

# Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council



## *Annual Report 2010–2011*



*Bringing the voice of communities to build a better health system.*





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## Message from the Chair, Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council

It is our pleasure to provide you with the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council annual report for 2010-2011. In our inaugural year, we have worked to raise awareness of our council and role, and to engage citizens in the Greater Edmonton area. Over the past year, our council has met seven times, provided responses to community questions and made appearances at public events.

During the first part of this year, our council spent time forming and learning our new roles. After the summer break, we were able to move ahead on our role of:

- listening to our communities to learn what worked well and to identify their health needs and gaps in service delivery;
- looking for opportunities and identifying areas for improvement;
- providing feedback to Alberta Health Services on future directions and plans for health care;
- collaborating with Alberta Health Services on areas of health care improvements; and
- identifying public participants for Alberta Health Act Consultations regarding the new Alberta Health Act during the summer of 2010.

The council was committed to building awareness of our role and to be a direct contact between people, communities and Alberta Health Services. In this coming year, the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council will continue to explore the possibilities of engaging citizens to benefit the health system generally, and to our communities in particular.

We wish to thank the Alberta Health Services Board and the Health Advisory Committee of the Board for their guidance. We thank the Community Engagement department for the resources and tools made available to us, in particular the significant contribution of Caroline McAuley, Community Engagement Officer. Most importantly, we thank members of our communities in the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council area who have provided us with input and hosted our meetings.

By moving forward together, we can maintain and improve the health of our communities and continue to bring the voice of the communities together in Greater Edmonton to build a better health system for all Albertans.

Sincerely,

Kathleen LeClair  
Chair, Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council



## Message From The Chair, Alberta Health Services Board

Health Advisory Councils are an important link between Alberta Health Services and the people we serve. We can only be genuinely responsive to Albertans if we understand their needs and listen to their concerns, which include hearing directly from councils.

Health Advisory Councils were established to engage local community members to provide feedback on what is working well within the health care system, suggest areas for improvement, and identify local issues and concerns.

The inaugural year for Health Advisory Councils has been highly effective in establishing processes, connecting with Albertans across the province and building foundational relationships both with communities and the Alberta Health Services Board and Leadership. Continually nurturing these connections will enable councils to be better informed and work more effectively in bringing the voice of communities to improve health care across the province.

In the first year of operation, councils have contributed significantly to key Alberta Health Services strategic planning initiatives. Key consultations included the 2010-2015 Health Plan, Alberta Health Act, Accreditation Canada consultation, Provincial Menu, Community and Rural health planning initiatives and the Strategic Scenarios 2030 “Driving Forces Workshops” which centered around health planning for the next 20 years.

Building on these successes over the next year will provide a valuable mechanism for communication and information flow between communities and Alberta Health Services. The Alberta Health Services Board and Leadership are committed to ensuring that Health Advisory Councils are successful in their work now and into the future. Board members will continue to increase engagement opportunities with councils, and attend council meetings, engagement events and community consultations.

In closing, we would like to thank all council members past and present, for the time, effort and expertise they have dedicated to bringing the public perspective forward to improve health care planning across the province.

Sincerely,

Ken Hughes  
Chair, Alberta Health Services Board



# The Year in Review

## Executive Summary

This annual report reflects the work completed by the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council over the past year and provides a review of the many successes that we have achieved together.

The Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council includes the large urban center of Edmonton and the surrounding rural communities. Our council is made up of community representatives from the Greater Edmonton area. As such, we represent the health services needs of 1.13 million residents and those who come to Edmonton to access our tertiary health facilities. Our role is to represent the voice of our communities to help build a better health system. We work directly with the Alberta Health Services senior leadership and the Board to fulfill this role.

This year was truly a year in which our council developed as a team and established our role. We had the opportunity to develop a Work Plan, which included the creation of promotional resources for our council, in addition to establishing tools and processes to support our council meetings. We provided direct input to Alberta Health Services and the Board through attendance at regular meetings, and annual Provincewide Council meeting, meetings with Board members, providing the Board with the minutes of our meetings in addition to briefings which provided an update on issues in the Greater Edmonton area.

Our accomplishments include:

- establishing regular meetings, and developing a Work Plan for the year;
- identifying and creating opportunities to engage with the public in our area;
- increasing our knowledge of available health services such as Emergency Medical Services, Aboriginal Health Services, mental health services, primary care networks; and
- providing feedback to Alberta Health Services on strategic health planning and health services matters.

In conclusion, we are pleased to provide you with this annual report and look forward to providing a community perspective for health services planning, as well as continuing our work and collaboration with the Alberta Health Services Board and senior staff.

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*“We represent the health services needs of 1.13 million residents and those who come to Edmonton to access our tertiary health facilities.”*

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*“Our role is to represent the voice of our communities to help build a better health system.”*



## Who We Are

Health Advisory Councils were established on June 30, 2009 under section 9(4) of the Regional Health Authorities Act (1994). The Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council held its organizational meeting on Tuesday, January 12, 2010 at the Sturgeon Community Hospital in St. Albert. The council was established to enhance engagement between communities in the area and Alberta Health Services. *Please see Appendix 1 for the Provincial Map.*

The Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council covers an area from Legal and Redwater in the north, to Nojack in the west, continuing southward to Warburg and eastward to Sherwood Park and New Sarepta. This geographic area contains a mixture of over 33 communities spread across a largely urban area, including the cities of Edmonton, Leduc, St. Albert, Spruce Grove and Fort Saskatchewan. This area also includes the rural communities in Strathcona County, Sturgeon County, Parkland County, Leduc County and the eastern section of Yellowhead County as well as the Alexander and Paul First Nations. *Please see Appendix 2 for the Council Map.*

Within this council area, health services are provided to 1.13 million people with approximately five per cent of Aboriginal origin (the largest urban Aboriginal population in the province), and a small (one per cent) rural population. Many other diverse populations are represented in this service area and the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council is one strategic measure used to engage the communities in meaningful dialogue with Alberta Health services regarding health issues.

Council members are required to reside within the geographic area of the council to which they are appointed and serve terms of either two or three years, to a maximum of five years.

As council members, we aim to provide a voice reflective of our communities, while maintaining a connection to Alberta Health Services.

| Current Members                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Ms. Kathleen LeClair (Chair)   | Edmonton      |
| Ms. Carol Rempel (Vice Chair)  | Warburg       |
| Ms. Winnie Bogosoff            | Edmonton      |
| Mr. James Dean                 | St. Albert    |
| Ms. Cindy Grand                | Edmonton      |
| Ms. Crystal Krueger            | Thorsby       |
| Dr. Chad Kulak                 | Stony Plain   |
| Mr. Donald Langford            | Edmonton      |
| Ms. Barbara Rothe              | Sherwood Park |
| Ms. Daniella San Martin-Feeney | Edmonton      |

*“Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council is one strategic measure used to engage the communities in meaningful dialogue with Alberta Health services regarding health issue.”*

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Dr. Wayne Shillington | Edmonton |
| Mr. Lawrence Tymko    | Edmonton |
| Ms. Sandra Woitas     | Edmonton |
| Ms. Catherine Workun  | Edmonton |
| <b>Past Members</b>   |          |
| Mr. David Hook        | Edmonton |

## What We Do

The role of the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council is to:

- gather public input regarding health needs and health services for the residents of the community served by the council;
- provide advice to Alberta Health Services regarding health issues, needs and priorities, access to health services, the promotion of health and other matters requested by Alberta Health Services; and
- promote and participate in activities that enhance the health of residents in the communities served by the council.

Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council members reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and have a broad interest in health issues as well as the health and well-being of the communities they represent.

## How We Are Accountable

Health Advisory Councils were established on June 30, 2009 under section 9(4) of the Regional Health Authorities Act (1994). The Alberta Health Services Board approved the Bylaw by which the councils were established, which was then approved by the Minister of Health and Wellness. The Alberta Health Services Board appointed members to each council following a provincewide recruitment drive in September 2009. Councils act as an advisory body to Alberta Health Services according to the Council Charter and Bylaw. Council members are required to reside within the geographic area of the council to which they are appointed and serve terms of two or three years, to a maximum of five years.

Councils act as an advisory body to Alberta Health Services, providing feedback from the public to support the strategic direction of Alberta Health Services. In this role, councils:

- provide feedback about what is working well in the health care system and areas for improvement;
- engage residents by talking to members of the community and advise of what they are saying about health services in their area;

- consider information provided by Alberta Health Services and identify issues or trends from a local perspective;
- provide feedback to Alberta Health Services on matters pertaining to health services and service delivery on an ongoing basis; and
- provide feedback to Alberta Health Services about strategies to further engage the community on health care delivery.



## What We Have Accomplished

### Engagement of the Public

The Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council identified four opportunities to explore and develop ways to engage with the public. Since the population of the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council area is large and diverse, it was apparent that the council would need to use a variety of methods to engage the public. The council was challenged to gain public participation, especially at council meetings. We implemented various strategies, including creating a greater web presence and hosting council meetings in locations across the area to improve accessibility for residents. We also had a presence at established community events. Council formulated a Work Plan and assigned tasks to council members to achieve the council work. These strategies are as follows:

1. To inform communities within the Health Advisory Council area on a timely basis of council activities, plans and meeting opportunities.

A subcommittee was formed to provide input and suggestions to Alberta Health Services to improve public accessibility of the web page. Specifically, we wanted the site to provide information about our council and activities for the public, with room to expand and develop an internal communication working mechanism to collaborate with other councils. Some initial work was completed by Alberta Health Services to develop a web page presence with quick access links from the main page of the Alberta Health Services website. Current statistics on the web page for December 2010 to February 2011 indicate a total of 87 hits, which will set a baseline for the coming Work Plan year. As such, council acknowledges the current limitations of this web page and the current capacity of Alberta Health Services to support a larger web presence at this time. Council will bring this ongoing item into the 2012 council year.

2. To actively connect the Health Advisory Council with the community through face-to-face engagement.

A second subcommittee explored the opportunity to actively connect with the public by using community organized face-to-face events. It was recognized that in order to support these events promotional materials such

as display banners, business cards and bookmark handouts would be needed for such large events. This subcommittee, working together with Alberta Health Services staff, developed promotional materials to support council activities. The branding successes of these materials were shared with Health Advisory Councils across the province for their use as well. Council has plans for display presentations at the Sherwood Park Trade Show in April and at the St. Albert Farmer's Market venues in the summer.

*"Council also challenged its members to gather health services feedback and concerns from the various community groups and community connections."*

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3. Obtain community concerns and feedback on health services at council meetings.

Council identified opportunities for individuals or community groups to present health services concerns or feedback at council meetings. We also identified the need to move the meetings from the central location of the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital to other locations, and hosted meetings in St. Albert at the Sturgeon Community Hospital, the Poundmaker Lodge and the Leduc Civic Center. These efforts improved engagement with nine community members attending various council meetings.

Council also challenged its members to gather health services feedback and concerns from the various community groups and community connections they had, and provide this information at round table discussions held at each meeting. The council was able to gather various health service themes that were then presented to Alberta Health Services senior leadership for feedback. Themes that resulted from community discussions included Emergency Medical Services response times, access to physicians and mental health and addiction services for the Aboriginal population.

4. Increase awareness of the council's role and activities through media and advertising.

Since this was our first year of operation, we needed to create awareness about our role and activities to engage the general public. As a result, we promoted, advertised and created public service media announcements informing the public of our meetings and the opportunity for input.

In addition to items identified in the Work Plan, we had opportunity to engage the public during the following events:

- Alberta Health Act Consultations. Council provided community members with contact information and host site locations to support community engagement activities for the Alberta Health and Wellness Health Act consultation. In total, council supported four meetings which were held within the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council area, including Fort

Saskatchewan, Stony Plain and southeast and central Edmonton.

- Local elected officials and Alberta Health Services breakfast mixers. The council chair, in collaboration with Alberta Health Services senior leadership within the Edmonton area, hosted two mayors' engagement mixers to facilitate communication between local municipal leaders and health services.
- Council members were invited to attend facility grand openings and celebrations held within the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council area. This provided council with an opportunity to create awareness of the council and its role, and to connect the public with their local council members.
- Council submitted a name change to the Alberta Health Services Board to become the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council instead of HAC 7. This change created awareness and promoted the council, enabling the residents of the area to more easily know which Health Advisory Council represented them.

## Provide Feedback and Advice to Alberta Health Services

The council established two strategies to provide feedback and advice to Alberta Health Services:

1. Establish and support regular, clear communication with key decision makers within Alberta Health Services.

Council looked to improve two-way communications with Alberta Health Services by hosting senior leadership at our regular meetings. We would like to express our thanks for the support we have received from Marianne Stewart, Vice President, Edmonton Zone who attended our meetings and introduced the council to senior staff in order for us to gain valuable insight into current health services issues. In addition, council was able to express community concerns and potential solutions directly to senior staff. When emergent issues arose in the area, the vice president organized teleconferences to ensure all council members were made aware of new strategies to address health issues. Council members also received updates regarding health services changes and successes via email. Overall, we have been successful in our communications efforts.

Council presented briefing notes to Alberta Health Services leadership to bring forward pressing concerns that required a quicker decision or resolution. Specifically, the need to develop a coordinated plan to address the unique health concerns with those of Aboriginal origin living with concurrent health issues, such as mental illness and addictions, was identified.

*“Council presented briefing notes to Alberta Health Services leadership to bring forward pressing concerns that required a quicker decision or resolution.”*

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2. Establish and support two-way communication with the Alberta Health Services Board.

Council recognizes that this Annual Report is one mechanism to provide feedback to the Alberta Health Services Board. In addition, council participated in bi-annual teleconference meetings with all of the Health Advisory Council Chairs across the province and the Provincial Health Advisory Council meeting, which was held in Edmonton on June 4 and 5, 2010. These meetings provided council the opportunity to share community concerns and issues about health services with the Alberta Health Services Board.

Council will have regular contact at council meetings with the Board members of the Health Advisory Committee to discuss the work of the council and our successes and challenges. However, opportunities did not present themselves in this Work Plan year. We hope this opportunity will be made available in the coming year.

In addition, council formally invited members of the Alberta Health Services Board to attend our regular council meetings. A commitment has been made by the Alberta Health Services Board to attend five meetings in the coming year. Board members have been unable to attend any meetings to date.

The Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council had the opportunity to provide additional health input to Alberta Health Services at the following events:

- Council provided representation and input to the Provincial Health Plan, the Primary Care Open Spaces Forum, the Community and Rural Health Planning for the Devon and Leduc geographic planning area and the Driving Forces 2030 workshop. Each of these opportunities provided council with the opportunity to bring the voice of our communities to Alberta Health Services' strategic planning initiatives.
- Council was asked to provide consultation to the Nutrition and Food Services Provincial Menu and to the Provincial Tobacco and Smoke Free Environments Policy.

*“Meetings provided council the opportunity to share community concerns and issues about health services with the Alberta Health Services Board.”*

## Promote and Participate in Activities that Enhance the Health of Residents

Council saw opportunities to promote and participate in activities that would improve the health of the residents in the Greater Edmonton area. One main strategy has been identified:

1. Promote and support Alberta Health Services health innovations, changes and opportunities that impact the health of our community through increased communication.

Council identified the need to become more knowledgeable about the health services available within our council area. Council members were provided with information about the current work in public health, Aboriginal health services (including some not-for-profit agencies supported by Alberta Health Services in this area), Emergency Medical Services, Capital planning activities within the Greater Edmonton area, Primary Care networks, and addictions and mental health services available within Alberta Health Services.

Council will be taking this information to community gatherings and other events to increase the public's awareness about initiatives that support better health practices.



## What We Have Learned

*"We have gained knowledge on many of the current health services and challenges facing Alberta Health Services and the community."*

This first year has been a tremendous learning experience for the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council. We have gained knowledge on many of the current health services and challenges facing Alberta Health Services and the community. In addition, we have gained knowledge about processes and techniques available from Alberta Health Services to support our council and our role.

Reflecting on the past year, we have learned the following:

- numerous health issues exist and it is important to understand the current levels of service and obtain feedback from the community;
- it takes time for new councils to understand their role and develop a working relationship with Alberta Health Services;
- our role is to identify health issues impacting our residents and direct individuals with specific concerns to Patient Concerns to have their issue resolved; and
- it is critical to have a name that clearly describes our council area to the public, which has helped increase awareness of our council.

## Logistics and Process

We learned that:

- in large urban centers, it is difficult to raise awareness about our meetings and the role of our council. The Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council will be using new methods of promotion in the coming year;
- moving the meetings from one community to another was invaluable. We were able to meet local residents and representatives from local towns and County councils at our meetings;
- inviting a key stakeholder in a community to the meeting helped ensure that others would also attend;
- there is a need to use various forms of advertising to promote the council and our role and activities; and
- based on our web page hits, we are not as visible and accessible as we would like. As a result, we will be increasing our web page promotion in the coming year.



## Looking Forward

### 2011-2012

In the coming year, we hope to reap the benefits from the planning and processes developed in our inaugural year. As we develop our 2011-2012 Work Plan and reflect on the outcomes of the work completed over the past year, changes will be made to further support the communities we represent. Our annual Work Plan will be available on the Alberta Health Services website at [www.albertahealthservices.ca/1814.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/1814.asp)

In December 2010, Alberta Health Services announced the expanded and strengthened role of Health Advisory Councils in providing greater engagement with Albertans. This will enable our council to connect regularly with the Alberta Health Services Board and management about strategic planning initiatives, both locally and provincially.

This past year we experienced challenges creating visibility and communicating our role to the residents of the Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council area. We are excited to start our face-to-face community engagements, beginning with the Great Canadian Trade Show in Sherwood Park in April 2011. This will be our first opportunity to engage with the greater public, and promote our council and our regularly held meetings. We will also increase the promotion of our council through various forms of media and hope to create greater opportunities using our web page and social media tools such as Twitter.

*“We thank the residents of our communities for their willingness to provide us with the input needed to improve our health system.”*

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We look forward to networking at our second annual Provincewide Council Meeting with all councils in June 2011. We appreciate the opportunity for our members to connect and build relationships with members from other councils across the province and with the Alberta Health Services Board and management. This event will also provide our council with an opportunity to share our successes and challenges, and learn from other councils as to what activities and strategies may work in our council area.

Overall, we are pleased with the successes we have achieved to date and look forward to increasing the visibility of the council and our engagement opportunities with the public. We thank the residents of our communities for their willingness to provide us with the input needed to improve our health system. We would also like to thank Alberta Health Services for their support, and look forward to greater success in the coming year.



## Contact Information 2011-2012

We welcome the opportunity to hear your voice. Please contact us at:

Kathleen LeClair, Chair

Email: [greateredmonton@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:greateredmonton@albertahealthservices.ca)

Caroline McAuley, Community Engagement Officer

Telephone: 780-853-5270

Email: [caroline.mcauley@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:caroline.mcauley@albertahealthservices.ca)

Community Engagement Department:

Telephone: 1-877-275-8830

Fax: 403-943-1163

Email: [community.engagement@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:community.engagement@albertahealthservices.ca)

Council Web Page:

[www.albertahealthservices.ca/1814.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/1814.asp)

Council Email:

[greateredmonton@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:greateredmonton@albertahealthservices.ca)

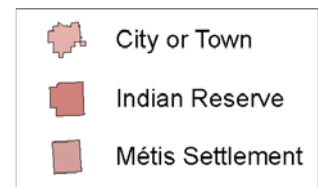
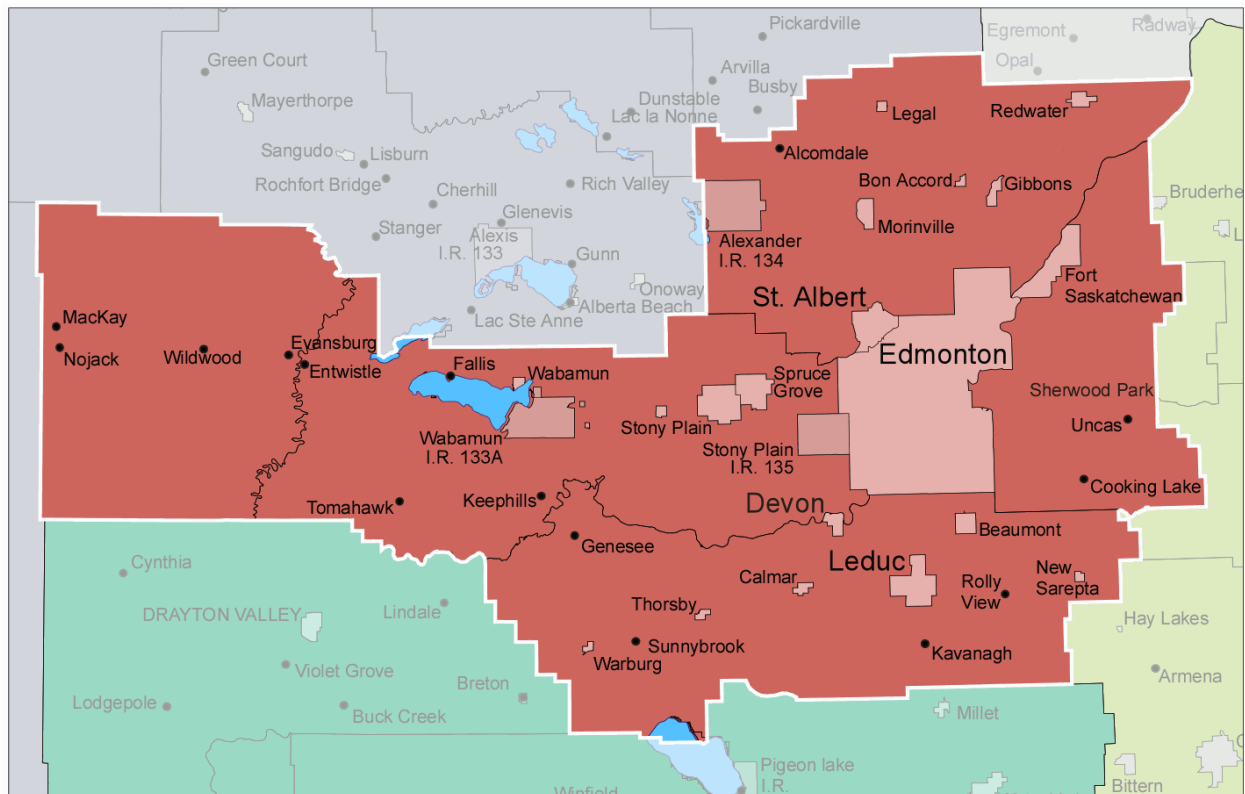
 **Appendix 1 – Provincial Map**





## Appendix 2 – Council Map

### Greater Edmonton Health Advisory Council Map





*Bringing the voice of  
communities to build  
a better health system*