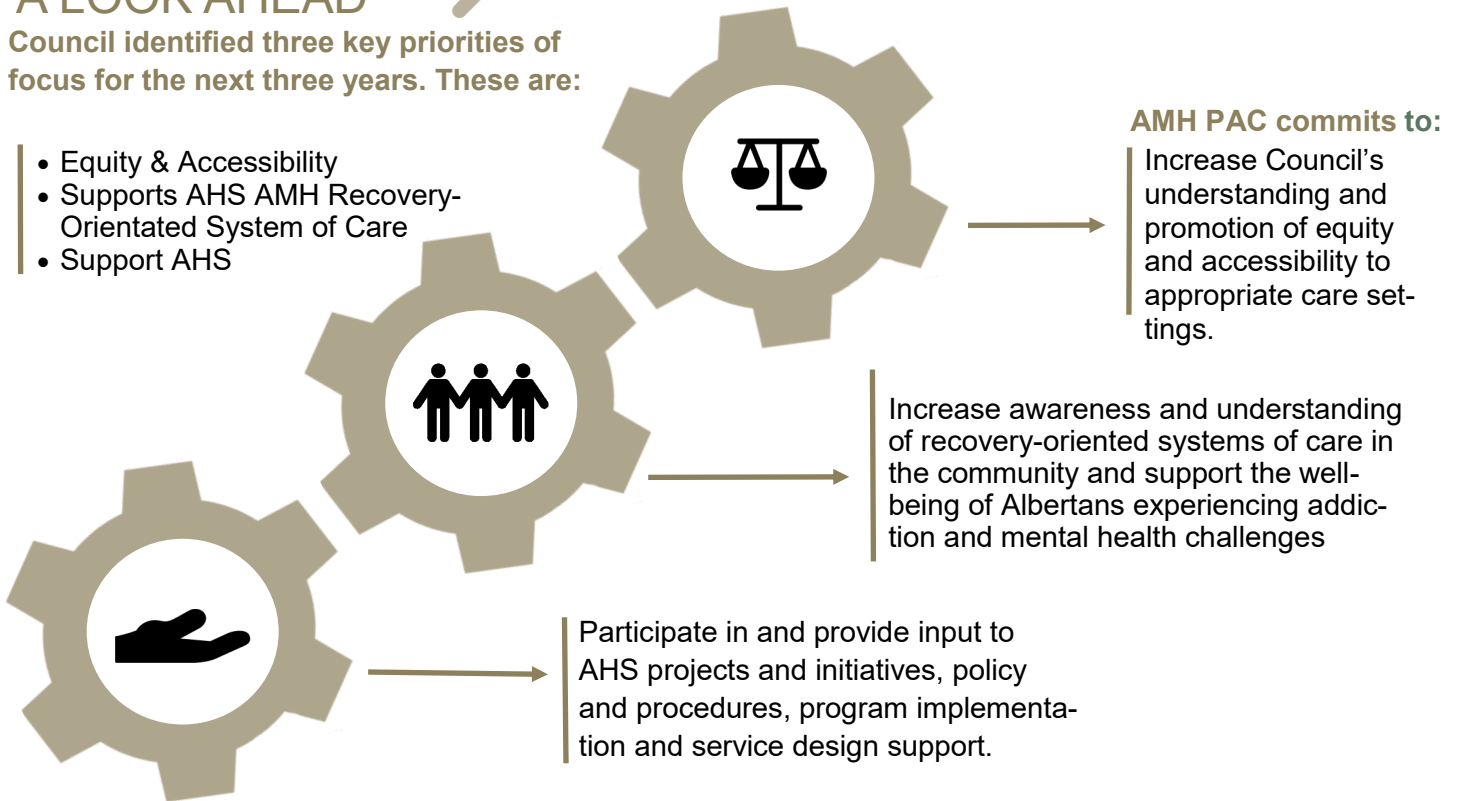


A LOOK AHEAD



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

- Equity & Accessibility
- Supports AHS AMH Recovery-Orientated System of Care
- Support AHS



GET INVOLVED



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

- Email: pac.amh@ahs.ca
- Phone: 1.877.275.8830
- Attend an [upcoming meeting](#)
- Provide input on various healthcare topics online, at [Together4Health](#)
- Apply to join an Advisory Council:

APPLY

