

Fort McMurray Community Conversation

January 24, 2019

What We Heard Summary

Alberta Health Services and the Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council co-hosted the eighth of 12 Community Conversations on January 21 in Fort McMurray. Community Conversations are designed to give AHS and the communities we serve the opportunity to celebrate local successes as we approach our 10 year anniversary – and to discuss ways we can work together to improve healthcare for all Albertans. Activities included two working sessions where participants identified challenges and then worked together to explore existing or new partnerships that could help to address those challenges.

12 Community members participated

11 AHS representatives participated

Attendees represented a variety of organizations and groups in and around Fort McMurray including the Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council, Canadian Mental Health Association, McMurray Metis, Northland School Division, Northern Lights Health Foundation, Waypoints, Someothersolutions, and Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP).

Key activities

- Shared healthcare successes in area
- Identified top healthcare challenges
- Considered existing and new community partnerships that could help address challenges

Community spotlight

Waypoints, an organization dedicated to protecting citizens from domestic abuse, shared information about how their staff assists in rebuilding lives by implementing crisis intervention and a range of support services while acknowledging the multitude of issues facing survivors of abuse.

Participants are grateful for

- Hospital
- Crisis line
- Emergency services
- Mental health walk-in clinic
- The building of Nunee Health Centre in Fort Chipewyan
- Clinics
- Local labs
- Breastfeeding support

“I’m pleased people who participated gave their time and energy that resulted in a productive conversation.”

Val O’Leary
Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council Chair

What We Heard Summary – Fort McMurray

Top healthcare challenges

- Wait times for counselling, specialists and testing
- Access to care due to distances and being in remote areas (and associated costs)
- Coordination of services and service providers
- Lack of communication about services

Sampling of suggested partnerships and ideas

- Ensure a better understanding of AHS and its funding partners
- Initiate direct collaboration and work together
- Use community agency supports
- Work with Indigenous communities and organizations
- Improve relationship and supports with rural communities
- Help improve awareness about services and resources by sharing via interagency and organization meetings/forums
- Use 211, HealthLink, and TeleHealth
- Work towards better relations between federal, provincial and municipal governments, and multi ministry program coordination
- Increase coordination of services
- Consider mobile health services



Kyle Pellegrini from Waypoints shares information about how his organization supports residents in the area

Evaluation of event

Most who completed the evaluation survey rated the event as good or excellent, and agreed or strongly agreed that:

- Their understanding of AHS' focus on wellness, prevention and community care increased.
- They had an opportunity to share thoughts and ideas in a productive way.
- AHS would consider input from the event when making decisions.
- Being at the meeting was a good use of their time.

What We Heard Summary – Fort McMurray



Words participants used to describe the greatest healthcare success in their community.



Words participants used to describe the greatest contributor to wellness in their community.



Val O'Leary, pictured here, shares comments with participants at the Community Conversation in Fort McMurray on January 24.

Next steps

- All outputs from the event will be shared with North Zone leadership for review.
- An action list will be put forward, and AHS will reach out to community groups to share the information and ideas collected to build partnerships and support community-based wellness.
- Information will be shared with the Health Plan and Business Plan team.

Handy links to learn more

- [Wood Buffalo Health Advisory Council](#) (we are [accepting applications to join the Council](#))
- [Together4Health](#) - summary of Community Conversations hosted in other communities across Alberta – and opportunity to continue the conversation
- [Because you cared video](#) – shown at the event