

primary cares

News & updates from the Calgary Zone



Indigenous resource hub

An [Indigenous resource hub](#) is now available on Specialist Link to support primary care providers to deliver culturally safe, holistic and community-driven care.

Developed by the Calgary Zone Truth and Reconciliation working group, the hub features listings for Indigenous health centres, substance use recovery and 2SLGBTQI+ supports, along with training opportunities to strengthen cultural humility in practice.

It also includes listings for mental health and wellness supports, such as the [AHS Indigenous Support Line](#) and [Alberta Indigenous Virtual Care Clinic](#).

HPV screening

Effective Wednesday, November 5, cervical cancer screening of eligible individuals aged 50-69 will transition to primary high-risk human papillomavirus (hrHPV) testing.

The transition aims to support earlier detection, longer screening intervals and improved access through self-sampling. Planning for provincial access to HPV primary screening for those aged 25-49 is ongoing. For now, those patients will continue to be screened using Pap tests.

Please note that the sample collection and lab submission process for HPV primary screening will remain unchanged. However, referral decisions will now be based on HPV genotype and cervical cytology results.

Primary care providers will continue to receive lab results and follow-up letters for patients who identify them as their provider. If a patient has a positive HPV result, they may seek providers' support for follow-up testing.

Resources are available, including an overview and FAQ, clinical pathway and follow-up instructions. [More information](#). There is also a [lab bulletin](#).

Newborn hearing screening: Patients' newborns can be screened for permanent congenital hearing loss. Newborn hearing screening and audiological diagnostic results dating from October 1, 2025, are now available on Netcare. [More information](#).

Imaging transfer assistance case

A recent Human Rights Tribunal of Alberta case saw the rights of a patient upheld with respect to transfer assistance when seeking diagnostic imaging in the community.

Based on this decision, wheelchair users and their physician or provider may be able to request that radiology clinics make arrangements to accommodate people with disabilities.

It is recommended that providers state on the requisition that the patient requires a transfer assist, and at time of booking, arrangements will need to be facilitated by the radiologist provider. Patients should not be required to bring their own support.

[More information.](#)

Immunization program latest

Phase two of Alberta's fall immunization program is now underway with influenza vaccination for Albertans aged five and older available at community pharmacies. Appointments for children aged six months-four years old will be available at public health clinics.

A three-strain injectable standard dose influenza vaccine is available free of charge to Albertans six months and older. An adjuvanted influenza vaccine may be offered to individuals 65 years of age and older, subject to local availability. [More information.](#)

The respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine is also available to those 60 years of age and older living in continuing care and seniors supportive living settings, as well as First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals who are 60 years of age and older. All Albertans 70 years of age and older are eligible for the RSV vaccine.

Phase one of the program offered the COVID-19 vaccine free of charge to eligible Albertans, including healthcare workers.

[Eligibility information.](#)

Lab bulletins

Alberta Precision Laboratories has issued bulletins for the following:

- **RPP test reminder:** The only paper requisition accepted by APL for COVID-19, influenza and Respiratory Pathogen Panel (RPP) requests is the [COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Viruses Requisition](#). [Read the bulletin.](#)
- **Dermatophyte test change:** Effective Tuesday, October 21, APL in Calgary began testing for dermatophyte fungi from skin scrapings and nail samples using nucleic acid amplification testing. Please use the [latest version](#) of the requisition. [Read the bulletin.](#)

- **Transfusion test menus:** The Provincial Transfusion Medicine service has adopted a centralized support model linking immunohematology reference labs to all other Transfusion Medicine testing labs. [Read the bulletin.](#)
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Avian flu in Calgary area

Avian influenza (H5N1) has been identified among birds at Butterfield Acres petting farm in Foothills County, near Calgary. Members of the public were exposed between Monday, October 6 and Sunday, October 12. No human cases have been identified thus far.

Patients presenting with respiratory or flu-like symptoms who visited Butterfield Acres between October 6 and October 12 and developed symptoms within 10 days after exposure are strongly recommended to complete nasopharyngeal AND throat swab testing (and conjunctival swabs in the presence of conjunctivitis). Symptomatic individuals are advised to reach out to 811 Health Link for a Virtual MD assessment.

[More information.](#)

Quick links

Billing webinar

On Wednesday, November 26, from 7–8:30 p.m., Calgary West Central PCN is hosting a webinar on fee-for-service billing. Norma Shipley, a consultant specializing in physician fees with the Alberta Medical Association, will share her expertise and answer questions. It is open to all PCN physicians in the Calgary Zone. [Register.](#)

Choosing Wisely: Urine tests drive antibiotic overuse

On Tuesday, November 18, at 11 a.m., Choosing Wisely Talks explores how urine tests can drive antibiotic overuse. Join Calgary physician Dr. Janet Reynolds as a panel discusses how urine dipsticks and urinalysis are often used to diagnose suspected urinary tract infections, but results are often inaccurate in older adults. [Register.](#)

Building teams

On Monday, November 3 and Tuesday, November 25, at 6 p.m., the AMA's Accelerating Change Transformation Team is hosting an interactive workshop that explores the building blocks of communication optimization in healthcare team settings. [Register.](#)

PCN Pain Rounds

On Wednesday, November 26, from 5:30–7 p.m., the next webinar in the PCN Pain Rounds series will focus on *Harnessing the Role of Parents in our Patients to Address Intergenerational Pain*. The webinar seeks to help attendees understand the relationship between parental responses and the development of chronic pain in children. [Register.](#)