

A photograph of a surgical team in an operating room. The scene is dimly lit with a strong blue light. In the foreground, a hand wearing a purple nitrile glove holds a pair of surgical forceps. Several other pairs of surgical instruments are laid out on a blue sterile drape in the background. The overall atmosphere is clinical and focused.

DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY
FIVE YEAR STRATEGY
2024 - 2029

COMMITMENT, COMMUNITY, COMPASSION



The Department of Surgery is a collaboration with Alberta Health Services and the University of Calgary and is one of the largest surgical departments in North America. With over 350 members, we are committed to a professional and academic culture that is continually progressing and improving. Our department is comprised of 13 surgical sections that teach and provide care at five acute care hospitals in the Calgary Zone.

COMMITMENT, COMMUNITY, COMPASSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Letter from Department Leadership | 2 |
| Vision, Mission, and Values | 3 |
| Our Focus | 4 |
| Our Goals | 6 |
| Improving the Patient Journey | 8 |
| Developing Our Faculty | 9 |
| Supporting Surgical Education..... | 10 |
| Advancing Research and Innovation | 11 |
| Promoting Quality Improvement | 12 |
| Managing Resources Effectively | 13 |

LETTER FROM DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP



Dear Colleagues,

The Department of Surgery in Calgary is both an academic department in the University of Calgary Cumming School of Medicine and a clinical department in Alberta Health Services, Calgary Zone. Our membership is diverse; it includes over 350 surgeons, dentists, podiatrists, and researchers in 13 sections across five acute care hospital sites. Emerging from the COVID pandemic with a new department head and several new deputy department heads, it seemed an appropriate time to review and update the department's vision and mission statements. With significant changes in the world around us, it has become necessary to reflect on our core values as a surgical group and to identify our focus and strategic goals for the next five years.

The strategic plan on the following pages began in October 2022 with a daylong retreat. There was diverse representation from the Department of Surgery as we came together to share ideas and understand each other's values. Numerous meetings were then held over an intensive one-year period, including obtaining feedback from the general membership. We are indebted to all those who engaged with us and provided suggestions for improving the plan. What is presented here represents the final version of our strategic plan that will guide us over the next five years, from 2024-2029.

The foundation of this strategic plan can be expressed in three words: Community, Commitment, and Compassion. Throughout this process, we continually came back to the idea that we are part of a larger community – a community that includes patients and families, surgeons, colleagues in other specialties, trainees, leaders, and employees with Alberta Health Services. Our core values of collaboration, integrity, accountability, inclusivity, and excellence in everything we do fuel our commitment to and compassion for this community.

Our focus is excellence in clinical care, a small phrase that conveys significant meaning. Excellence in clinical care means we are dedicated to progress. We are socially accountable and responsible for the well-being of our community. We will be guided by the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. We strive to be good stewards of the resources we use.

With these elements of our focus in mind, we developed six key goals and a description of how we will accomplish them. The goals are lofty but achievable. We believe in our people and our community, and we know that we can improve the patient journey. We will help our faculty to thrive and succeed in not only their clinical work but also in areas of research, education, quality improvement, and beyond. We will find new ways to manage our resources more effectively, being cognizant of our environment and our planet.

We hope you will find this strategic plan as exciting as we do. We look forward to working with you over the next five years as we work to meet our goals.

Sincerely,

Kevin Hildebrand

Zone Clinical and Academic Department Head Surgery

Frankie Fraulin

Deputy Department Head, Physician Services and Governance

Francis Sutherland

Deputy Department Head, Surgical Access Improvement

Marcia Clark

Deputy Department Head, Clinical Programs and Operations, Surgical Quality, and Innovation

Natalie Yanchar

Deputy Department Head, Professionalism, Physician Wellness, EDI



VISION

A thriving surgical community that excels in the care of our patients and their families.



MISSION

To champion the patient journey while developing the next generation of surgeons through compassion and excellence.



VALUES

We value collaboration, integrity, accountability, inclusivity, and excellence in everything we do.



OUR FOCUS



EXCELLENCE IN CLINICAL CARE

DEDICATION TO PROGRESS

We focus on making tomorrow better today through research, education, and quality improvement.

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY & COMMUNITY

We are responsible as surgeons for the needs of the people we serve, work with, and train.

RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

We make wise use of and are accountable for financial, material, and human resources while being agents of environmental protection for present and future generations.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ACCESSIBILITY (EDIA)

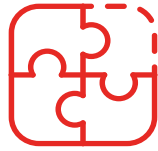
We are guided by EDIA in our working relationships, treating patients, selecting and training learners, and recruiting and retaining faculty.



OUR GOALS



IMPROVING
THE PATIENT
JOURNEY



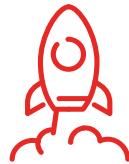
DEVELOPING
OUR
FACULTY



SUPPORTING
SURGICAL
EDUCATION



ADVANCING
RESEARCH AND
INNOVATION



PROMOTING
QUALITY
IMPROVEMENT



MANAGING
RESOURCES
EFFECTIVELY

OUR GOALS



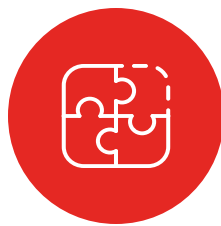
IMPROVING THE PATIENT JOURNEY

We are committed to expanding patient access to surgical services, implementing innovative models of care delivery, and fostering connections in our community.

To accomplish this goal, we will:

- Identify and address barriers to accessing surgical services, implement new programs, and optimize the use of resources in order to decrease wait times.
- Explore and adopt new evidence-informed technologies and clinical care pathways to streamline care delivery.
- Strengthen communication channels with our extended medical community, which includes referring physicians, specialists in the community, allied health, and others, by aiming for effective, transparent and accountable sharing of patient information.
- Implement robust safety protocols and continuously review and improve surgical practices.
- Evaluate and respond to the effectiveness of our efforts using patient-reported experience and outcome measures to ensure patients receive equitable care and are treated with respect and dignity.

OUR GOALS



DEVELOPING OUR FACULTY

We will attract and retain the best surgeons by building a supportive environment for personal and professional growth.

To accomplish this goal, we will:

- Follow EDIA principles when performing needs assessments to attract a diverse pool of healthcare professionals that will bring new talent and skills to our department.
- Provide and promote alternative employment arrangements to allow for a healthier, more robust workforce.
- Implement onboarding processes and mentorship programs for a smooth integration of team members.
- Provide education opportunities on EDIA and other professional development events.
- Promote awareness of the importance of physical, emotional, and mental wellness and strategies to improve self-care while acknowledging and addressing extrinsic stressors contributing to moral distress and burnout.
- Regularly audit faculty well-being through membership surveys in partnership with Well Doc Alberta.
- Pursue alternative funding plans such as clinical ARPs, the AMHSP, and other novel models of remuneration.
- Grow leadership by developing a leadership handbook as a living resource for current and aspiring leaders and implementing more robust and consistent feedback processes.

OUR GOALS



SUPPORTING SURGICAL EDUCATION

Optimize the Department of Surgery's contributions to the learning opportunities of trainees at all levels in the Cumming School of Medicine. This includes undergraduate medical education, postgraduate medical education (residents), fellowship programs, and continuing medical education for staff.

To accomplish this goal, we will:

- Optimize infrastructure and contemporary educational and evaluation frameworks to provide comprehensive learning opportunities for all levels of trainees.
- Ensure adequate resources for all training programs, including support and development of program directors, program administrators, and faculty.
- Strengthen fellowship training programs, increasing the rigour of financial and accounting processes.
- Encourage faculty engagement in teaching by providing mentorship opportunities, incentives, and recognition for their contributions to surgical education.
- Support a continuous cycle of quality improvement through feedback from faculty and trainees.
- Empower a culture of developing and supporting leaders in surgical education.
- Partner with the UME, PGME, and other organizations to facilitate trainee wellness initiatives.
- Incorporate EDIA principles into all aspects of education, including trainee recruitment, curriculum design, faculty literacy, and teaching methodologies.

OUR GOALS



ADVANCING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

We will embrace a culture of discovery to advance research capacity among current and new faculty members, cultivate the next generation of surgeon-researchers, and foster partnerships for innovation.

To accomplish this goal, we will:

- Provide resource supports to enhance research activities within our existing faculty.
- Implement sustainable funding and remuneration models to attract new faculty with a strong research background or potential.
- Promote and support current research training pathways for aspiring surgeon-researchers through mentorship, funding, and networking opportunities.
- Foster interdisciplinary collaborations to encourage innovative approaches and broaden the impact of our research.
- Establish relationships with industry partners to facilitate the commercialization of research findings.
- Evaluate the success of our research and innovation initiatives using performance metrics and feedback.

OUR GOALS



PROMOTING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

We will provide the highest standards of care to optimize outcomes through a robust commitment to quality improvement.

To accomplish this goal, we will:

- Foster a culture of transparency and accountability, encouraging open communication and collaboration and sharing of best practices.
- Support systems for tracking, analyzing, and addressing surgical outcomes, including cultural and equity disparities and patient-reported metrics.
- Support and grow the Evidence Decision Support Program to promote data-driven insights for clinical decision-making.
- Ensure all sections participate in structured quality improvement activities.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our quality improvement efforts using continuous performance metrics and stakeholder feedback.

OUR GOALS



MANAGING RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY

We will embrace a culture of optimizing resources and fiscal responsibility. We aim to develop a sustainable financial structure and create programs that improve efficiencies and reduce waste.

To accomplish this goal, we will:

- Assess our current financial structure and identify opportunities for increased efficiency and cost savings. Regularly review our financial strategies to align with our strategic priorities.
- Evaluate surgical techniques and variations between surgeons and promote responsible allocation of resources.
- Identify and measure ways to reduce/ mitigate environmentally harmful practices in the operative environment and incorporate more environmentally friendly strategies.
- Create a structured program to engage our community in philanthropy.
- Establish partnerships with grant agencies, foundations, and industry sponsors to secure funding for research, education, and infrastructure projects.

**CUMMING SCHOOL
OF MEDICINE**

