

primary cares

News & updates from the Calgary Zone



New referral process for orthopedics, urology, spine

A new process will be introduced in the Calgary Zone next month for all non-urgent urology, spine and orthopaedics referrals.

Effective Tuesday, October 11, physicians and clinic staff should send all referrals to a new, central fax number: 1-833-627-7023. Please note the following:

- There's no change to referral forms or letters at this time; new forms are due to be introduced later in the fall and included in Electronic Medical Records
- Specify if you want the next available provider with the shortest wait list, or a specific provider, clinic or site
- Please state if you are requesting an out-of-Zone referral and include the name of a preferred provider or clinic
- A reminder that tele-advice and access pathways are available via specialistlink.ca

Please note: There is a 12-week grace period for this change. If referrals are sent directly to the surgeon, specialist or the old central access number after October 11, a note will be faxed back indicating it has been forwarded for review.

The new process was developed as part of the Alberta Facilitated Access to Specialized Treatment (FAST) program, which is part of the Alberta Surgical Initiative (ASI). Urology, spine and orthopaedics are the first specialties to be added to the new central access and intake program; others will follow in the coming months.

[More information.](#)

Surgery waitlist calls

Patients waiting for surgery in the Calgary Zone are being contacted by Alberta Health Services (AHS) as part of a new validation and confirmation project.

Throughout September, patients may receive a call or voicemail via an automated system. They will be asked for their personal health number and date of birth to confirm their identity. They will not be asked for financial information, and their place on the list will not be affected if they miss the call or hang up. [More details.](#)

Reminder: Calgary Zone webinar recording

A recording of the Calgary Zone's *Primary Care Hot Topics* webinar can now be [watched online](#).

The virtual event, which took place on Monday, September 12 and was watched live by more than 350 physicians, teams and staff, featured the following segments:

- Alberta Medical Association President Dr. Vesta Michelle Warren on the potential physician agreement ([skip to 3:53](#))
- Mental health apps, with Jason Mumme ([skip to 21:44](#))
- COVID-19, immunization and monkeypox, with Dr. Jim Kellner ([skip to 44:18](#))
- Tips and tricks for getting your patient in to see a gastroenterologist ([skip to 1:17.24](#))
- Other primary care hot topics ([skip to 1:52.43](#))

[Click here](#) to complete the webinar survey.

Reminder: Hepatitis B exposure risk

About 1,500 patients who received care via the Calgary Midwives Collective are being notified of a potential hepatitis B risk due to improperly sterilized medical equipment.

Although the risk is considered very low, Alberta Health Services is advising patients who received prenatal, delivery and/or post-natal care to call their doctor and arrange for testing. For information about sequential testing, please [read the memo](#).

Patient enquiries can be directed to 811.

Bivalent booster information

Albertans aged 18 and over now have the option of receiving a COVID-19 bivalent booster dose.

Those who have completed a primary series of COVID-19 vaccines (which includes a mix of AstraZeneca, Pfizer and Moderna) are eligible. The recommended interval is a minimum of five months from the last dose or previous infection. [More information](#).

Bookings can be made [online](#) or by calling Health Link at 811.

Trauma training series

AHS is offering updated trauma-informed care eLearning modules and five new trauma-focused virtual workshops to providers who want to develop trauma-focused skills. [More information](#).

Alberta Addiction and Mental Health education sessions: On the last Friday of each month, from September through June (9–11 a.m.), Alberta Addiction and Mental Health will offer didactic lectures from subject matter experts, followed by Q&As. [Join the livestream](#).

Quick links

Reminder: Mackid lecture

On Tuesday, September 27, from 5:30–9 p.m., the 56th annual Mackid lecture will be held at the Best Western Premier Calgary Plaza Hotel. It includes a dinner and the Department of Family Medicine Physician Awards. [More information](#).

Pediatric pain webinar

On Thursday, September 29, from 7–8:15 p.m., the Alberta College of Physicians' Collaborative Mentorship Network hosts a discussion about the prevalence of chronic pain in children. [Register](#).

Dietitians and primary care

On Tuesday, October 4, at 10 a.m., the Canadian Malnutrition Task Force and Canadian Nutrition Society will host a webinar led by dietitians working in primary care multidisciplinary teams. [More information](#).

Connect Care unpacked

On Wednesday, October 12, AHS is hosting webinars in two separate time slots to help explain how Connect Care will change processes for primary care providers and staff. Register for separate sessions from [10-11 a.m.](#) and [4:30-5:30 p.m.](#)