

Check Against Delivery

Alberta Supports Centre Opening May 30, 2014, Red Deer Honourable Manmeet S. Bhullar, Minister, Human Services

Good afternoon everyone.

Every day, government works diligently to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable Albertans.

We have many great support programs; AISH, Alberta Works, Child Care, PDD, Seniors, to name a few examples.

These programs work well when they are delivered individually.

But when people need access to multiple supports, Albertans have told us over and over - it is frustrating and inefficient.

There was no formal way to help them find the full suite of supports and benefits they really needed.

As a result, some of our most vulnerable citizens would sometimes fall through the cracks.

Helping our most vulnerable citizens is the right thing to do:

- by changing how government delivers supports;
- coordinating and aligning our programs, processes and systems to be citizen-centred; and
- Helping people become more independent so they can be successful and lead fulfilling lives – and in many cases, they will no longer need our support.

Through Alberta Supports, Albertans can access a broad range of government social-based programs and supports.

Alberta Supports is a streamlined delivery approach – it is not a program.

Alberta Supports is a central hub to help Albertans connect to over 34 programs and 120 supports.

- Childcare Supports
- Income Supports
- Disability Supports
- Seniors Supports
- Employment and training
- Emergency Supports

Albertans can connect to Alberta Supports three ways.

Click on the Alberta Supports Website;

174,383 public users to date

The online tool, *My Alberta Supports-Connecting you to services*, helps Albertans find out if they may be eligible for a number of supports and benefits.

Over the next several months, Albertans will be able to apply online for select supports.

Call the Alberta Supports Contact Centre,

Since 2010 the Alberta Supports Contact Centre has received over a million telephone calls

This past year, almost 234,000 Albertans received information and assistance

Come in to a local Alberta Supports Centre.

Last summer the first four Alberta Supports Centres, opened in Lethbridge, Fort McMurray, St. Paul and Medicine Hat.

Since opening, more than 10,500 Albertans have been served at one of these centres.

Alberta Supports Services Coordinators are the “system navigators” who can help Albertans

By email, telephone or in-person, to find the right government supports and benefits.

Help with applications

Handle application enquiries

Identify client needs

Referrals to community agencies and service providers.

This new way of doing business will help to reduce service gaps, simplify access and help Albertans change their lives or their situation.

An independent client survey conducted by WellQuest Consulting on behalf of Alberta Supports, more than 85% of clients felt that Alberta Supports is meeting their needs.

Service Coordinators knew what they needed (90.8%)

They gave them the information they needed (89.6%)

They gave them the right forms to apply for supports from the government (89.5%)

They helped them fill out these forms (90.8%)

Staff answered their questions about supports, services and programs (89.5%)

They told them what papers they need to qualify for one or more programs (87.5%); and

Service coordinators also told them what they need to do to get supports from the government (87.9%).

Today, I am proud to “officially open” the Alberta Supports Centre in Red Deer.

Red Deer and Edmonton are the newest additions to the Alberta Supports family – both centres quietly opened their doors in late March.

Additional locations will open in Calgary, Peace River, Slave Lake and Whitecourt in summer 2014.

Other locations will open in 2015.

The presence of Alberta Supports Centres in local communities, like this one in Red Deer...

...is beneficial for community agencies, care-givers and advocates whose role it is to guide and assist vulnerable citizens to government services.

Many of you here today, represent a diversity of community agencies, municipal government and community service providers.

I encourage you to connect with the staff in your local Alberta Supports Centre to learn more about our services and find new ways that we can work together.

In closing, I want to thank all of you for joining me today.

I also want acknowledge the staff from the different divisions of Human Services who are changing the face of service delivery for Albertans.

I made a commitment to take action to support vulnerable families and keep children healthy and safe.

Providing better access to government programs through Alberta Supports is a part of how this is happening.

Children, youth, adults and seniors - all benefit from this holistic approach to service delivery.

You are making a difference in the lives of Albertans, and we're on a journey that will bring even better service to those who need us.

Thank you.