



Health Council of Canada Meeting
Edmonton, Alberta
February 14-15, 2013

This was the inaugural meeting for new Councillor, [Dr. Cy Frank](#), appointed after the Alberta government [formally joined the Health Council in January 2012](#). Dr. Frank was welcomed by the Chair of the Health Council, Dr. Jack Kitts and endorsed as a clinician leader in improving access, quality and standardization in musculoskeletal care – “a pioneer who has put hip and knee in a place we never thought possible.”



To begin the meeting, the [Honourable Fred Horne, Alberta's Minister of Health and Wellness](#) engaged Council on areas of reform his province is focusing on amidst sustainability pressures intensified by lower than anticipated oil revenues. He noted that one of Alberta's hopes in joining the Council was to spark a national discussion on sustainability. Minister Horne commented that they have plans to expand on the 40 Primary Care Networks already in place, to address the high percentage of visits for mental health issues and to continue piloting three family care clinics. The Minister praised some Aboriginal bands in Alberta for the models of primary care they have implemented, adding that rheumatoid arthritis is an emerging health issue for Aboriginal people superseding even diabetes. A second focus is on the addressing the social determinants of health through income support programs and housing. In commenting on the uptake of electronic health records, a third focus, the Minister said they are taking an enterprise approach to their use, not simply automating old ways of doing things. Lastly, the province is focused on how to quell population health risks, and how to provide care for increasing numbers of seniors in the future – challenges shared by all jurisdictions across Canada.

Council heard presentations from Dr. Tom Noseworthy, Professor of Health Policy and Management, Department of Health Sciences and Institute for Public Health, University of Calgary who briefed Council on Alberta's clinical practice networks and Dr. Axel Meisen, Chair in Foresight at Alberta Innovates - Technology Futures who proposed aligning unemployed and underemployed youth in servicing the [home care needs of our seniors population](#). On the second day, Dr. John Cowell, CEO, Health Quality Council of Alberta offered several key messages including the need for clinicians to drive change in the system, to align incentives, and to continue driving Alberta's quality improvement initiatives in response to patient experiences and values in line with the Alberta Quality Matrix for Health.



Overall, Councillors used the Edmonton meeting to convene with Alberta colleagues, to respond to management reports, to set direction for forthcoming public reports and events, and to recognize the outstanding contribution of former Councillor, Cheryl Doiron, who resigned recently.

Images (l-r):

1. Dr. Cy Frank, Councillor, Health Council of Canada and Honourable Fred Horne, Minister of Health and Wellness, Alberta
2. Dr. Tom Noseworthy, Professor of Health Policy & Management, Department of Health Sciences and Institute for Public Health, University of Calgary; Dr. Axel Meisen, Chair in Foresight at Alberta Innovates-Technology Futures, and John G. Abbott, CEO, Health Council of Canada.