



WHY IT'S TIME FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Alberta Hospital Edmonton is a 410-bed psychiatric hospital campus located on the northwest edge of Edmonton. The hospital serves high-need mental health patients from communities of all sizes across Alberta.

Alberta Health Services planned to close 246 treatment beds until Health Minister Gene Zwozdesky reversed the decision in January 2010. Unfortunately, Alberta Health Services still plans to close the geriatric program at Alberta Hospital Edmonton and, at great and unnecessary expense, move those patients into a 150-bed facility that was built to provide long-term care.

The plan to close the geriatric building is likely just the tip of the iceberg, as Alberta Health Services and Health Minister Gene Zwozdesky have still not committed to redeveloping Alberta Hospital Edmonton.

We're asking concerned Albertans like you to consider the facts and then contact your MLA to support the redevelopment of Alberta Hospital Edmonton, and to keep the geriatric program at the hospital running.

Alberta Hospital Edmonton supports all communities with an invaluable resource

- Alberta Hospital Edmonton serves the most severely ill mental health patients from communities across our province. In January, 2010, Dr. Donna Wilson, Professor of Nursing at the University of Alberta, released a study confirming 30 per cent of Alberta Hospital Edmonton's patients come from outside the capital region.
- Wilson's study found that Alberta Hospital Edmonton served patients from 87 communities across the province – most from nursing homes that can't handle patients suffering mental illness
- The McDermott Report, commissioned by the government in 2005, found that Alberta already has too few beds – about a quarter of the national average.
- In his fall 2008 report Alberta's Auditor General confirmed there is an inadequate capacity of community mental health resources to support patient demand.

We can afford to redevelop Alberta Hospital Edmonton

- The 2006 O'Neill O'Neill Procinsky Architects/Croft Planning and Design report commissioned by the Capital Health Region estimated the cost of demolishing and rebuilding nearly all the buildings on the site to be \$266 million – far less than the Alberta Government is spending to redevelop the old Federal Building for new political offices and a parkade for politicians at the Legislature in Edmonton.
- We can afford to keep the Alberta Hospital Edmonton running in good condition until the economy recovers. In early March, 2010 Alberta Health Services provided Health Minister Gene Zwozdesky with an assessment that showed all buildings on the site providing patient services to be in "fair to good condition" and estimated the cost of all necessary maintenance to be just \$8.6 million.
- Alberta Health Services plans to spend up to \$5 million to upgrade Villa Caritas, a long-term care centre in West Edmonton, so it can move geriatric psychiatry patients there from Alberta Hospital Edmonton, even though the geriatric psychiatry building currently needs just \$1.4 million in repairs.



Redeveloping Alberta Hospital Edmonton was as a top priority until AHS took over

- The Roadmap for the Future: The Capital Health Plan for Regional Mental Health Program Delivery 2005-2008 said the redevelopment of Alberta Hospital Edmonton needed to be the region's top priority.
- Redevelopment was stated to be a No. 1 priority again in a 2006 report prepared for Capital Health by O'Neill O'Neill Procinsky Architects and Croft Planning and Design for the Capital Health Region.
- The O'Neill O'Neill Procinsky Architects/Croft Planning and Design report outlined many past initiatives aimed at renewing and improving Alberta Hospital Edmonton, including: the 1987 Alberta Hospital Edmonton Master Plan, and joint "site master planning" exercises conducted by the firm Wood O'Neill and the Alberta Mental Health Board from 1999 to 2002.
- The O'Neill O'Neill Procinsky Architects/Croft Planning and Design report projected a need for 130 new mental health treatment beds due to demographic pressures from an aging and growing population – that demand has still not been met.

Closing beds would backlog psychiatric patients in hospitals and long-term care

- Dr. Wilson concluded her study saying that closing "100 beds could result in 300-700 less admissions each year" to Alberta Hospital Edmonton. As all the patients at Alberta Hospital Edmonton "were transferred from acute care hospitals or continuing care facilities around the province, a backlog of patients needing acute psychiatric care would occur at these facilities," she said.
- Closing beds at Alberta Hospital will not reduce the demand for mental health services, it will just overload our local hospitals, long-term care centres and communities.

Alberta Hospital Edmonton keeps our families and communities safe

- In fall 2009 a Berkeley School of Public Health study of bed closures in the United States found that one public psychiatric hospital bed decrease per 100,000 people "would result in about 45 additional suicides per year."
- A 2008 Vancouver Police Department study title Lost in Transition found that the closure of 200 beds at the Riverview Psychiatric Hospital was followed by a surge in the number of hours police officers spent dealing with calls related to people suffering from mental illness.
- The Vancouver Police study found that 31 per cent of all calls to the Vancouver Police Department were related to mental illness and estimated the annual demand on resources to be the equivalent of 90 full-time police officer positions.