

The future of health care is in your hands

Indigenous information gathering sessions



On November 8, 2023, the Government of Alberta announced the Refocusing Alberta's Health Care System Initiative to improve health outcomes and empower health care workers to deliver quality care across the province. The government is committed to communicating with health care workers and listening to the input of patients, families, and caregivers across Alberta to:

- Identify barriers and challenges related to accessing the health care system, opportunities to streamline processes, and discuss community-driven solutions
- Understand how to successfully implement the new direction, and how to improve local decision-making
- Find ways to enhance ongoing communication
- Demonstrate transparency and two-way dialogue to ensure all people have a voice

Case for Change

Current Health Care System

- It takes too long to get the right health care, especially in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities
- Currently, Alberta Health Services (AHS) is the provincial health authority responsible for the planning and delivery of health services in the province.
- Spending (per capita) aligns with similar provinces, but health outcomes are not where they should be
- The health care system is complicated and doesn't work together effectively
- Leadership can be improved to create better patient experiences and health outcomes

Refocused Health Care System

A refocused and unified provincial health care system will:

- Centre around four priority areas of focus
- Create a modern and cost-effective health care system
- Enhance local decision-making
- Promote a seamless patient journey with the right care at the right time
- Value the workforce, and provide safe and healthy work conditions
- Focus on health promotion, early detection, and intervention

Health Care System Overview

The Minister of Health, together with the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction, are responsible for Alberta's health care system and hold the four organizations accountable. The Minister of Health sets policies and direction to protect and promote the health of Albertans. The Minister is also accountable for overseeing the delivery of health care services (e.g., services delivered by Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, etc.).

Four Organizations

Right now, AHS is the provincial health authority responsible for the planning and delivery of health services in the province. In the refocused system, AHS will continue to have a key role in delivering acute care services, with a renewed emphasis on shorter wait times and higher quality of care.

The new, unified provincial health care system will have four specialized areas of focus: *Primary Care Organization*, *Continuing Care Organization*, *Acute Care Organization*, and *Mental Health and Addiction Organization*. The refocused system will keep the best parts from the existing model while evolving to better meet the needs of Albertans.

These changes will:

- Meet the needs of patients by improving outcomes and access
- Strengthen the role of local decision-making and regional advice
- Relieve pressure on the acute care system by introducing specialized organizations to provide the right care where and when Albertans need it
- Prioritize the well-being of health care workers and leverage their expertise



Primary Care Organization will:

- Provide **provincial oversight and coordination** of primary care service delivery
- Ensure every Albertan is **attached** to a regular family physician, nurse practitioner or primary care provider
- Ensure **accountability** for all publicly funded providers and clinics
- Improve community and **local needs**
- Support Alberta Health in determining **alternative payment models**

In rural hospitals, AHS may continue to operate primary care where necessary.



Continuing Care Organization will:

- Provide **provincial oversight and coordination** of continuing care service delivery
- Manage **contracts** for service delivery, but will not be an operator
- Ensure equitable, consistent, and **timely access** to continuing care services and increase the number and distribution of beds to reflect the projected demographic shifts

In rural hospitals, AHS may continue to operate its continuing care subsidiaries and continuing care beds where necessary.



Acute Care Organization will:

- Have **provincial oversight** of acute care service delivery and clinical operations, including leading and contracting (if appropriate) Emergency Medical Services operations
- Hold AHS, Covenant Health, and other entities **accountable**
- Incentivize **regional innovation** and enhance **local decision-making**, as appropriate
- **Reduce wait times** and improve quality of care while improving integration



Mental Health and Addiction Organization (Recovery Alberta) will:

- Have **provincial oversight**, including setting system-level objectives, performance standards, and system-level planning
- Focus on **planning and service delivery** of mental health and addiction services in higher-tiered/acuity services (hospital-based) and community outpatient clinics
- Both the Mental Health and Addiction Ministry and Organization will be able to **hold contracts** with third-party service providers

Integration Council

The new Integration Council, chaired by the Minister of Health, will include participation from all parts of the new health care system. This Council will ensure patients experience a seamless health care journey. This Council will have improved provincial oversight to achieve system-wide health planning and policies. The Integration Council's main vision is for patients to experience a seamless journey.

Advisory Councils

The Ministry of Health is restructuring the 12 existing Health Advisory Councils into Regional Advisory Councils with a stronger role and creating a new **Indigenous Advisory Council** to better represent regional perspectives. All four health organizations will be tasked to work closely with these new advisory councils to enhance local decision-making, bring forward local priorities, and give regional input on capital and system plans.

