

NEWS RELEASE

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Health Quality Council of Alberta empowers patients to be active participants in their healthcare

How asking key questions can improve healthcare experience and outcomes

(Calgary, AB) – The Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) has launched a public information campaign that offers new tools and resources to help Albertans become active participants in their healthcare.

Centred on the slogan ‘*You’re the most important part. Put yourself at the centre of your healthcare,*’ the campaign targets Albertans with chronic illness and their caregiving family members.

“Visiting a healthcare provider can be stressful for some people, whether they’re navigating a new chronic condition or simply worried about asking questions regarding changes in their health,” said Charlene McBrien-Morrison, CEO of the HQCA. “By providing Albertans with resources about how they can speak up in those settings, our hope is to ease any concerns and ensure they feel heard, supported, and more in control of their health.”

The HQCA campaign will feature ads on Alberta television networks and social media, directing Albertans to helpful, [online resources](#) such as *Tips for Talking with Your Healthcare Team and Questions to Ask About Your Treatment Options*.

“If I had known the right questions to ask 10 years ago, I’m certain I would have been diagnosed and provided with treatment much sooner,” said Medgine Mathurin, an Edmontonian who has lupus, a long-term autoimmune disease. “Through my own healthcare journey, I’ve learned that being a bystander to your healthcare is not an option, and I know these tools will give Albertans the confidence to advocate for themselves.”

Mathurin and fellow patient advisor Alta Magee are active supporters of the HQCA’s approach to person-centred care as members of the agency’s Patient and Family Advisory Committee.

“I’ve seen first-hand how care can improve when patients are informed,” said Alta Magee, a rural southern Alberta resident who worked as a registered nurse for nearly 50 years. “While I could explain the preferred medical course of treatment based on the science and research, patients had their own wishes when it came to medication and quality of life. These resources

give patients the tools to better understand their options and make better decisions about their care.”

"These HQCA resources are invaluable because they prompt the kind of questions and information-sharing we rely on," said Dr. Raj Dhaliwal, a Calgary-based family doctor. "The more patients are engaged in their healthcare, the more effective and accurate their medical care becomes."

Research shows engaged patients make more informed decisions about their health and that a patient-provider partnership leads to better, and safer, healthcare. For example, in [one study](#) of adults with Type 2 diabetes, greater patient engagement was associated with increases in emotional well-being and decreases in weight, blood glucose levels, and depressive symptoms.

The HQCA met with healthcare partners and its Patient and Family Advisory Committee to ensure the tools reflected the needs of Alberta patients and supports similar efforts in the province.

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Note: For campaign resources and to watch the campaign ad, [click here](#).

For more information, contact:

Lisa Brake, Director, Communications and Engagement
Health Quality Council of Alberta
403.875.0359
lisa.brake@hqca.ca

About the HQCA

The Health Quality Council of Alberta is a provincial agency that brings together patients, families, and our partners from across healthcare and academia to inspire improvement in patient safety, person-centred care, and health service quality. We assess and study the healthcare system, identify effective practices, and engage with Albertans to gather information about their experiences. Our responsibilities are outlined in the *Health Quality Council of Alberta Act*.