

Strategy Highlights

Primary Health Care Strategy

Vision

A primary health care system that supports Albertans to be as healthy as they can be

Guiding Principles

Person-Centred

Primary health care provides services that reflect and respond to an individual's needs, culture, values, religion, language, and preferences. Individuals and their families are supported and encouraged to take responsibility for their health and an active role in decision-making about their health care.

Accessible

The primary health care system provides all Albertans with access to a regular primary health care provider or team, and timely access to primary health care services through arrangements that facilitate 24-7 access to appropriate services. Services and programs are provided in a manner that is flexible and accessible to Albertans.

Continuity of Care

The primary health care system is organized, connected, integrated, and co-ordinated with other parts of the health care system and with community and social services. Albertans are able to build and maintain relationships with their health care team.

Proactive

Primary health care services emphasize proactive approaches to early prevention, health promotion, addressing root causes rather than symptoms, and focus on support for individuals that is close to home. A proactive approach involves Albertans in improving their health.

Collaborative

The primary health care system includes a range of providers, government ministries, the non-profit sector, citizens, and communities working together to improve the health of Albertans. Team members work at full scope of practice and with defined team roles and responsibilities in a culture of collaboration.

Accountable

Accountability is about people being empowered to take responsibility for their actions. At the system level it is reflected through good governance, sustainability, and reporting, and is mirrored by providers through their collaboration with peers and engagement with individuals.

Sustainable

Primary health care is delivered in ways that are effective and demonstrate value for money and help ensure that the system is able to serve all Albertans.

Quality

Primary health care strives for excellence, defined by the Health Quality Council of Alberta as acceptable, accessible, appropriate, effective, efficient, and safe. A quality health care system includes a focus on continuous learning and improvement from research and experience, evidence-informed decision making, and individuals seeing the right provider at the right time.

Equitable

Primary health care works to address issues of inequity that are barriers to health, particularly the health of vulnerable populations. Equity is about levelling the playing field for people. Good health outcomes are linked to people's social and economic situations, factors that can be modified through access to better health system supports, education, better incomes and employment.

Outcomes

Attachment

All Albertans have a health home.

Quality

Clinical and social supports are brought together to promote wellness, provide quality care based on proven courses of action, and effectively manage chronic disease.

Self-Management

Albertans are involved in their care and have the supports needed to improve and manage their health.

Access

Albertans have timely access to a primary health care team.

Improvement in Health Status and Care Experience

Albertans are as healthy as they can be, have better health overall, and report positive experiences with primary health care.

Provider Engagement and Satisfaction

Providers are satisfied and happy with their work lives, and able to provide quality care.

Transforming the Primary Health Care System: Strategic Directions

Enhancing the Delivery of Care

What it Means For Albertans
Albertans without a family doctor will be able to sign up to get a regular provider and will see the provider who best meets their needs. Access will be faster because appointments can be scheduled with any member of the health care team. The team will make sure care is co-ordinated for individuals — they will not be on their own.

What it Means For Providers
Working to enhance the delivery of care, providers will work collaboratively across occupational silos and will provide their patients with a broad range of care. With a greater understanding of who their patients are, primary health care teams will be able to better tailor their services to meet the needs of their local communities. Providers will understand the many skills and capabilities of their peers and how to work together effectively.

Cultural Change

What it Means For Albertans
Cultural change is about changing the way we see and think about our health and health care. Albertans will be supported to be active in their health and will have the ability to interpret and act on the health information around them. Albertans will be partners in their health care and tools such as myhealth.ca will support an individual's participation.

What it Means For Providers
Cultural change will happen in a variety of ways, such as new and strengthened linkages to community and social services. Providers have long understood the impact of the social determinants of health, and now connecting patients with the supports they need will be made easier. Professional development will be available for providers to learn more about the root causes of health inequities.

Building Blocks for Change

What it Means For Albertans
Building blocks for change is about changing the way primary health care is organized, particularly at the system level. For Albertans, these changes will be seen in all sorts of ways when accessing primary health care — such as not having to repeat their stories or undergo duplicate testing. Patients will be involved in building change and will have a say in a system that is designed around them.

What it Means For Providers
Building blocks for change are ways providers can be supported to help transform the system. One of the most visible building blocks will be a common IM/IT system that allows for easy communication across providers and organizations. All team members will be able to base their treatment decisions on the same information, and providers and clinics will have the data needed to measure and report performance to improve outcomes.