

May 15, 2008

One provincial board to govern Alberta's health system

Edmonton ... One provincial governance board will replace Alberta's nine regional health authority boards, the Alberta Mental Health Board, Alberta Cancer Board and Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) to ensure the provincial health system is patient-focused and provides equitable access to all Albertans in the 21st century.

The new Alberta Health Services Board will be responsible for health services delivery for the entire province and will report directly to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Alberta Health and Wellness will continue to be responsible for setting, monitoring and enforcing provincial health policy, standards and programs, as well as for managing health capital planning, procurement and outcome measures.

"This new governance model will clarify the roles and responsibilities that will help make Alberta's publicly-funded health care system more effective and efficient," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "Today's announcement is about a governance change to move to a 21st century health care system. I want to assure Albertans that quality patient care will continue to be delivered throughout the province. Our goal is to create a high quality and innovative system that provides equitable access to health services and long-term sustainability."

The new provincial board is the first major decision to come out of the government's action plan on health announced April 16.

"The first priority in our health action plan is to improve the way health care is administered in this province," said Ron Liepert, Minister of Health and Wellness. "Moving to one provincial governance board will ensure a more streamlined system for patients and health professionals across the province. I want to thank all past board members for their dedicated service to Albertans. We will build on their achievements and lessons learned during their governance experience."

Effective immediately, a transitional provincial board made up of a chair and six-members has been appointed by the Minister of Health and Wellness. The Minister will also establish a process to recruit additional members for a permanent 15-member provincial board of directors and CEO.

Ken Hughes has been appointed interim chair of the Alberta Health Services Board and Charlotte Robb has been appointed interim CEO.

The operations of the nine regional health authorities, the Alberta Mental Health Board, AADAC and the Alberta Cancer Board will be administered by the Alberta Health Services Board once region contracts, bylaws, union agreements and management structures have been dealt with. These entities will transition into a single provincial health authority.

The new governance model is intended to strengthen a provincial approach to managing health services, including surgical access, long-term care, chronic disease management and addictions and mental health services as well as health workforce and access to primary care.

"This is a change to the governance of the health system. Albertans will continue to receive health programs and services in their communities as they do today," said Liepert. "We will continue to rely on the skills and dedication of our health care professionals to deliver the high quality health care services

we depend on.”

Three advisory councils will be created to advise and report to the new provincial board on cancer research, addictions services and mental health services. Under this new governance model, the provincial board will oversee the integration of cancer delivery services and support the use of research findings in clinical practice.

“Cancer research and treatment remains a top priority in this new governance model,” said Liepert. "This advisory council on cancer will provide advice to the Alberta Health Services Board to ensure Alberta remains at the forefront of cancer research and care. This new direction builds on our commitment to improve access to clinical treatment for all Albertans through the development of the cancer corridor in Lethbridge, Red Deer and Grande Prairie as well as high quality innovative programs through the existing Alberta Cancer Prevention Legacy Fund."

The board will also ensure a province-wide focus for addictions services and mental health services. The addictions council will advise on policies for a province-wide addictions system that follows evidence-based practice and innovative delivery, while meeting community and client needs.

The board will also ensure an enhanced focus on mental health services in establishing an advisory council to provide advice on province-wide mental health service delivery, innovation and mental wellness.

Voluntary Community Health Councils, to be appointed by the Alberta Health Services Board, will be strengthened to provide advice on community health issues and recommend ways to effectively address local health needs. “It will be important to ensure that local health needs in rural Alberta are met under this new governance model. Community Health Councils will ensure representation at the local level,” said Minister Liepert.

-30-

Backgrounder attached

Media enquiries north of Red Deer may be directed to:

Shannon Haggarty, Communications, Alberta Health and Wellness, 780-427-7164, **or**

Media enquiries in Red Deer and south may be directed to:

Howard May, Communications, Alberta Health and Wellness, 403-949-5011

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

May 15, 2008

A short history of Alberta's health system governance

Before 1994

The provincial health ministry managed 128 acute care hospital boards, 25 public health boards and 40 long-term care boards.

1994

Seventeen health regions were established by government with appointed boards to manage operational decision making at the local level.

2001

As part of municipal elections on Oct. 15, 2001, two-thirds of board members were elected and the remaining one-third of members were appointed on Nov. 9, 2001.

2003

The 17 health regions were reduced to nine regions on April 1, 2003 with board members appointed by government. Mental health services and associated budgets were transferred to the regional health authorities. Alberta Mental Health Board continued to provide policy and planning advice to the health minister.

2008

The Alberta Health Services Board is established by government to deliver health services for the entire province and be accountable to the Minister of Health and Wellness.



Alberta Health Services Board interim members

Interim chair

Ken Hughes, president of Alpine Insurance and Financial Inc., an Alberta-based insurance brokerage firm; former founding chair of Headwaters Health Authority (1994-1995), former MP for the rural riding of Macleod in southern Alberta (1988-1993).

Interim board members

Jack Ady, current board chair for Chinook Health Region; Mount Royal College board of governors member; former Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development (1992-1997).

Pierre Crevolin, current board member for Capital Health; Caritas Foundation Governance Committee board chair; former Caritas Health Group board member (1995-2003); former president of NACE International and former president and general manager of CSI Coating Systems.

Linda Hohol, past president of TSX Venture Exchange (2002-2007); former executive vice-president of wealth management, CIBC Toronto.

John Lehnert, partner of Bearisto, Lehnert, Ketchum Engineering Ltd.; chair of the Grande Prairie Public School District.

Irene Lewis, president and CEO of SAIT Polytechnic; chair of the Alberta Economic Development Authorities' Energy Resource Committee and a committee member of the Calgary Airport Authority Business Development Advisory Council.

Don Sieben, chartered accountant; member of the Athabasca University and University of Alberta board

of governors; Canative Housing Corporation board of directors member.

Interim CEO

Charlotte Robb, former CEO and president of DynaLife Diagnostics (formerly Dynacare Kasper Medical Laboratories); business advisory committee member for the University of Alberta and Concordia College; former senior vice-president of operations, Business Development Bank of Canada, Prairies and Western Region and the former Alberta/NWT Vice President and Regional Manager of Commercial Banking for the CIBC.

-30-

Media enquiries north of Red Deer may be directed to:

Shannon Haggarty, Communications, Alberta Health and Wellness, 780-427-7164, **or**

Media enquiries in Red Deer and south may be directed to:

Howard May, Communications, Alberta Health and Wellness, 403-949-5011

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

[Alberta Government](#) | [News Room](#) | [Ministries Listing](#) | [Health and Wellness Home Page](#) | [News Releases](#) | [Top of Page](#) |

[Send us your comments or questions](#)

Copyright(©) 2008 Government of Alberta

