



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6 Canada

August 2, 2023

The Honourable Dan Williams
Minister of Mental Health and Addiction

Dear Minister:

I want to thank you for your service to this government, and congratulate you on your new role as Minister of Mental Health and Addiction.

Our Cabinet is made up of talented, diverse, and experienced leaders and I am proud to share with you our responsibility to fulfill the mandate given to us by Albertans. We all love this beautiful province and want the best for our families and our future. Over the next four years, we will take clear and decisive action to grow and diversify our economy while ensuring our health, education and other core social programs are world class.

I have full confidence that our team will build on our solid foundation of stability, informed decision-making, and good governance to improve the lives of Albertans and help our province realize its potential.

All of Canada, including Alberta, is experiencing an unprecedented and deadly mental health and addiction crisis. We must make addressing this crisis a cornerstone priority of our government. Accelerating the implementation of the recovery-oriented “Alberta Model” of care will be essential to saving the lives of hundreds of Albertans.

Under your leadership as Minister of Mental Health and Addiction, I expect you to work closely with your Cabinet and Caucus colleagues and the public service through the Committee, Cabinet, and legislative processes to deliver on our platform commitments to support Albertans, including:

- Investing at least \$20 million per year to expand mental health classrooms from 20 to 60.
- Expanding Integrated School Support Programs to an additional 22 high-needs schools through an investment of at least \$4.5 million per year..
- Increasing support for addiction and mental health prevention by expanding resiliency education in schools.
- Providing an annual investment of at least \$5 million with First Nations and Métis school communities across Alberta to amplify the voice of youth and create



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6 Canada

opportunities for educators, Elders, parents, coaches, and community members to develop their own strategies to enhance student wellness.

- Working collaboratively with community and government partners to develop compassionate intervention legislation, supporting facilities and legal processes to save the lives of those that are a danger to themselves or others.
- Implementing recovery community centres for youth in major centres throughout the province.
- Building and operationalizing at least 11 new recovery communities in key locations throughout the province, working collaboratively with the Ministries of Infrastructure, First Nations, and Metis communities.
- Developing at least five new 75+ bed mental wellness centres for short and long-term treatment and recovery.
- Expanding Counselling Alberta to provide same day, no wait list, accessible and affordable counselling sessions for all Albertans by investing at least \$4 million per year.
- As the lead, and in collaboration with the Ministers of Education and Children and Family Services, expanding access to young people struggling with severe mental illness with at least four new youth mental wellness centres to provide inpatient mental health and addiction treatment to youth. This should include expansion of prevention and early intervention mental health supports for children and youth that are integrated within schools and communities.
- As lead, working in partnership with the Minister of Indigenous Relations, support indigenous peoples in Alberta by strengthening a comprehensive continuum of mental health and addiction services, ensuring service provision is not disrupted by jurisdictional disputes.

In addition, I expect you to deliver on further initiatives overseen by your ministry including:

- Completing a review of mental health and addiction related expenditures within Alberta Health Services and, as appropriate, within ministries across the Government of Alberta to ensure expenditure oversight by the ministry.
- As the lead minister, continuing to develop a recovery-oriented system of care in Alberta for mental health and addiction in partnership with other government



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6 Canada

departments that support the mental health and addiction needs of Albertans to ensure consistency across the Government of Alberta.

- Working with Alberta Health Services to establish a dedicated Provincial Mental Health and Addiction Operations division and governance structure within Alberta Health Services.
- Ensuring the Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction is responsible for the management of Government of Alberta funding provided to Alberta Health Services for the purpose of delivering mental health and addiction services.
- Developing electronic information gathering systems to ensure that system outcomes are standardized, transparent, focus on recovery-based outcomes, and explore mechanisms for greater information sharing with lead organizations and other government departments that support the mental health and addiction needs of Albertans.
- Working with stakeholders across Alberta to help Albertans improve their mental wellness while creating healthy and vibrant communities.
- Collaborating with your Federal, Provincial, and Territorial colleagues to ensure that Alberta's interests are represented when engaging with governments across Canada and collaborate closely with other jurisdictions when their interests are aligned with Alberta.
- Working with the Minister of Justice, who is the lead, to assess proposed federal medical assistance in dying legislation amendments to include those with mental health conditions and recommend Alberta's regulation of the profession with regards to it.
- In collaboration with the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services, who is the lead, ensuring that police services have the tools they need to support the wellness and recovery of Albertans while they focus on keeping communities safe.
- Working closely with the Minister of Health, who is the lead, to ensure that recovery from mental health and addiction and increasing the recovery capital of Albertans, is a guiding policy in the modernization of Alberta's primary healthcare system.



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6 Canada

I direct you to work closely with the public service, including your Deputy Minister and other senior officials in your ministry, to support the priorities outlined in this letter with the highest standard of professionalism, integrity, and creativity.

I also expect you to regularly and proactively reach out to all ministry-related stakeholders in order to take feedback and identify potential solutions on issues of importance to them, including finding ways our government can reduce burdensome and unnecessary red tape and barriers that are hurting their members' ability to grow the economy and improve quality of life for the Albertans they serve.

Together with you and our Caucus and Cabinet colleagues, I look forward to serving all Albertans to ensure our province remains one of the best places on earth to live, work and raise a family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danielle Smith

Premier of Alberta