



# Adding value

to Alberta's integrated  
health system

March 2015

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ADDING VALUE TO ALBERTA'S INTEGRATED HEALTH SYSTEM

### Our Mission

We are called to continue the healing ministry of Jesus by serving with compassion, upholding the sacredness of life in all stages, and caring for the whole person—body, mind and soul.

### Our Vision

Inspired by our mission of service, we will be leaders and partners in transforming health care and creating vibrant communities of health and healing.

### Our Values

As a Catholic organization, we are committed to serving people of all faiths, cultures and circumstances, according to our Values:

*Compassion*  
*Respect*  
*Collaboration*  
*Social Justice*  
*Integrity*  
*Stewardship*

### Our Strategic Directions

#### Serve

*We will strengthen our mission and live our values to meet the needs of those we serve through excellence in care, an engaged team and wise use of our resources.*

#### Grow

*We will seek out and respond to the needs of our communities, especially vulnerable and marginalized populations.*

#### Transform

*We will create systems of care that enable people and communities to be healthy.*

#### Contribute

*We will leverage our legacy to maximize the strategic contribution of Catholic health care.*

As Canada's largest Catholic provider of health care, Covenant Health positively influences the health of Albertans and adds value as a key partner in Alberta's integrated health system through our rich history and current role, breadth of programs and services, high quality and performance, systems leadership and the strength of our people.

Covenant Health builds on the 150-year legacy of our founding congregations of Sisters. These courageous women laid the foundation of Alberta's healthcare system, responding to the everyday needs of communities and the unmet needs of the sick and dying with the highest standards of quality, caring for the whole person—body, mind and soul.

That spirit anchors a vibrant corporate culture of compassion and innovation named one of Canada's 10 Most Admired Cultures for 2014. Our engaged physicians, employees and volunteers embrace a shared mission as they provide quality, compassionate care and work to transform health care to respond to the changing needs of Albertans, now and into the future.

Today, Covenant Health plays a leadership role in shaping and delivering health services, supporting Alberta Health Services and the Government of Alberta in achieving their goals. Our facilities and programs have a significant footprint that extends across the continuum of care and the province. We provide extensive core services, as well as specialty services to meet unmet needs in 12 communities. We work collaboratively to meet the healthcare needs of people across Alberta based on priority health needs and stakeholder engagement.

Quality care is central to our mission of service. Covenant Health programs and services are fully subject to meeting health service delivery standards in the province, and to meeting the requirements of our Catholic sponsors that our work be carried out according to the highest quality standards.

We look at health holistically, discerning the unmet healthcare needs of communities and vulnerable populations, recognizing that health and well-being is more than the absence of disease.

Guided by our mission and commitment to exceptional care, Covenant Health finds opportunities and innovations to address unique health issues. We are a trusted partner in leading programs at zone and provincial levels that have a significant health impact for Albertans.

As a top employer with a vibrant mission, distinct culture and strong tradition, we offer a workplace that is meaningful and provides an opportunity for people to grow, flourish and live their calling each day.

# HISTORY AND ROLE

## A TRADITION OF SERVICE AND EXCELLENCE

As Canada's largest Catholic provider of health care, Covenant Health positively influences the health of Albertans—building on a 150-year legacy that shaped Alberta's past, creates a vibrant culture of hope and healing for our teams and those we serve, and will transform health care to meet the changing needs of Albertans into the future.

Covenant Health's journey is grounded in the legacy of our founding congregations of Sisters who arrived on the prairies before Canada was a nation. The Sisters laid the foundation of Alberta's healthcare system, responding to the everyday needs of communities and the unmet needs of the sick and dying with the highest standards of quality. They helped pioneer the many towns and cities that became the backbone of our province, serving people of all faiths, cultures, traditions or circumstances with courage and resourcefulness.

That spirit anchors a vibrant corporate culture of compassion and innovation named one of Canada's 10 Most Admired Cultures for 2014. Our engaged physicians, employees and volunteers embrace a shared mission and calling to provide quality, compassionate care. Our service to Albertans and our contribution to the health system is grounded in this mission—a belief in human dignity, a holistic and values-based approach to care and a call to meet the needs of those most vulnerable.

Today, Covenant Health is a key partner in the integrated health system serving Alberta, working in collaboration with individuals, communities, partners and funders to meet the healthcare needs of Albertans, and to create vibrant communities of health and healing.

Covenant Health serves Albertans through all life stages, supporting individuals and families across Alberta through a broad range of services in communities, health centres, hospitals, seniors' facilities and hospices. As Alberta continues to grow and our population ages, Covenant Health is uniquely positioned to identify and implement solutions to system pressures and gaps in service, innovate new approaches to care and address the changing needs of Albertans.

We offer a full continuum of care from birth to end of life:

- Comprehensive emergency care
- Critical care
- Child health
- Surgery
- Medicine
- Women's health
- Restorative and rehabilitation
- Mental health
- Continuing care
- Supportive living
- Palliative care



We are accountable for providing services as outlined in the Co-operation and Services Agreement between Covenant Health and AHS. This agreement, finalized in 2010, outlines the delivery of services by Covenant Health, the delivery of shared services by AHS and Covenant Health, and establishes principles and expectations to be followed by both parties.

## Our call to partnership and collaboration

A strategic partner in the integrated health system

Covenant Health is a key partner within the single, integrated health system that serves Alberta. Working with Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services (AHS) and others towards a common goal of providing a patient/resident-focused, accessible and sustainable health system, Covenant Health is aligned with—and supports—the government’s vision and priorities for the health system.

Covenant Health adds value to the provincial health system through our reputation and performance as a top-accredited provider and good steward of resources. As a nimble organization with a nationally-recognized culture based in a mission of service, we foster innovation, choice and flexibility. Committed to collaboration and stewardship, we leverage existing services and supports and pioneer new solutions to help make the system stronger.

We are committed to:

- Working with Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services to build a high performing, reliable and integrated health system
- Improving access to health care and reducing unnecessary waiting
- Serving Alberta’s most vulnerable citizens
- Fostering innovation and providing more choice in continuing care
- Strengthening primary health care

Covenant Health works with AHS in multiple roles:



**STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER** – contributing as a partner in executing the Health Plan for the province. Example: Assessing health needs and developing service plans for zones and communities.



**STRATEGIC ALLIANCE** – working collaboratively to deliver quality acute care and community services to ensure care is integrated and seamless from the perspective of patients, clients and their families. Example: Joint planning and decision-making for service planning.

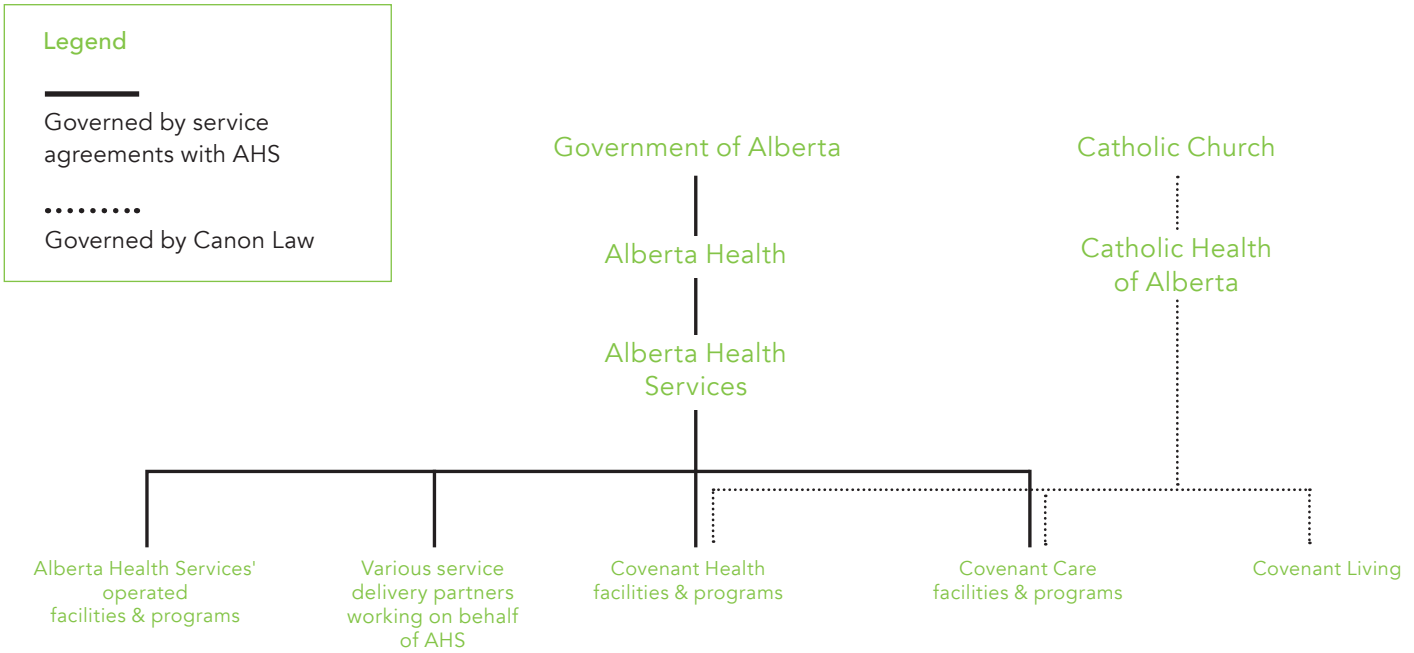


**SHARED SERVICES** – sharing support systems and processes to ensure effective and efficient service delivery. Example: Covenant Health and AHS share Internal Audit, IT, Contracting and Procurement, and Supply Management services.



**SERVICE PROVIDER** – acting as an independent provider in the competitive environment, supporting AHS to ensure quality of service. Example: Covenant Care’s supportive living facilities.

## One system, dual accountability



**Covenant Health is not a duplicate or parallel health system.** This is a misconception—Alberta has one integrated health system, with many providers.

- Alberta Health is responsible for setting the policy direction for Alberta’s health system.
- Alberta Health Services is the Regional Health Authority responsible for implementing the direction for health through the provincial Health Plan, partnering with multiple organizations in a co-ordinated fashion.
- Covenant Health, along with other health services providers, works within that Health Plan, allowing AHS to sustain a comprehensive service delivery model that uses the strengths and skills of each organization to optimize care delivery.
- As a Ministry of the Catholic Church, we are also accountable for mission fidelity, high quality of care and resource stewardship. Canon Law requires that work carried out in the name of the Church be done according to the highest quality standards.

In provincial planning and service delivery, Covenant Health is committed to the core principle of the **greater good** and, therefore, must support what is most beneficial to the people we serve.

As members of the Catholic Health of Alberta family, Covenant Care and Covenant Living contract Covenant Health to provide executive and corporate services.

“...the modern continuum of health requires collaborative, integrated, efficient and high-quality health services delivered by many types of health professionals across many different settings.”

From the Alberta Health Act (2010)

# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## ADDRESSING UNMET NEEDS TO MAKE THE SYSTEM STRONGER

Covenant Health plays a leadership role in shaping and delivering health services, supporting Alberta Health Services and the Government of Alberta in achieving their goals. We provide extensive core services across the continuum, as well as specialty services to meet unmet needs in 12 communities across the province.

### Mission-driven leader

Covenant Health provides large scale, high value and high volume core services for the system. Our facilities and programs have a significant footprint that extends across the continuum of care and the province.

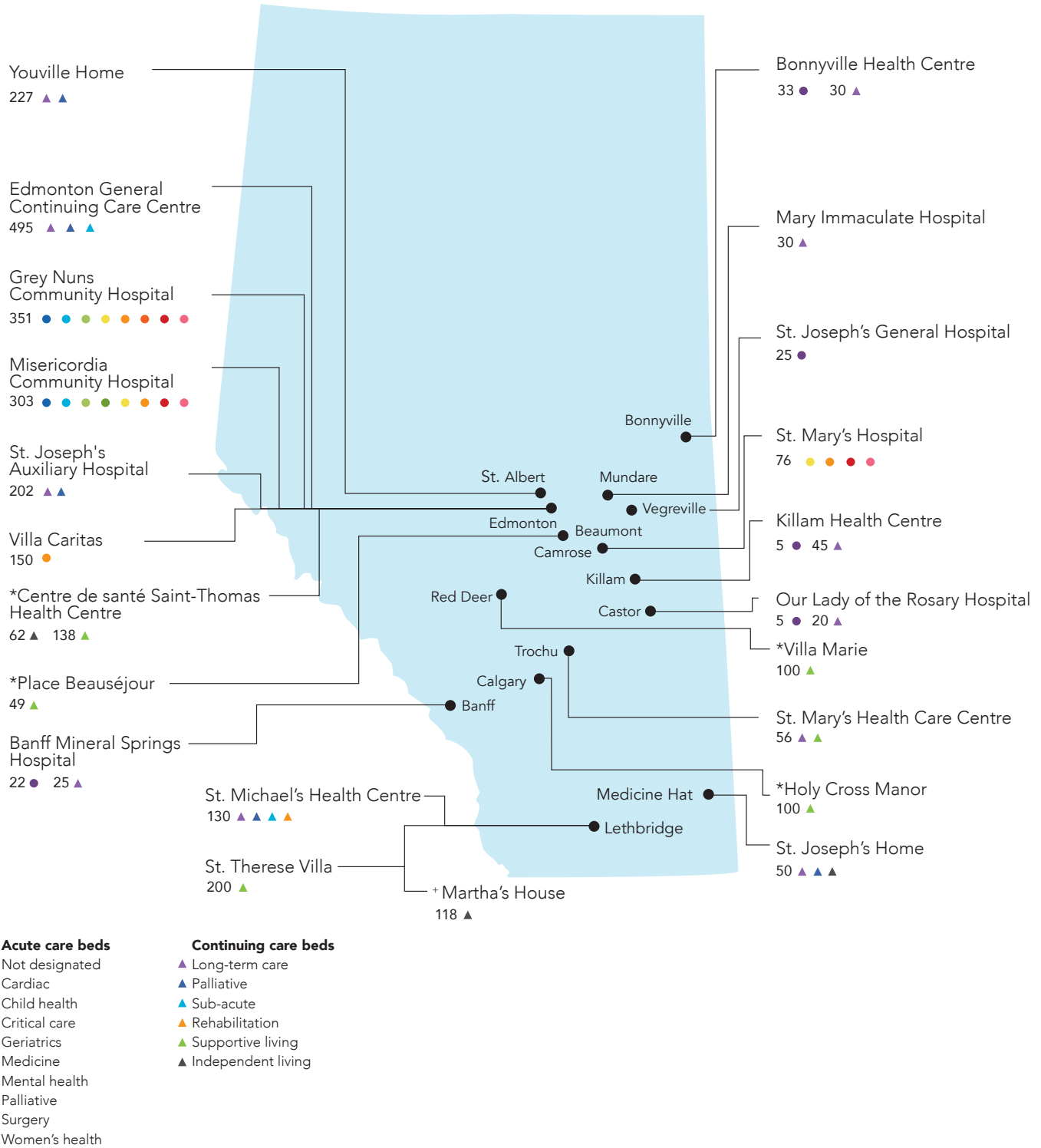
- Our Edmonton hospitals account for nearly **one quarter of the Emergency department visits in the Edmonton zone.**
- The Misericordia and Grey Nuns make up about 30 per cent of the bed base within their zone.
- The Misericordia completes 60 per cent of all breast cancer surgeries in the Edmonton zone, and has the third highest volume for completing hip fracture surgeries in the province.
- Villa Caritas is Alberta's **largest provider of geriatric mental health services** and, collectively, we operate 250 beds in the province dedicated to serving those with mental illness at **both rural and urban sites.**
- About 50 per cent of babies born in the Edmonton zone are born at the Misericordia or Grey Nuns Community Hospitals.
- Covenant Health provides **1 in 4 provincially funded palliative and hospice beds** in Alberta, supporting palliative needs in urban and rural communities, including Bonnyville, Camrose, Edmonton, Killam, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, St. Albert and Vegreville.

### Service activity (2013-14)

Service	Activity
Emergency visits:	197,033
Outpatient clinic visits:	401,250
Acute patient days:	318,515
Resident days:	513,803
Surgeries:	43,090
Births:	9,504
Diagnostic imaging exams:	260,639
Lab tests:	3,135,964

# OUR FACILITIES

## 2013-14 Service capacity



\*This is a Covenant Care facility.

\*This is a Covenant Living facility.

Covenant Health provides contracted administrative and corporate services to Covenant Care and Covenant Living.

## Trusted partner

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Guided by our mission and commitment to exceptional care, Covenant Health finds opportunities and innovations to address unique health issues. We are a trusted partner in leading programs at zone and provincial levels that have a significant health impact for Albertans.

- The Misericordia is **the only public Hyperbaric Oxygen treatment centre in the province**, providing treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning, problem wounds and radiation tissue damage.
- The Grey Nuns Community Hospital is the centre for the Northern Alberta Vascular program, which **services Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories**.
- The Institute for Reconstructive Sciences in Medicine (iRSM) is a pathfinder in the treatment and rehabilitation of patients with severe disfigurement of the face, head and neck due to cancer, trauma or congenital abnormalities. **iRSM is a unique Canadian resource and a world-renowned clinical institute**.
- The Misericordia is the only site in the Edmonton zone doing sarcoma surgery for adult patients with bone cancer and hip arthroscopy surgery for young patients who have hip problems causing immobility. The Misericordia is also the **only site between Vancouver and Winnipeg** offering transanal endoscopic microsurgery for bowel cancers in the lower intestine.
- One of only two stroke care sites in the Edmonton zone, the Grey Nuns is a provincial partner in offering comprehensive stroke care.
- Our **innovative rural clinics** include the Plastic Surgery (Hand) Clinic, Sport Medicine Clinic, and Osteoarthritis Clinic in Banff; and the Heart Function Clinic, Stroke Prevention Clinic, and Urology Clinic in Camrose.
- The Grey Nuns has **one of only two Psychiatric Intensive Care units in Edmonton**, providing care for 38 per cent of patients in the zone through the most acute phase of their mental illness.

## Values-based provider

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We look at health holistically, discerning the unmet healthcare needs of communities and vulnerable populations, recognizing that health and well-being is more than the absence of disease.

- Building on the reputation of the **internationally-recognized** Grey Nuns Tertiary Palliative Care Unit, we established the Palliative Institute. The Institute will respond to the growing need for end-of-life care across Alberta, to ensure patients facing serious illnesses have access to a spectrum of co-ordinated health services.
- We provide **comprehensive trauma services in three rural communities** (Banff, Bonnyville and Camrose) and ensure stabilization after transfer.
- We implemented the first Newborn Safe Havens in Alberta at the Misericordia and Grey Nuns Community Hospitals.



Values-based provider ...continued

- We serve families in difficult times with early pregnancy loss programs and full service Intermediate Care Nurseries at the Grey Nuns and Misericordia.
- Covenant Health is the **first Alberta organization to participate in the Baby-Friendly Initiative**, a global program with the goal to protect, promote and support families in breastfeeding to ensure the best start in life for babies.
- The Misericordia Geriatric Assessment Unit provides an interdisciplinary approach to assessment and rehabilitation of appropriate geriatric patients who have multiple and complex needs.
- St. Mary's Hospital is a Primary Stroke Center with Stroke Prevention and Heart Function Clinics, inpatient services, a Heart Failure Optimization Program and an Atrial Fibrillation Detection Program. An Early Supportive Discharge program offers outreach in-home rehabilitation to improve recovery, which **decreases a patient's length of stay in the hospital.**
- Our rural ambulatory clinics bring **services to the doorstep of the communities we serve**, addressing basic needs such as foot care, prenatal care, dietary counselling, physiotherapy/occupational therapy, and women's wellness.
- Cancer care is provided in Bonnyville and Camrose so patients can receive care close to home.
- We developed a pilot program in Lethbridge to provide care and support to people who are homeless and have complex medical needs.

Provincial highlights  
2013-14

Covenant Health operates 1,480 continuing care beds in 11 communities, making up six per cent of the provincially funded continuing care and supportive living spaces in Alberta.

We perform 11 per cent of surgical procedures in the province at five of our hospitals.

Nearly one in five Alberta babies is born at one of our hospitals.

We offer emergency services in seven communities, with our facilities handling one in every 10 emergency visits in the province.

# QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE

## DEMONSTRATING EXCELLENCE IN QUALITY OF CARE AND FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Quality care is central to our ongoing mission of service. Covenant Health programs and services are fully subject to meeting health service delivery standards in the province, and to meeting requirements of the Catholic Church.

Our policies and practices are aligned with provincial standards, meeting our accountability to Alberta Health and AHS, as a trusted provider and a key partner in Alberta's integrated health system.

As an accountability to the Catholic Church, Canon Law requires that work carried out in Catholic health care be done according to the highest quality standards.

### **Externally validated performance and commitment to continuous improvement**

Meeting and exceeding national performance standards

#### **Accreditation Canada standards**

One of the key ways in which Covenant Health examines, validates and continually improves the quality of its programs and services is through the Accreditation process. Accreditation is also a mandatory accountability as per Alberta Health Ministerial Directive D5-2008.

Covenant Health's principal accreditation activities are conducted by Accreditation Canada, an independent, not-for-profit organization that consults with experts to develop healthcare standards based on best practices.

Since our first Accreditation survey in 2010, Covenant Health has consistently achieved outstanding results every year. The decision and status awarded to, and maintained by, Covenant Health is **Accreditation with Exemplary Standing**. This is the highest level of accreditation.

Covenant Health has also been nationally recognized by Accreditation Canada with two Leading Practices—our Mission Discernment Process and our Parenteral Therapy program.

Covenant Health has "...a dynamic leadership team who are committed to ensuring that the mission, vision and values of the organization are central to their work, working collaboratively to guide the organization toward excellence and innovation in compassionate, patient and client-centred care." Accreditation Canada report (2014)

### National health system reporting

The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) recently implemented a three-year Health System Performance reporting initiative publicly displayed on CIHI's YourHealthSystem.ca website. It allows facilities to compare themselves to national, provincial or peer group averages.

For the majority of indicators, many **Covenant Health urban and rural sites perform consistent with or better than the national average.** The data contained within YourHealthSystem.ca is from the 2012-13 fiscal year.

Examples of where site performance exceeds the national experience include:

Top 10 per cent for the last three years:

- 30-day overall readmission (Grey Nuns and Banff)
- Three-day obstetrical readmission (Grey Nuns)
- 30-day surgical readmission (Banff)

Better than the national average:

- 30-day overall readmission (Misericordia)
- 30-day obstetrical readmission (Misericordia)
- 30-day surgical readmission (Grey Nuns)
- Hospital standardized mortality ratio (Grey Nuns)

### Provincial reporting

#### Alberta Health Plan and Business Plan strategic measures

As part of the 2013-16 Alberta Health Plan and Business Plan reported to the Minister, there are 16 strategic measures that outline the priority areas of focus and accountability for health organizations' performance in Alberta. Eleven strategic measures apply to individual Covenant Health facilities.

Our 2013-14 fiscal year performance shows that many of our facilities are already **exceeding the 2014-15 and 2015-16 performance targets.**

Examples of where site performance exceeds the 2014-15 and 2015-16 targets include:

- Hospital standardized mortality ratio (Bonnyville, Grey Nuns, Misericordia)
- Expected length of stay versus actual length of stay (Banff, Bonnyville, Grey Nuns and Misericordia)
- Surgical readmission rate (Banff, Bonnyville and Grey Nuns)
- Mortality following heart attack (Grey Nuns)
- Mortality following stroke (Grey Nuns)

In 2013-14, Covenant Health received 30 per cent of the commendations in the province and 57 per cent in the Edmonton zone.

(source: Feedback and Concern Tracking System, 2015)

## Infection Prevention and Control audits

In October 2014, Accreditation Canada completed an accreditation survey of our Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) program. They made special mention of a number of processes and systems in place at Covenant Health they felt to be best practices, including cleaning processes, how successful we have been in drilling hand hygiene and IPC practices down to the front line, and a comprehensive IPC website for staff to access related resources.

Our commitment to excellence in this area is evident:

- Covenant Health’s hand hygiene program has seen a **53 per cent increase in improved compliance across the organization** in the past two years, supported by physician engagement, IPC champion leadership, hand hygiene audit process and just-in-time education.
- There have been **no Central Venous Catheter Blood Stream Infections in the past three years**, due to standardized process for the insertion and maintenance of central lines.
- Covenant Health has led the province in the development of algorithms for the diagnosis and management of Clostridium difficile. Since September 2014, monthly auditing of the pre-printed patient care order (PPCO) set has been completed to ensure compliance with the PPCO and the appropriate use of treatment options. **We consistently score 95 to 97 per cent on these audits.**
- Our MRSA and VRE **infection rates are significantly lower than the Edmonton Zone and Alberta rates** (per 10,000 patient days).

## Stewardship of resources and productivity

Covenant Health has exceeded the service level targets as outlined in the Co-operation and Services Agreement with AHS, while meeting our financial commitment to a balanced budget since Covenant Health was formed. We maintained a balanced budget position for the 2013-14 fiscal year.

We cared for more Albertans through our hospitals than outlined in our annual service agreement with AHS, meeting or exceeding targets for service levels in surgeries, laboratory services, births, emergency visits and occupancy.

### Covenant Health adds value by meeting or exceeding service targets within existing funding levels:

Activity Levels	2013-14 Funded	2013-14 Actuals	Variance	%
Inpatient days	306,558	318,515	11,957	3.9%
Emergency visits	188,651	197,033	8,382	4.4%
Outpatient clinic visits	388,911	401,250	12,339	3.2%
Births	9,225	9,504	279	3%
Diagnostic Imaging Exams	258,133	260,639	2,506	1%
Laboratory tests	2,938,822	3,135,964	197,142	6.7%
Surgeries	42,344	43,090	746	1.8%

# SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

## TRANSFORMING THE SYSTEM TO MEET PRIORITY NEEDS

Covenant Health provides leadership in the system to support Alberta Health Services and the Government of Alberta in achieving its goals. We work collaboratively to meet the healthcare needs of people across Alberta based on priority health needs and stakeholder engagement.

### Transformation in acute care

Covenant Health has embarked on a number of interrelated initiatives that are part of our strategy to address the challenges facing our patients and residents as they journey through their acute care stay and transition to the community or home.

Serving as a platform for this strategy, **Path to Home creates a systemic model designed with the patient at the centre of the journey.** Using an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to care planning, the model works to improve the patient experience from admission to discharge in line with provincial standards for patient access to hospital care.

Also under the umbrella of this work: CoAct, Care Transformation, Clinical Workforce, Bed Allocation Methodology, Care Management Optimization and Destination Home.

Other initiatives that are part of our contribution to the transformation of the healthcare system are:

- Transition to collaborative practice model
- Site utilization model
- Patient and care team localization
- Enhanced recovery after surgery
- Orthopedic consultation streamlining

Our areas of emphasis focus our resources on health issues facing vulnerable and under-served populations. We leverage our expertise to enable innovation and to be of greater service in:

- Seniors' health
- Rural health
- Addiction and mental health
- Palliative and end-of-life care

The benefits of the Rural Health Strategy have included operational efficiencies, partnerships and relationships that result in collegial responses to system issues and patient care needs, and improvements to patient/client and family satisfaction.

This model has also led to reduction of duplication, as service providers work together to assess and address service gaps in a co-ordinated way.

## Rural Health Strategy

With the knowledge that each community is unique, Covenant Health's Rural Health Strategy focuses on developing recommendations that meet the basic health and wellness needs of individuals close to home, ensuring co-ordination between centres and supporting effective transitions between care settings and providers.

The strategy was informed through our engagement with rural communities and Alberta Health Services about what services can be reasonably accessed within each community and through geographically aligned linkages with other sites. These "corridors of care" look at defining comprehensive, complimentary care and service models that are sustainable.

Covenant Health is also looking at linking with urban centers to leverage the strengths of the system. Not only can this benefit the rural community, but it can position the rural facility to be a potential solution to capacity pressures in urban centres. We have worked to build linkages between the healthcare facilities in the rural communities, Primary Care Networks, Emergency Medical Services, pharmacies and others.

Covenant Health's 11 Community Boards are a key part of the Rural Health Strategy. These groups represent our Board of Directors in their communities, and ensure there is effective communication between the local communities and the provincial organization.

## Palliative and end-of-life care

The need for end-of-life care is expected to increase 33 per cent by 2020. As an internationally-recognized leader, Covenant Health is positioned to champion a future where every Albertan can make informed decisions about their end-of-life care and where their caregivers have the knowledge, expertise and resources to support them.

The Covenant Health Palliative Institute's distinctive role in achieving this future is to serve as a palliative and end-of-life care knowledge broker for clinicians, policy makers, patients and families, and to **lead informed public discourse on end-of-life issues.**

The Palliative Institute employs a collaborative knowledge-to-action process aimed at continuous quality improvement and capacity-building. The goal is to ensure patients facing serious illnesses have access to a comprehensive spectrum of co-ordinated health services regardless of their location.

## Network of Excellence for Seniors' Health and Wellness

Covenant Health established a Network of Excellence for Seniors' Health and Wellness in 2013. The goal is to champion a future where seniors can achieve optimal wellness and are supported to be independent, active and valued members of their communities.

Through collaboration, practical research, evaluation and knowledge dissemination, the Network addresses the challenges of an aging population and the growing demands on the seniors' health and wellness system. Creating capacity and expertise for innovation and transformative thinking, the Network is helping to lay the groundwork for a sustainable model for seniors' care.

### Ethics Centre

A new web-based Ethics Centre, available on both Covenant Health's intranet and public website, was recently launched to build further capacity for clinical, organizational and research ethics.

The vision for the Ethics Centre arose out of a passion to ensure our clinical and administrative colleagues were empowered to face the increasingly complex challenges of the healthcare world. It supports them as they seek to honour the dignity of patients and residents by serving with compassion and understanding.

By supporting our staff and physicians in ethical decision-making, the Ethics Centre enhances quality care to those we serve. Good ethical practices also benefit our retention and recruitment strategies—one of the reasons why we are recognized as a top employer with a top culture.

### Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Covenant Health has developed a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and public statement entitled, "One Mission, Many Faces".

Consistent with our mission and values to serve people of all faiths, cultures and circumstances, our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is intended to deepen this commitment, and through practical initiatives and deliverables, honour the increasing diversity of the populations we serve and work with.

A significant outcome of this strategy was the development and implementation of an Interpretative Services and Translation program. This program ensures patients with diverse cultural or linguistic needs are able to navigate the system safely, from admission to discharge. It also ensures timely access to qualified interpreters, translated patient education and discharge teaching resources.

Covenant Health has recently been approved as a Joanna Briggs Institute affiliated synthesis centre. We will be the first non-university Canadian centre, as well as the only centre located in Western Canada. The Institute and its collaborating entities assist in the improvement of healthcare outcomes globally.

# THE STRENGTH OF OUR PEOPLE

## FOSTERING AN ENGAGED WORKFORCE

As a top employer with a vibrant mission, distinct culture and strong tradition, we offer a workplace that is meaningful and provides an opportunity for people to grow, flourish and live their calling each day.

### Governance and leadership

#### Board of Directors

Covenant Health has an effective and meaningful governance and leadership structure. We have an 11-member Board of Directors, comprised of dedicated members of the community, with fiduciary responsibilities to our funder, but also to the Bishops of Alberta through the sponsor.

This dual accountability to both civil and canonical authorities represents an added level of scrutiny. It ensures Covenant Health is a good steward of resources, delivers high quality care, and makes decisions and acts with integrity as a good corporate citizen in keeping with our mission.

#### Community Boards

We have 11 well-established volunteer Community Boards serving in an advisory capacity throughout the province. We also work closely in collaboration with 10 community-based Foundations.

With a focus on advice and advocacy, the engagement of over 130 community and foundation board members across Alberta ensures we are **closely connected to the communities we serve.**

Board members are key players in identifying emerging issues, concerns and opportunities, and they raise funds to meet local needs. They serve as effective ambassadors in supporting their facilities and raising awareness of programs, services and contributions.

#### Leadership team

Covenant Health is committed to ensuring we build the strongest leadership team, with everyone using their gifts and talents to the fullest. Our senior leadership team and our overall organizational structure is effective and efficient, and aligned with the mission. With minimum levels of bureaucracy, **we focus on enabling supports at the front-line point-of-care and service.**

Our clinical care and service leadership model establishes clear leadership roles, responsibilities and common core functions across all programs and services.

We focus on four critical aspects of care and service and operations:

- Access and flow
- People and teams
- Efficiency and resources
- Quality and safety



This common emphasis ensures we advance our strategic plan to grow, innovate and integrate our programs and services to improve quality, access and sustainability.

### Staff, physicians and volunteers

Our team consists of nearly 15,000 mission-driven staff, physicians and volunteers who share our calling. Across our hospitals, health centres and long-term care facilities, our interdisciplinary teams **work collaboratively to provide quality, compassionate care to people at all stages of life.**

Through their dedication and skill, we grow our service to Albertans every year, seeing more people in our Emergency departments, performing more surgeries in our hospitals, treating more people in our outpatient clinics and enhancing care for seniors and palliative patients.

## Organizational culture

### Just workplace

Covenant Health's Just Workplace Framework articulates how our mission, values and ethical commitments support the transformation of care and service delivery. This ensures both an economically viable and just workplace, all oriented to the people in our care, and fulfillment of our strategic directions.

It is an extension of our Mission Discernment Tool and the Health Ethics Guide, helping to bring a consistent values-based decision-making approach to health care.

### Employee engagement

Higher levels of employee engagement, a positive work environment and a healthy workforce all have significant and direct impact on the delivery of care and services. They also affect operational performance, recruitment and retention, and succession planning.

In evaluating our engagement on a two-year cycle, Covenant Health uses the Q12 model from The Gallup Organization, an internationally recognized leader in measuring employee engagement.

We continue to improve on our measures of engagement across our organization—improving overall engagement scores in our 2012 survey, particularly in staff being recognized for their good work, encouraged in their development and feeling that someone at work cares about them as a person.

We also launched an **action plan to strengthen the involvement of physicians**, building on the input of 400 urban and rural physicians in our 2012 Physician Engagement Survey, and their positive expressions of how organizational values shape decision-making.

We were recognized as one of Alberta's Top Employers in 2014 and 2015.



Covenant Health has also been named one of Canada's 10 Most Admired Corporate Cultures for 2014—an honour that speaks to our investment in employee engagement and the organizational culture we foster.

### Provincial Volunteer Strategy

Covenant Health is committed to professionalism and excellence in supporting our volunteers, who bring the love and care of our communities into all of our facilities. We have a three-year strategy to strengthen our volunteer management and support through policy development, professional development and volunteer recognition.

### Workplace safety

Supported by a \$2-million government grant, and informed by industry best practices and employee feedback, we recently implemented bE LITE, a new patient handling and musculoskeletal injury prevention program. We have successfully administered the program to all Covenant Health sites, with approximately 4,000 employees trained to the program.

### Workplace wellness

When the wellness of employees is supported, employees are better able to support patients and residents. Through a \$500,000 government grant, Covenant Health has begun the process of developing a comprehensive wellness program that supports our employees' mind, body and spirit.

### Full scope of practice

Covenant Health supports full scope of practice for all healthcare disciplines to ensure skills and education are appropriate to competencies, needs of those we serve and the environment of care. As scope of practice changes, team members are informed of the legislative changes and support is provided. We began year-long education and clinical practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in January 2013.

### Learning and Development

Covenant Health is in the process of implementing a comprehensive Learning and Development Strategy that is driven by improving employee performance and delivering the highest level of compassionate care.

We have launched CLiC, a state-of-the-art learning environment that serves as a focal point for all learning in our organization to design, deploy, track, measure and report all learning that occurs. The expected outcome is a direct, measurable impact on performance and cost of service delivery.

### Educational placements

Covenant Health is committed to providing quality educational opportunities for students from a wide range of healthcare disciplines and building strong, collaborative relationships with academic institutions to support the development of tomorrow's workforce. For the 2013-14 fiscal year, we provided more than 4,000 students with clinical placements, resulting in over 25 million preceptor hours.

One in four Alberta physicians has privileges to care for patients and residents at a Covenant Health site.

We add value through our proven service, and we make the health system stronger.

About 25 per cent of our employees have been with us for over 10 years.

Our 2,715 volunteers gave nearly 190,000 hours of service in 17 facilities across Alberta in 2013-14.

Our team consists of nearly 15,000 staff, physicians and volunteers.

# HIGHLIGHTS

## Covenant Health's value add comprises five important elements:

### HISTORY AND ROLE

- Catholic health care has been a trusted provider in Alberta for 150 years, instrumental in laying the foundation for the healthcare system we have today.
- Our legacy anchors a vibrant corporate culture of compassion and innovation named one of Canada's 10 Most Admired Cultures for 2014. Our engaged physicians, employees and volunteers embrace a shared mission and calling to provide quality, compassionate care.
- Covenant Health is not a duplicate or parallel health system. We work as a collaborative partner to achieve our mission and the priorities of Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services business plans.

### PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- We offer a full continuum of care from birth to end of life in our urban and rural hospitals, health centres and continuing care facilities.
- We provide large scale, high value and high volume core services for the system and specialty services unique to our organization that address unmet needs of communities and vulnerable populations.
- We are trusted to lead key programs that positively impact significant health issues facing Albertans.

### QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE

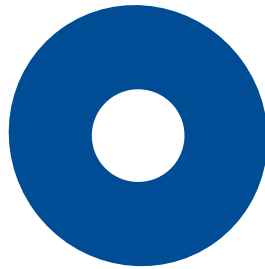
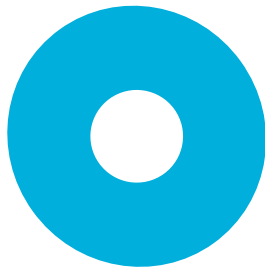
- As a ministry of the Catholic Church, we exceed accountabilities for mission fidelity, high quality of care and financial management.
- As a provincial partner, our programs and services are fully subject to meeting health service delivery standards in the province.
- Our programs meet and exceed national performance standards, and exceed service level targets set by Alberta Health Services.
- We maintain Accreditation with Exemplary standing, the highest level of accreditation possible from Accreditation Canada.

### SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

- We focus our resources on health issues facing vulnerable Albertans: seniors' health, rural health, addiction and mental health, and palliative care.
- We are championing initiatives to address the challenges patients face as they move through the acute care system, from the hospital back to their community or home.

### THE STRENGTH OF OUR PEOPLE

- We are recognized as one of Alberta's Top 70 Employers for two consecutive years and named one of Canada's 10 Most Admired Cultures for 2014.
- As one of the largest organizations in the province, we invest in a number of programs to support our staff, physicians and volunteers, including: employee engagement, ethical reflection, workplace wellness, full scope of practice and learning and development.



[CovenantHealth.ca](https://www.CovenantHealth.ca)

