**From:** AHS CEO
**To:** AHS.All
**Subject:** AHS COVID-19 Update: Temporary Expansion Structure to Provide Additional Capacity
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# *Temporary Expansion Structure to Provide Additional Capacity*

*Please print and share with your teams as needed*

**Dear staff, physicians and volunteers,**

## Today's Update

- **Cases in Alberta**
- **Temporary Expansion to Peter Lougheed Centre**
- **Personal Protective Equipment Update**
- **Patient Care Handouts Online**
- **Reasonable use of AHS Computers**
- **ZEOC Update – North Zone**
- **Foundations of Gratitude**
- **COVID-19 Effect on Addiction and Mental Health**
- **Mental Wellness Moment – Juggling Demands at Home**
- **Shout Out**
- **Acts of Community Kindness**

## COVID-19 Status

We have confirmed 28 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 1,451. Of the total cases in Alberta to date, 192 are suspected to have been acquired in the community, 97 have been hospitalized and 33 admitted to intensive care units (ICU). Today, there are 47 cases in hospital, with 14 in ICU. The number of recovered cases is now at 592.

Today, we must report three more deaths related to COVID-19: a woman in her 80s and a woman in her 60s in Calgary Zone, and a man in his 70s in Edmonton Zone. We want to share our sincere condolences with the loved ones of these Albertans. We know this is a very hard day for you and we grieve with you. In total, 32 Albertans have now passed

away from COVID-19.

As we discussed in our update yesterday, we have been developing modelling in Alberta to help predict how COVID-19 will impact our province in the coming weeks. In the most likely scenario, we anticipate the surge of cases may be at its peak in the middle of May. While we have already done an incredible amount of work to prepare our organization to respond to this pandemic, there is still much more work to be done. Be assured, we are doing all we can to be ready to handle the cases coming our way. This includes adding capacity, freeing up resources and procuring supplies, including personal protective equipment.

## Things You Need to Know

**Temporary Expansion to Peter Lougheed Centre**

It was announced today that an expansion to the Peter Lougheed Centre (PLC) in Calgary will help meet patient needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alberta-based Sprung Structures has donated a temporary structure to AHS that will add up to 6,000 square feet of treatment space which will be located in AHS parking lots 10 and 17, next to the PLC. Work is now underway to prepare the site for the structure, which is 70 metres by 105 metres, and will create approximately 100 more care spaces for Calgary-area patients. It is a tensioned membrane building, which combines an aluminum substructure with highly tensioned membrane panels. AHS will invest up to $3 million to turn the structure into a site for safe, high-quality healthcare delivery which meets all standards for infection prevention and control.

There have been 835 cases of COVID-19 identified in the Calgary zone as of April 8. This represents 61 per cent of all the cases in Alberta. AHS is working on other measures to increase the number of acute care beds in the Calgary zone and throughout the province in response to a surge of demand caused by COVID-19. These measures include postponement of all elective surgeries and procedures, and identifying non-clinical spaces in AHS facilities that can be adapted for patient care. In all, AHS is ensuring that more than 3,000 acute care and intensive care spaces are available for patients with COVID-19.

More details will be shared as this project and construction take shape.

**Personal Protective Equipment Update**
We continue to ensure that our recommended approaches to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use across Alberta reflect the emerging evidence of COVID-19 transmission, and related risks to patients and healthcare providers.

There will be an announcement related to PPE coming tomorrow to address our current approach and supplies.

**Patient Care Handouts Available Online**
Albertans can now read about COVID-19 self-care instructions and how to manage symptoms of COVID-19 at home on MyHealth.Alberta.ca. These two patient care

handouts provide concise COVID-19 related general health information and home care advice. The health information has been reviewed by AHS medical experts and is approved for use by healthcare providers across Alberta to provide:

- standardized online patient education
- discharge instructions at the point of care
- home care advice by Health Link tele-triage staff

MyHealth.Alberta.ca team currently is working to make the handouts available through ahs.ca/covid online resource as well as in Connect Care system for discharge workflow.

**Reasonable use of AHS Computers While Working Remotely**
IT Security regularly monitors activity on AHS computers, including internet use, to help assess risk and protect our system from large scale malware threats. While it's acceptable to check your personal email account, and catch up on news and social media posts, please ensure when using AHS devices, whether working remotely or on-site, your online activity complies with our Code of Conduct and AHS' IT Acceptable Use policy.

*IT Security reminders:*

- Always lock/log-off your AHS computer when leaving your desk – even when working remotely.
- Create strong passwords for your AHS devices and do not share them with anyone.
- Change your password if there's a chance it's been compromised.
- Your AHS email address is for business purposes only per the AHS Access to Information policy. Do not use your AHS email to sign up for any online services, programs or social media sites that are not work related.
- If you encounter any security issues, always report the situation immediately to the IT Service Desk or email securityincident@ahs.ca.

Your cooperation will help protect our AHS systems. Visit InfoCare to learn more.

## In the Zones

**Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) Update – North Zone**
Our North Zone Population, Public and Indigenous Health (PPIH) team continues to be in communication with representatives from the 33 First Nations, eight Métis Settlements and Métis Nation of Alberta, and has been working with Friendship Centers on urban Indigenous supports, including vulnerable populations, as the pandemic continues to evolve in our province. The PPIH team is hearing their concerns, noting their vulnerable populations, and is providing resources to educate and equip their communities around COVID-19.

Residents throughout the North Zone are showing their gratitude to AHS and our healthcare teams for caring for our communities during these challenging times. From impromptu messages of thanks in sidewalk chalk outside the Westlock Healthcare Centre, to blue and green ribbons on trees in Grande Prairie, Albertans are finding various ways to show their appreciation for the care that our teams provide every day. Thank you notes, cards, posters, and banners have flooded in to various AHS sites. Police and fire crews have initiated first responder parades outside the Northern Lights Regional Healthcare Centre and QEII Hospital, putting their support on display for all to see. These expressions of gratitude echo the pride we feel for the excellent work being done by our staff throughout our zones.

First responders show their appreciation for healthcare workers in Grande Prairie with a siren and lights parade around the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital.

## Be Well - Be Kind

**#FoundationsofGratitude shows support for healthcare heroes**
We're incredibly grateful to our health foundation partners for launching #FoundationsofGratitude today. Through this campaign, foundations from across the province are coming together to show their appreciation for healthcare professionals and support staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Albertans are asked to join the foundations in showing support, by creating and placing hearts in their windows at home, and sharing images of their "HEARTwork" and messages of support online, using the social media tag #FoundationsofGratitude.

Thank you to our talented and compassionate staff who are facing COVID-19 head on to support Albertans. We also thank our foundation partners and their donors for their tremendous contributions toward healthcare in our province. For more information on #FoundationsofGratitude, visit here.

#FoundationsOfGratitude

**We're here to Help**
Everyone is impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic differently. This can include concerns related to your mental health or financial stress.

There are many support services and resources in place to help you feel safe and healthy during this time. Our people can find support through the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), which offers a range of services to help AHS staff navigate through work, health and life challenges.

See the new Resilience, Wellness and Mental Health Resource Guide to help you take practical and proactive steps to maintain your mental health and wellness.

**COVID-19 Effect on Addiction and Mental Health**
A weekly digest providing the latest literature and resources regarding the effect of COVID-19 on addiction and mental health is available. Every Monday, the newest evidence and resources will be shared and compiled by the AHS Provincial Addiction and Mental Health Knowledge Exchange team. You can subscribe to receive the latest updates.

**Mental Wellness Moment**
Working from home. Home schooling children. Managing household duties. It can be difficult juggling these and other responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. In his latest Mental Wellness Moment, Dr. Nicholas Mitchell answers questions about struggling with various demands while staying safe at home.

This clip is one in a series of short Mental Wellness Moment videos where Dr. Mitchell talks about protecting your mental health in a time of pandemic. AHS has more resources to look after your mental health at ahs.ca/covid.

**Shout Out**
In addition to the work outlined in our North Zone ZEOC update, we wanted to provide North Zone with some additional recognition for the incredible job they've done supporting continuing care services in High Prairie and McLennan. This shout out is for the entire North Zone team, which has helped with service continuity in these two communities under the added pressure of COVID-19 restrictions and care.

**Acts of Community Kindness**
We continue to receive word from around Alberta of public health protocols being taken seriously. This time, a sculpture at the entrance to the town of Canmore is donning its PPE. The head appears to be deep in thought, which is understandable these days and seems to be keeping its physical distance from others. Thanks to those in Canmore who found a way to have a little fun, while expressing their thanks to healthcare teams in Alberta.

In seriousness, these are very difficult times for most of us, as we face new realities and increasingly stringent restrictions. Many of us are juggling working remotely, with the intensified pressures of home life, while navigating the overwhelming information about COVID-19 coming at us. But, in the midst of all of this, there can still be great hope. We have been reminded daily of the meaningful and wonderful ways humans are coming together to help each other with kindness and compassion. There is much good in our world to celebrate, even during this pandemic. This video is such a poignant and uplifting illustration to remind us to choose hope.

As important observances and celebrations for many faiths are taking place in the days and weeks to come, including Passover, Ramadan and Easter, we want you to enjoy time

with loved ones, using virtual ways to connect. Please take time to celebrate and rejuvenate, and hopefully welcome spring to Alberta. Find strength in each other and the wave of support we have seen from Albertans for the work you are doing.

With gratitude and appreciation,

**Dr. Verna Yiu**
AHS President & CEO

**Dr. Laura McDougall**
Senior Medical Officer of Health