



David Thompson Health Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 26, 2023 / 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. / Red Deer Regional Hospital

ATTENDEES & INTRODUCTIONS	
Members	Pam Hansen (Chair), Rosemary Brown, Gerry Greschner, Ken Hansen, Christine Heggart,, Wendi Lautenbach, Judy Lorenz, Robert Yatkowsky
Alberta Health Services (AHS)	Janice Stewart, Andrea Thain Liptak, Sandi Sebastian, Leanne Rudrum, Jacquie Hakes, Heather Kipling, Laura Lee Clarke and Deanna Dament
Regrets	Allyssa Deheer, Janey Olson, Martha Winchell, Peggy Makofka and Darrin Thompson
Public	24
Welcome & Introductions	Gerry welcomed all in attendance and went through introductions. Gerry provided a land acknowledgment.
Approval of previous minutes	Council proposed corrections to the attendance section of the previous minutes. Deanna revised the document. Council approved the February 23, 2023, minutes by consensus.
STANDING ITEMS	
Alberta Health Services Zone Update	<p>Janice Stewart, Chief Zone Officer, Central Zone, shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key AHS priority is patient flow. Central Zone is moving patients from its Emergency Medical Services (EMS) partners to its Emergency Departments (ED), then from the EDs waiting room to see a physician faster. • Several new EMS vehicles are in Red Deer and throughout the zone. • An interfacility transfer program started in the spring to move patients between facilities. By July, ten interfacility transport vehicles will be operating. Feedback has been that there’s a noticeable difference because there are more EMS vehicles in some towns. • Central Zone faces challenges in hiring anesthesiologists. Nurses in active surgical sites are training in anesthetics. • AHS decided several day surgeries can be moved outside of Red Deer. The surgeon will go to a site for a day and operate. • Evaluating patients that come into the ED and need placement in assisted living or long-term care takes time. AHS is hiring more staff to do assessments.



- Alberta Health's Red Deer Redevelopment continues in phases. The intent is to increase the number of beds, operating rooms and catheterization labs. The Minister of Infrastructure updated the Mayor and City Council on the redevelopment and held a public open house with a high turnout. The projected completion date is 2030 – 31.
- AHS hires clinical associates as physician extenders to support specialists in the hospital; often they get into a residency program and practice in the area.

Andrea Thain Liptak, Senior Operating Officer – Rural Acute, Allied Health, Primary Care, and Indigenous Health Central Zone shared the following:

- Service disruptions and long-standing closures continue throughout the Central Zone.
- Leadership changes have occurred in some areas of the Central Zone and vacancies remain in other towns and cities.
- To increase retention and improve new-staff orientation, all new hires start on the same day.
- Rural surgical planning is continuing, and Indigenous Health Action Plan is underway.
- Renovations are occurring in Rocky Mountain House and plans are in place to renovate in Wetaskiwin.
- The Stettler kitchen is now open, and the grand opening is in June.

Sandi Sebastian, Director, Women's and Children's Health Services RDRHC, shared the following:

- The Central Zone is looking at implementing a centralized triage model for endoscopy.
- AHS opened twenty Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds and now managers are busy recruiting.
- The General Internal Medicine Unit will be expanding, and several other services and clinics are either undergoing renovations or moving from one floor to another at the Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre (RDRHC).
- The RDRHC is providing new moms who used opioids during pregnancy a nonjudgmental program that keeps mom and baby together and teaches the mother to care for her newborn during the baby's withdrawal and then assists them to transition back to the community.

Leanne Rudrum, Director, Community and Seniors Health shared the following:

- Community and Seniors Health is working to get patients in acute care back home and in the home care program if home care is an option. If it is not an option, AHS wants to place patients into either assisted living or long-term care.
- Home care in the zone is undergoing accreditation from now until the end of June; accreditors can show up anytime.
- Long-term care (LTC) homes started a pilot project implementing quality boards so family members, staff and the public can see what the LTC home is working on.
- In late summer or early fall AHS will run a survey focusing on home care services.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits are underway at all our AHS-owned sites and partner sites. • Connect Care is coming to Central Zone on May 6. • In the fall, Red Deer Home Care and Calgary Supportive Living are doing a pilot project on Connect Care.
<p>Voices of the Community</p>	<p>Ponoka – Kevin and Rick shared Ponoka has a severe doctor shortage and service disruptions are common. The town wants the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) process to license International Medical Graduates (IMGs) made more efficient.</p> <p>Coronation – Carole shared that the Coronation Hospital Foundation’s patio refurbishment project that was stalled, is now going ahead. Quinton expressed concern that it is not sustainable for a small town to send \$100,000 to attract a doctor and then have them leave in less than a year. Many communities are finding that doctors will check out their options in rural and hop from one location to the next and then pick urban centers. Some doctors are locums forever. Incentives are needed to move locums to a practice.</p> <p>Red Deer – Darcee, a paramedic and health promotions coordinator, indicated the 45-minute EMS turnaround time is great in the daytime but is difficult in the evenings. The target of 45 minutes is from the time of EMS arrival at a site to departure from the site. This includes the time for EMS to complete documentation once handover of the patient to the ED. Darcee notices an improvement in EMS’ morale.</p> <p>Wetaskiwin – Bill shared that The Town of Wetaskiwin donated land to The Hope Mission to implement a capital project for the town’s unhoused. The Hope Mission’s van is in service and allowing the RCMP and the EMS to focus on emergencies.</p>
<p>Voices of the Community Questions and Answers (Q & A)</p>	<p>Q: Can AHS and the Health Advisory Council help the Town of Ponoka with the CPSA?</p> <p>A: Ponoka’s concerns are shared by many in the Central Zone. CPSA recently started allowing doctors from certain countries in particular specialties to waive the accreditation requirements. Change is incremental.</p>
<p>Council Round Table</p>	<p>Rocky Mountain House – Rosemary shared that construction on the operating rooms continues.</p> <p>Hanna – Rob reported Hanna will not lose 33 day homes because a former McMann staffer is stepping in to keep them open.</p> <p>Bentley – Pam shared the town’s van is available to get residents to and from the local grocery stores, but it is unused because neighbours are helping neighbours. Wendi reported Bentley’s postal services have returned, but food insecurity is a concern because of the recent closure of the local grocery store and the passing of its owner.</p>



	<p>Eckville – Judy reported they are still looking for a Nurse Practitioner.</p> <p>Sundre – Gerry discussed the recent skills day in Sundre. It had a great turnout and support from the community.</p>
Council Roundtable Q & A	<p>Q: Is there a lack of occupational therapists (OT) in outpatient services? A: There is a shortage of OTs and physiotherapists (PTs), but service disruptions are not occurring because the staff are covering multiple programs and communities.</p> <p>Q: Do the requirements for IMGs differ in every province? A: Yes, other provinces onboard IMGs in different ways.</p> <p>Q: Can AHS step up to help financially with IMGs? A: AHS has paid in one way or another for all 77 per cent of IMGs in the Central Zone.</p>
NEW BUSINESS	
Election for Chair and Vice Chair	<p>David Thompson Health Advisory Council held its elections April 26, 2023, in Red Deer, AB for Chair and Vice Chair as follows: Pam Hansen put forth an expression of interest for the position of Chair. Deanna Dament asked three times if there were any further nominations from the floor. Pam Hansen was declared Chair of the David Thompson Health Advisory Council by acclamation. All in favour. MOTION CARRIED.</p> <p>David Thompson Health Advisory Council held its elections April 26, 2023, in Red Deer, AB for Chair and Vice Chair as follows: Peggy Makofka put forth an expression of interest for the position of Vice Chair. Deanna Dament asked three times if there were any further nominations from the floor. Peggy Makofka was declared Vice Chair of the David Thompson Health Advisory Council by acclamation. All in favour. MOTION CARRIED</p>
Date of Next Meeting	<p>Date: Oct. 5, 2023 Time: 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Location: St. Joseph’s General Hospital, Vegreville, AB</p>

Our meetings are open to the public. Dates and locations are [available here](#).
[Find your Health Advisory Council here](#). Visit [Together 4 Health](#) (T4H) to engage with AHS online.

