



Specialist Link holiday schedule

It's the most wonderful time of the year and Specialist Link's hard-working team of experts will be taking a break over the holidays.

Tele-advice will not be available on statutory holidays – Wednesday, December 25, Thursday, December 26 and Wednesday, January 1, 2025. Select services will also close from Monday, December 23 to Friday, January 3, 2025. Normal service will resume on Monday, January 6, 2025.

Please download our [opening hours list](#) for the detailed schedule. For more information, call 403-910-2551 (extension 0), or email specialistlink@calgaryareapcns.ca. Happy holidays!

Specialist Link
Connecting Primary and Specialty Care

2024-25 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Specialist Link tele-advice is closed on weekends and statutory holidays. (December 25, 26, and January 1).

How to request tele-advice: Please visit www.specialistlink.ca or call 403.910.2551

Please note: Effective January 1, 2025, non-urgent orthopaedic surgery tele-advice is no longer available on Specialist Link. Providers are asked to call RAAPID for advice.

DATE	STATUS	CLOSED SERVICES
DEC 23 (MON)	CLOSED	Anesthesiology COVID Dermatology Endocrinology Infectious Disease OB Internal Medicine Thrombosis Transgender Health Pediatric Palliative Care
DEC 24 (TUES)	CLOSED	Anesthesiology Colorectal Surgery COVID Dermatology Endocrinology General Surgery Infectious Disease OB Internal Medicine Otolaryngology Thrombosis Transgender Health Pediatric Otolaryngology Pediatric Palliative Care
DEC 25 (WED)	CLOSED	CHRISTMAS DAY
DEC 26 (THURS)	CLOSED	BOXING DAY
DEC 27 (FRI)	CLOSED	Anesthesiology Colorectal Surgery COVID Dermatology General Surgery Child & Adolescent Gynecology Infectious Disease OB Internal Medicine Otolaryngology Transgender Health Pediatric Otolaryngology Pediatric Palliative Care Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
DEC 30 (MON)	CLOSED	Anesthesiology Colorectal Surgery COVID Dermatology Endocrinology General Surgery Infectious Disease OB Internal Medicine Thrombosis Transgender Health Pediatric Palliative Care Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
DEC 31 (TUES)	CLOSED	Anesthesiology Colorectal Surgery COVID Dermatology Endocrinology General Surgery Child & Adolescent Gynecology Infectious Disease OB Internal Medicine Otolaryngology Thrombosis Transgender Health Pediatric Otolaryngology Pediatric Palliative Care Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
JAN 1 (WED)	CLOSED	NEW YEAR'S DAY
JAN 2 (THURS)	CLOSED	Anesthesiology Colorectal Surgery Community Pediatrician COVID Dermatology General Surgery Infectious Disease OB Internal Medicine Transgender Health Pediatric Palliative Care Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
JAN 3 (FRI)	CLOSED	Anesthesiology Colorectal Surgery COVID Dermatology General Surgery Infectious Disease OB Internal Medicine Transgender Health Pediatric Palliative Care Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

*Orthopaedic surgery tele-advice no longer available

Tele-advice service changes: Effective Wednesday, January 1, 2025, orthopedic surgery tele-advice will no longer be available via Specialist Link.

System pressures and workforce issues have contributed to the closure of the line, which was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic. Family physicians and nurse practitioners are instead asked to direct questions to the RAAPID consultation and advice line.

Please refer to the [orthopedics access pathway](#).

FAST reminder

Three new groups were added to FAST in the Calgary area earlier this month: Neurosurgery, oral maxillofacial surgery and plastic surgery. The other services offered through FAST are general surgery, gynecology, orthopedic surgery (except for oncology and pediatric orthopedics, as well as spine surgery), urology and vascular surgery. Please note: The planned launch of

Otolaryngology has been delayed until further notice. Questions should be directed to the Calgary Zone FAST team at 1-833-553-3278 ext. 4 or emailed to abfast.calgary@ahs.ca. Visit ahs.ca/fast for more information.

eReferral service changes: Three eConsult services are no longer available in the Calgary Zone. Ophthalmology, child and adolescent psychiatry and geriatric medicine eConsults are no longer being offered locally.

Mailed and faxed results being resent

Community providers may see duplicates of some test results as AHS resolves a delivery problem and re-delivers affected results via fax. If you normally receive test results via mail or fax and are waiting for results listed below, you can find them in Netcare. Please also check Connect Care – if you have access – or your EMR. Affected results include:

- Cardiac echo
- Holter monitor
- Cardiac monitor
- Stress test
- Nuclear stress test
- Cardiac magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
- Chest angio MRI
- Nuclear medicine perfusion

[Read the memo.](#)

Please email any questions or concerns to ccproviderbridge@ahs.ca.

Referral form for breastfeeding assessment

A referral form for breastfeeding/bottle-feeding assessment is now available via Specialist Link.

The form asks providers to triage by semi-urgent, urgent and emergent and share pertinent history. It applies to clinics in urban Calgary, Airdrie and Cochrane.

All the breastfeeding clinics accept all patients, regardless of geographical location. All clinics also offer virtual care, as required.

[Download the form.](#)

MAPS town hall

A town hall was held earlier this week to provide an update on the Modernizing Alberta's Primary Health Care System (MAPS) initiative.

A summary of updates referenced in the town hall can be [downloaded here](#). Further information on the standup of Primary Care Alberta is available as follows:

- [PCN staff fact sheet](#)
- [Physician fact sheet](#)
- [Workforce FAQ](#)

The next town hall is due to take place in the new year. [Click here](#) to sign up for the MAPS newsletter to receive more information about town halls and other engagement opportunities. Questions about MAPS can be directed to health.MAPS@gov.ab.ca.

Reminder: Help make Alberta Find a Doctor better

The Alberta Find a Doctor (AFAD) team has launched patient and provider surveys to help shape the future of the website.

Launched in 2019 by Alberta's Primary Care Networks and operated with support from Alberta Health grant funding, it attracted 1.1 million visits last year and aims to make it quicker and easier for Albertans to find a family doctor, nurse practitioner or health team. The website relies on both PCNs and providers to help keep listings as accurate and up-to-date as possible.

The AFAD team is exploring ways of improving the website for users, PCNs and providers. To take part in the surveys, please:

- Take the [physician and nurse practitioner survey](#)
- Take the [user \(patient\) survey](#)

In addition to the above surveys, the AFAD team is organizing focus groups with PCNs, zones, physicians and other partners. For more information, please email info@albertafindadoctor.ca.

Infectious disease webinar

A recording of the Calgary Zone's final webinar of 2024, which focused on the respiratory virus season, can now be [watched online](#). If you have suggestions about topics for 2025 webinars, please email info@calgaryareapcns.ca.

Quick links

New provincial requisition form

A new provincial Non-Gynecological Cytopathology Requisition ([22204](#)) has been developed and is now available. All legacy/zone requisitions should be replaced with the new provincial form. [More information](#).

Universal transport medium collection kits

Effective immediately, the current Puritan UniTranz-RT Universal transport medium (UTM)/viral transport medium (VTM) collection kits (red cap) will transition to a new product (white cap).

Both products are acceptable to use when collecting swabs for virus and syphilis nucleic acid testing. [More information.](#)

Complex care ECHO

On Tuesday, January 28, 2025, from 8–9:45 a.m., the ECHOing Care series continues with a Zoom-based discussion about enteral nutrition and home-blended tube feeds. [Register.](#)

PCN Pain Rounds: January 2025

On Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., the next 90-minute webinar in the PCN Pain Rounds series, *Fibromyalgia: Weighing the Medication Options*, will cover medication management and therapies for fibromyalgia. [More information.](#)

Support for PPIP program

A University of Calgary program is available to help physicians meet the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta Physician Practice Improvement Program (PPIP) requirements. [More information.](#)