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# Resolving Concerns Within Alberta's Health System

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Alberta

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# Resolving Concerns Within Alberta's Health System

**A**lberta's health care system offers a wide variety of services at different venues of care.\* Occasionally, patients or their family members have concerns or complaints about service, treatment or how decisions were made. The first avenue is to address your concern directly with the service provider(s) or organization(s) involved.

Depending on the nature of the concern and the service in question, you can also discuss your concern with other bodies, the professional association to which the health professional is a member, or Alberta's Ombudsman. The following organizations listed alphabetically, can be contacted to address your concerns or complaints or provide you with confidential assistance.

Concerns about suspected criminal acts related to health care services should be taken to the police. Concerns about injuries or disputes related to care in the health system may also be taken to the Courts.

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\* In addition to the organizations listed in this brochure, Health Link Alberta can help you find appropriate services and health information. Health Link is a telephone advice and health information service, staffed with highly trained registered nurses and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can call Health Link from anywhere in Alberta: Calgary (403) 943-5465, Edmonton (780) 408-5465 or Toll-Free 1-866-408-5465.

## Abuse

If you have a question or concern about possible abuse of an adult in the care of a hospital, nursing home, seniors' lodge, group home, personal care home, shelter or day program, you can report this to the **Protection for Persons in Care Reporting Line** administered by Alberta Seniors and Community Supports.

Toll-Free: 1-888-357-9339

If you have a question or concern about possible abuse or neglect of a child, you can report this to the **Child Abuse Hotline** or **Alberta Children's Services**.

**Child Abuse Hotline** at 1-800-387-5437 (this line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

### Alberta Children's Services

Telephone: (780) 422-2001 Edmonton Area

Toll-Free: 310-0000, then ask the operator to connect you to the Child and Family Services Authority in your area.

If the incident involves a health care professional, you may report it directly to the governing body of the health care professional. (See the Health Professionals Conduct and Competence section on page 10 to find contact information.)

### **Alberta Blue Cross Drug Plan**

If you have a question or concern about the Alberta government-sponsored Alberta Blue Cross drug plan, please contact **Alberta Blue Cross**:

Telephone: (780) 498-8000 Edmonton Area

(403) 234-9666 Calgary Area

Toll-Free: 1-800-661-6995

Website: [www.ab.bluecross.ca](http://www.ab.bluecross.ca)

### **Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan**

If you have a question or concern about coverage under the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan, including: eligibility, registration, claims, billing inquiries or premium assistance, please contact **Alberta Health and Wellness**:

Telephone: (780) 427-1432 Edmonton Area

Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed by (780) 427-1432

Fax: (780) 422-0102

E-mail: [health.ahcipmail@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.ahcipmail@gov.ab.ca)

### **Alberta's Health System**

You may contact **Alberta Health and Wellness** for any matter related to Alberta's health system.

Telephone: (780) 427-7164 Edmonton Area

Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed by (780) 427-7164

E-mail: [health.ahinform@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.ahinform@gov.ab.ca)

## Alberta Ombudsman

If you have a question or concern about the fairness of how your complaint was handled, you may contact the Alberta Ombudsman. The Ombudsman conducts independent investigations into written complaints from individuals who believe they have been treated unfairly by:

- the provincial government, its departments, agencies, boards or commissions
- the patient concerns resolution process of a regional health authority and the Alberta Cancer Board
- professional colleges proclaimed under the *Health Professions Act*.

Investigators are available Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. You may also complete an on-line complaint form at [www.ombudsman.ab.ca](http://www.ombudsman.ab.ca) and then select the "Making a Complaint" button. This service is provided free of charge.

### Head Office

10303 - Jasper Avenue N.W.,  
Suite 2800  
Edmonton, AB, T5J 5C3  
Telephone: (780) 427-2756  
Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed  
by (780) 427-2756  
E-mail:  
[om.buds@ombudsman.ab.ca](mailto:om.buds@ombudsman.ab.ca)

### Regional Office

801 - 6 Avenue S.W.,  
Suite 2560  
Calgary, AB, T2P 3W2  
Telephone: (403) 297-6185  
Fax: (403) 297-5121  
E-mail:  
[om.buds@ombudsman.ab.ca](mailto:om.buds@ombudsman.ab.ca)

## Ambulance Services

If you have a question or concern about care received in an ambulance, you should first discuss it with the ambulance operator. The next step is to contact the municipal government responsible for the ambulance program. You may also contact the **Registrar** responsible for licensing ambulance operators:

Alberta Health and Wellness

Telephone: (780) 422-9654 Edmonton Area

Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed by (780) 422-9654

Fax: (780) 422-0134

E-mail: ehs@gov.ab.ca

If you have concerns about billing by an ambulance operator, you may contact the local municipal government responsible for the ambulance service.

## Care in a Hospital or Nursing Home

If you have a question or concern about care, treatment and/or standards of accommodation received by a patient in a hospital or resident in a nursing home, contact the **Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee**.

250 Garneau Professional Center

11044-82 Avenue

Edmonton, AB, T6G 0T2

Telephone: (780) 427-4924 Edmonton Area

Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed by (780) 427-4924

Fax: (780) 427-0806

### Caregivers' Private Offices, Clinics or Facilities

If you have a question or concern about care received at a doctor's or private practitioner's office, clinic or facility (e.g. a non-hospital surgical facility), you should first discuss it with the doctor or practitioner. You may also contact the governing body of the health care professional. (See the Health Professionals Conduct and Competence section to find contact information.)

### Communicable Disease and Other Public Health Matters

If you have a question or concern about communicable diseases, public health emergencies, environmental health or anything related to public health, you may contact the Medical Officer of Health of your local regional health authority. (See the Health Authority Facilities or Programs section to find contact information.)

If you have a question or concern about a decision or order by a regional health authority, Medical Officer of Health or public health inspector under the *Public Health Act* or regulations, you may contact the **Public Health Appeal Board**.

23<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 10025 Jasper Avenue  
Telus Plaza North Tower  
Edmonton, AB, T5J 1S6  
Telephone: (780) 427-2813 Edmonton Area  
Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed by (780) 427-2813  
Fax: (780) 422-0914

## Government of Alberta Health Benefits or Assistance Programs

If you have a question or concern about health benefits or assistance provided by other Government of Alberta Ministries, you should contact these departments directly. Alberta Health and Wellness can direct you to the appropriate department. All departments listed below can also be reached through the Alberta Government toll-free service: 310-0000, followed by the direct number listed.

- Alberta Aids to Daily Living – **Alberta Seniors and Community Supports**  
Telephone: (780) 427-0731 Edmonton Area
- Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped – **Alberta Seniors and Community Supports**  
Telephone: (780) 415-6300 Edmonton Area
- Alberta Child Health Benefit – **Human Resources and Employment**  
Telephone: (780) 427-6848 Edmonton Area  
Toll-Free: 1-877-469-5437
- Accommodation standards for long-term care, lodge, assisted living or other private facility – **Alberta Seniors and Community Supports**  
Telephone: (780) 422-0122 Edmonton Area
- Income Support – **Human Resources and Employment**  
Telephone: (780) 644-5135 Edmonton Area  
Toll-Free: 1-866-644-5135  
E-mail: [iscc@gov.ab.ca](mailto:iscc@gov.ab.ca)
- Alberta Works – **Human Resources and Employment**  
Telephone: (780) 644-5135 Edmonton Area  
Toll-Free: 1-866-644-5135  
E-mail: [iscc@gov.ab.ca](mailto:iscc@gov.ab.ca)

## Health Authority Facilities or Programs

If you have a question or concern about care you received in a hospital, nursing home, non-hospital surgical facility or community program administered by or under contract to a regional health authority, the Alberta Cancer Board or the Alberta Mental Health Board, there are a number of places to turn. Concerns should first be discussed with the member of the care team who is most closely involved in your care, such as the nurse or doctor. If not resolved, the next step is to contact the health authority's **Patient Concerns Officer** who accepts all concerns and addresses or redirects people to other organizations authorized to address concerns. By law, a health authority must address all concerns that are brought forward by any individual regarding health services and other support services that are provided to, or sought by, patients.

Alberta's health authorities are:

- Chinook Regional Health Authority (403) 388-6009  
or Toll-Free 1-800-595-2742
- Palliser Health Region (403) 529-8042
- Calgary Health Region (403) 943-1111, 24 Hour (403) 943-5465  
or Toll-Free 1-866-408-5465
- David Thompson Regional Health Authority (403) 341-8622  
or Toll-Free 1-800-752-8957
- East Central Health (780) 608-8800 or Toll-Free 1-888-608-1516
- Capital Health (780) 407-1000
- Aspen Regional Health Authority (780) 349-8705
- Peace Country Health (780) 538-5387 or Toll-Free 1-800-732-8981

- Northern Lights Health Region (780) 791-6000  
or Toll-Free 1-877-791-5550,
- Alberta Cancer Board (780) 412-6322
- Alberta Mental Health Board (780) 422-2233  
or Toll-Free 310-0000 followed by (780) 422-2233

## Health Information and Privacy

If you have a question or concern about accessing or correcting health information or personal information held by a caregiver or organization in Alberta's health system, the **Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner** can help you. You may also contact the Commissioner for concerns about inappropriate collection, use and disclosure or management of health or personal information.

### Edmonton

# 410, 9925 - 109 Street  
Edmonton, AB  
T5K 2J8  
Telephone: (780) 422-6860  
Toll-Free: 1-888-878-4044  
Fax: (780) 422-5682  
E-mail: [generalinfo@oipc.ab.ca](mailto:generalinfo@oipc.ab.ca)

### Calgary

Suite 500, 640 - 5th Avenue S.W.  
Calgary, AB  
T2P 3G4  
Telephone: (403) 297-2728  
Toll-Free: 1-888-878-4044  
Fax: (403) 297-2711  
E-mail: [generalinfo@oipc.ab.ca](mailto:generalinfo@oipc.ab.ca)

(Please note that an appointment is required.)

## Health Professionals Conduct and Competence

If you have a question or concern about the care provided by a health professional you should first discuss it with the health professional or their direct supervisor. If this does not resolve the matter or your concerns are about the health professional's conduct or competence, contact the **health profession's governing body**. The governing bodies ensure their members meet acceptable standards for competence and conduct, including ethical conduct. The governing bodies can also provide you with contact information for their members if you are having trouble finding a practitioner for services.

Alberta's governing bodies of health professions include the:

- acupuncturists:  
Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine Society of Alberta  
(780) 428-8897
- chiropractors:  
College of Chiropractors of Alberta (780) 420-0932
- laboratory and X-ray technologists:  
Alberta College of Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technologists  
(780) 920-6785
- dental assistants:  
College of Alberta Dental Assistants (780) 486-2526
- dentists:  
Alberta Dental Association and College (780) 432-1012  
or 1-800-843-3848
- dental hygienists:  
Alberta Dental Hygienists' Association (780) 465-1756
- denturists:  
College of Alberta Denturists (780) 429-2330

- dental technologists:  
College of Dental Technologists of Alberta (780) 469-0615  
or 1-800-537-0568
- electroneurophysiology technologists:  
Alberta College of Medical Diagnostic and Therapeutic Technologists  
(780) 487-6130 or 1-800-282-2165
- hearing aid practitioners:  
College of Hearing Aid Practitioners of Alberta (403) 269-8581  
or 1-800-990-4327
- licensed practical nurses:  
College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (780) 484-8886  
or 1-800-661-5877
- midwives:  
Alberta Association of Midwives (403) 246-8968
- medical laboratory technologists:  
Alberta College of Medical Laboratory Technologists (780) 435-5452  
or 1-800-265-9351
- medical radiation technologists:  
Alberta College of Medical Diagnostic and Therapeutic Technologists  
(780) 487-6130 or 1-800-282-2165
- naturopaths:  
Alberta Association of Naturopathic Practitioners (403) 266-2446
- opticians:  
Alberta Opticians Association (780) 429-2694 or 1-800-263-6026
- optometrists:  
Alberta College of Optometrists (780) 466-5999 or 1-800-668-2694
- occupational therapists:  
Alberta College of Registered Occupational Therapists (780) 436-8381  
or 1-800-561-5429

- paramedics:  
Alberta College of Paramedics (780) 466-2772 or 1-800-351-2267
- pharmacists:  
Alberta College of Pharmacists (780) 990-0321 or 1-877-227-3838
- physicians:  
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (780) 423-4764  
or 1-800-661-4689
- podiatrists:  
Alberta Podiatry Association (780) 453-5883
- psychologists:  
College of Alberta Psychologists (780) 424-5070 or 1-800-659-0857
- registered dietitians:  
College of Dietitians of Alberta (780) 448-0059 or 1-866-493-4348
- respiratory therapists:  
College and Association of Respiratory Therapists of Alberta  
(403) 274-1828 or 1-800 205-2778
- registered nurses:  
College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta  
(780) 451-0043 or 1-800-252-9392
- registered psychiatric nurses:  
College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Alberta (780) 434-7666
- physical therapists and physiotherapists:  
College of Physical Therapists of Alberta (780) 438-0338  
or 1-800-291-2782
- speech language pathologists and audiologists:  
Alberta College of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists  
(780) 944-1609 or 1-800-537-0589
- social workers:  
Alberta College of Social Workers (780) 421-1167 or 1-800-661-3089

## Mental Health Services

If you have a question or concern relating to patients who are or were involuntarily detained under the *Mental Health Act*, you may contact the **Mental Health Patient Advocate**. The Advocate can provide information on how to obtain legal counsel, apply to a Review Panel or the Court of Queen's Bench, or deal with care-related concerns. The Advocate may also undertake an investigation of a formal patient's complaint that could result in recommendations to the designated facility, officials or the Minister.

1202, 10035 - 108 Street

Centre West Building

Edmonton, AB, T5J 3E1

Telephone: (780) 422-1812

Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed by (780) 422-1812

Fax: (780) 422-0695

Website: [www.health.gov.ab.ca/about/advocate.html](http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/about/advocate.html)

## Out of Country Health Services

If you have a question or concern about receiving specialized health services that cannot be obtained in Canada, please contact Alberta's **Out of Country Health Services Committee** through Alberta Health and Wellness. The committee will determine if the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan will fund these services.

13th Floor, Telus Plaza, North Tower

10025 Jasper Avenue

Edmonton, AB, T5J 1S6

Telephone: (780) 415-8744 Edmonton Area

Toll-Free: 310-0000 followed by (780) 415-8744

Website: [www.health.gov.ab.ca/ahcip/OOCHSCInfoSheet.pdf](http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/ahcip/OOCHSCInfoSheet.pdf)

## Products, Drugs and Devices

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the safety of products, including drugs and devices used or prescribed in the health system, contact **Health Canada**:

Address Locator 0900C2

Ottawa, ON

K1A 0K9

Telephone: (613) 957-2991

Toll-Free: 1-866-225-0709

TDD/TTY Toll-Free: 1-800-267-1245

## Unexpected or Unexplained Deaths

If you have a concern relating to a death which occurred suddenly or cannot be explained, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner could conduct an investigation. All such deaths in Alberta are investigated under the authority of the *Fatality Inquiries Act*. Medical Examiners determine the date, time and place of death, the circumstances under which a death occurred and the cause and manner of death.

A Medical Examiner, the next of kin of the deceased or anyone that the **Chief Medical Examiner** considers to be an interested party can request the **Fatality Review Board** to review findings and determine if a public fatality review should be held.

### Chief Medical Examiner

Edmonton

7007-116 Street N.W.

Edmonton, AB

T6H 5R8

Telephone: (780) 427-4987

Fax: (780) 422-1265

Calgary

4070 Bowness Road N.W.

Calgary, AB

T3B 3R7

Telephone: (403) 297-8123

Fax: (403) 297-3429

### **Fatality Review Board**

Justice and Attorney General

Telephone: (403) 297-8123

Fax: (403) 297-3429

### **Workers' Compensation Board Funded Health Services**

If you have a question or concern about health benefits for injuries sustained in the workplace, contact the **Workers' Compensation Board:**

Telephone: (780) 498-3999

Toll-Free: 1-866-922-9221

TDD/TTY: (780) 498-7895

Website: [www.wcb.ab.ca](http://www.wcb.ab.ca)

### **Worksite Health and Safety**

If you have a question or concern about workplace health and safety, please contact **Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Worksite Health and Safety**. Occupational Health and Safety Officials will investigate worksite incidents and hazards, including concerns about safety of radiation equipment or potential radiation exposure.

#### **Worksite Health and Safety:**

Telephone: (780) 415-8690 Edmonton Area

Toll-Free: 1-866-415-8690

TDD/TTY (780) 427-9999 Edmonton Area

TDD/TTY Toll-Free: 1-800-232-7215

Fax: (780) 422-3730

E-mail: [whs@gov.ab.ca](mailto:whs@gov.ab.ca)

Website: [www.worksafely.org](http://www.worksafely.org)





