

# MAPS MOMENTUM

## Quarterly Newsletter

Welcome back to another update! The Modernizing Alberta's Primary Health Care System (MAPS) team is excited to share the latest insights and updates on the MAPS 2-Year Implementation Plan.



### Primary Care Alberta Stand Up

[Primary Care Alberta](#) was officially established as a legal entity under the leadership of Kim Simmonds in November 2024!

Primary Care Alberta is driving its vision into action, paving the way for a future where every Albertan can rely on a trusted health care provider, supported by a committed health care team. In addition to patients, Primary Care Alberta envisions building a positive culture for providers by ensuring they feel valued and fulfilled in their roles, with a strong, supportive environment in place.

Alberta Health is currently working with and supporting the provincial health agency as it becomes operational on February 1, 2025.



### Removing barriers in the health care system

Alberta's government remains committed to removing barriers for Indigenous Peoples in accessing health services and ensuring they receive high-quality, timely culturally safe care.

In partnership with the Office of the Alberta Health Advocates, Tony Cardinal has been appointed as Alberta's first Indigenous Patient Safety Investigator and Advocate. His work will centre on addressing concerns about racism and mistreatment in healthcare. Indigenous patients and their families can now voice their experiences through established channels, ensuring their concerns are addressed in a culturally safe and appropriate way.

For more information, visit [Removing Barriers In The Health Care System](#).



### Regional Health Corridors

Alberta Health established seven new [regional health corridors](#) to support seamless patient journeys. This change supports an integrated approach to health system planning to inform decision-making and better respond to local needs and priorities.

While the system is moving to the new corridors, Alberta Health Services (AHS) will temporarily retain its zones for organizational purposes. Existing zones will ensure its services reflect zone priorities. Alberta Health and AHS will work to align the new expectations on corridors as AHS evolves to its new role as a service provider in the coming year.

No decisions have been made about the boundaries for Regional Primary Health Care Networks (RPHCNs). Alberta Health plans to align them with corridors, but final decisions will incorporate stakeholder input to promote integration and improvements to primary care.



### Alberta Health Workforce Strategy

The Alberta Health Workforce Strategy is a framework designed to address the ongoing and evolving pressures affecting the province's health workforce. The newly updated strategy aligns with changing operational realities and workforce needs, addresses persistent workforce challenges, and supports the implementation of the MAPS recommendations.

The Alberta Health Workforce Strategy has five strategic focus areas essential for building and maintaining the health workforce needed to support Albertans' health and wellness.

For more information, visit [Health Workforce Strategy | Alberta.ca](#)



### Care Opinion is launching!

Care Opinion, funded by Alberta Health, is an online platform where patients, and their families share their health care stories and feedback directly with clinics, hospitals, and care networks. It gives patients and their families a voice by allowing interactive engagement with health care providers.

These stories will help health organizations understand what is working and what is not.

The platform is set to fully launch in early 2025.



## Primary Health Care Grants

Alberta's government is delivering on its commitment to improve primary health care for rural Albertans.

### Rural Team Recruitment Grant and the Municipality Supported Grant

In fall 2024, the Government of Alberta introduced \$12 million in funding for two new grant programs: the Rural Team Recruitment Grant and the Municipality Supported Grant. Albertans can look forward to having access to quality care, no matter where they live once the grants are fully implemented. The grants will improve rural access to team-based care and aim to reduce the use of emergency services for non-urgent care. With improved team-based care, nurses, pharmacists, and social workers will help provide a cohesive system to deliver better, more accessible care for Albertans.

In total, 42 applications were received for the rural team recruitment grant while 16 applications were received for the municipal supported grant. The program is no longer accepting applications and grant funding is set to roll out early 2025, so stay tuned!

For further information, visit [Alberta Primary Health Care Grants](#).

### Rural and Remote Family Medicine Resident Physician Bursary Pilot Program

Alberta's government introduced a new Rural and Remote Family Medicine Resident Physician Bursary Pilot Program to strengthen support for family medicine residents interested in serving rural and remote areas.

With \$16 million in funding, this program will allocate up to \$8 million annually for the next two years. Bursary recipients will commit to delivering comprehensive patient care in eligible communities for three years after completing their residency.

Applications for the bursary program opened January 6, 2025. For more information and to apply, please visit [Rural and Remote Family Medicine Resident Physician Bursary](#).

### Competitive Compensation for Resident Physicians

Resident physicians can now expect competitive and fair-market compensation for physicians in training through a newly negotiated agreement.

The agreement provides for a 3% wage increase in the first two years, and a two percent wage increase in the last two years.

For more information, visit [Competitive Compensation for Resident Physicians](#)

### Primary Care Innovation Fund

The Primary Care Innovation Fund will support health innovations in primary care across the province that align with improving access to care, reducing administrative burden, and enhancing team-based care.

A total of \$3 million in funding is available, with up to \$1 million for short-term projects lasting one to two years. The deadline to submit a proposal is now complete, and decisions will be shared in early 2025.

Stay tuned for updates. For more information, contact [hif@gov.ab.ca](mailto:hif@gov.ab.ca).



## Nurse Practitioner Primary Care Program

The Nurse Practitioner Primary Care program is showing early signs of success, with 43 nurse practitioners already practicing autonomously in communities, including rural locations across the province. With nurse practitioners practicing independently about 30,000 more Albertans will have access to the primary health care they need.

Alberta Health is still accepting expressions of interest from nurse practitioners. Want to know more? Click on [Nurse Practitioner Primary Care Program](#).





## Transition to Regional Primary Health Care Networks



In October 2024, the transition to Regional Primary Health Care Networks (RPHCNs) project moved into the design phase with 15 design workshops, held both in-person and online. Building on insights from the assessment phase, the discussions explored governance models, size, and geography of RPHCNs, patient access for unattached and underserved communities, and better support for healthcare providers.

**PHASE 1: Assessment**  
(June – September)

**PHASE 2: Design**  
(October – February)

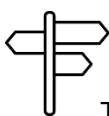
**PHASE 3: Approvals and Transition Planning**  
(March – August)

A physician survey was rolled out in October to gather feedback from family physicians and rural generalists on governance, the current non-profit corporation (NPC) and legal model, the Primary Care Network (PCN) programming for patients and supports for team-based care.

The Primary Care and Rural Health Division, supported by the Indigenous Health Division, will be hosting in-person design workshops with PCN and Indigenous partners in various geographical areas to ensure Alberta's primary care system reflects diverse needs and perspectives. The design phase of the projects allows project teams to review and refine the Regional Network model, incorporating feedback from PCNs, Zone Committees, and Indigenous partners before the approval and transition phase of the project.

Between January 28 and February 25, 2025, there will be 16 in-person workshops; eight for PCN stakeholders and eight for Indigenous partners, plus two virtual sessions for those unable to attend in person.

Sessions with Indigenous partners are being held to allow for more focused and culturally appropriate discussion on the needs of each partner group. These workshops mark the first formal engagement with Indigenous partners on the Regional Network model.



## New Pathways on Alberta Pathway Hub

The new Alberta Pathway Hub offers a series of pathways to streamline patient care and support healthcare providers in delivering efficient and effective services.

Discover the latest co-designed pathways for seamless primary-to-specialty care transitions:

### Clinical:

1. [Provincial Hematuria Evaluation Primary Care Pathway](#) (December 2024)
2. [Provincial Renal Mass Diagnosis Primary Care Pathway](#) (December 2024)
3. [Provincial Female Urinary Incontinence Primary Care Pathway](#) (December 2024)
4. [Provincial Adult General Surgery Referral Pathway](#) (December 2024)
5. [Provincial Adult Orthopedic & Spine Referral Pathway](#) (December 2024)

### Patient:

6. [Female Urinary Incontinence Patient Pathway](#) (December 2024)

### Referral:

7. [Provincial Breast Health Referral Pathway](#) (December 2024)

The Hub is constantly evolving based on feedback from users. Watch for updates here: [Your Input Shapes The Future Of Primary Care In Alberta](#).

Interested in getting involved in co-designing pathways? Email [albertapathways@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:albertapathways@albertahealthservices.ca).



## MAPS Dashboard Quarterly Update

Stay up to date on progress on the 30 action items under the seven key focus areas in the MAPS 2-Year Implementation Plan by visiting the [MAPS Public Dashboard](#) which was updated on January 6, 2025.



## Upcoming Events

Events you can expect this winter

- **Jan 23-24, 2025:** MAPS Summit
- **Jan/Feb 2025:** Design workshops with PCNs



## MAPS Newsletter – Spring Edition

Stay tuned for the Spring 2025 edition of the newsletter coming April 2025.



## Stay Connected

To catch up on progress made on MAPS initiatives between newsletters, check out the [MAPS website](#).

To connect with the MAPS team, or if you have questions, comments, or concerns, email [health.MAPS@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.MAPS@gov.ab.ca).