



Department of Pediatrics Strategic Plan 2024-2029



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
CUMMING SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Pediatrics



Alberta Health
Services

Children were active participants in the design of our Alberta Children's Hospital. Therefore, we thought it was equally important to involve them in identifying our Departmental Vision. We asked children and adolescents who have been patients at the hospital to tell us, in words or pictures, what health looked like to them. Their pictorial answers are included as part of this strategic plan.

The cover page is a drawing by an 11-year-old girl who requires frequent care at the Alberta Children's Hospital. Her picture is a drawing of her health journey using the Beads of Courage that the Child Life team provide to patients when they are at the hospital.

Patients are given a necklace and receive a new bead that corresponds to a hospital stay, procedure, blood draw, appointment with a specialist, infusion, etc.

The rest of her picture is what she loves to do when she is healthy including being in the forest surrounded by nature and waterfalls.

Overview

The Department of Pediatrics is one of 20 academic departments in the Cumming School of Medicine at the University of Calgary. The Department is comprised of over 450 faculty members and is organized into 23 sections and units:

Adolescent Medicine	Emergency Medicine	Nephrology
Cardiology	Gastroenterology	Neurology
Child and Family Health Research Unit	Global Child Health Unit	Newborn Critical Care
Child Abuse Services	Hematology	Oncology/Bone Marrow Transplant
Community Pediatrics	Pediatric Hospital Medicine	Palliative Medicine
Critical Care	Immunology	Respiratory Medicine
Dermatology	Infectious Diseases	Rheumatology
Developmental Pediatrics	Medical Genetics	

The Department of Pediatrics has one Department Head who reports to the Medical Director, Calgary Zone of Alberta Health Services, three Deputy Department Heads (Clinical Affairs, Professional Affairs, and Education), and several Section Chiefs, Unit Directors, and Educational Program Directors.

The Department of Pediatrics provides all levels of care to infants, children, and adolescents from Calgary as well as Southern Alberta and parts of British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Services are provided at the Alberta Children’s Hospital, Foothills Medical Centre, Peter Lougheed Centre, Rockyview General Hospital, and South Health Campus.

The Department of Pediatrics provides:

- Undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate medical education
- Residency training programs and post-doctoral fellowships

Purpose & Goal

The purpose of the strategic plan is to inform the trajectory of the Department of Pediatrics for the next five years (2024-2029).



Development of the Strategic Plan

The foundation for the document reflects the broader context of Pediatric care in Canada, assessed through an environmental scan. Department members had an opportunity to iteratively shape the evolution of the strategic plan through a three-part engagement process.

Phase I – Understanding the Current Landscape

In the fall of 2023, an environmental scan of the strategic plans of Canadian publicly funded children’s hospitals as well as the strategic plans of the Canadian Pediatric Society and Children’s Healthcare Canada was conducted. Draft goals were developed based on the results of the environmental scan.

Phase II – Internalizing the Findings

A. Engagement Survey

Members and staff of clinical and academic sections in the Department of Pediatrics were surveyed to gather feedback on the proposed goals as well as objectives and activities for how the goals could be achieved. The survey was distributed to the department members and there was a total of 152 respondents, 52 of which completed the entire survey and 100 completed part of the survey.

B. Section Consultations

Consultations with each of the sections of the Department of Pediatrics were held in March and April 2024. Information gathered through an environmental scan conducted in fall 2023 and a staff survey held in early 2024 formed the basis of these consultations. A total of 175 individuals participated in the consultations, including four who provided input via email.

C. Strategic Planning Retreat

Building on the survey and consultation findings, the Department of Pediatrics hosted a strategic planning retreat on May 10, 2024 (n = 45 members participated) to deepen the dialogue. The objectives of the session were to:



- Build consensus on the vision, mission, values, and goals for the department for the next five years
- Identify potential objectives and activities for achieving the goals and mission
- Determine mitigation strategies for the impact of external factors beyond the control of the Department

Part III – Charting the Way Forward

Members of the leadership team reviewed the refined vision, mission, values, goals and objectives on June 11, 2024, and a final revised version of the plan was presented back to the Department membership for review between June 16-24, 2024.



Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

Thriving together

Mission

To optimize child and youth well-being through inclusive care, discovery, and collaboration; foster strong family and community connections; and support a positive and fulfilling work environment for our teams.

Values

- **Integrity** – honest, transparent and ethical approaches
- **Compassion** – a virtuous response that seeks to address the needs of a person through relational understanding and action
- **Curiosity** – a strong desire to know or learn something
- **Humanity** – seeing the potential value and goodness of humans, emphasize common needs, and seek rational ways of solving problems
- **Gratitude** – being thankful; readiness to show appreciation and return kindness



Goals & Objectives

Table 1: Clinical care goals and objectives

Themes	Goals	Objectives
Care quality and access	1 To prioritize the delivery of safe, high-quality care through effective communication and commitment to improving our services to achieve better patient outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with key frontline staff as part of the Departmental decision-making process • Increase access to, and utilization of, high-quality language interpretation and translation services • Utilize data, including Connect Care, to inform quality improvement initiatives • Identify opportunities to embed research into clinical care • Explore how artificial intelligence can support/enhance patient care
Patient care services	2 To deliver comprehensive Pediatric care by facilitating the accessibility of subspecialty care, while also strengthening cooperation between acute and community Pediatric services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support team-based care that includes allied health professionals in both the acute and community settings • Develop care pathways and clear referral criteria for subspecialty clinics • Advocate for solutions that strengthen the accessibility of care documentation to providers in both acute care and community settings • Decrease physician’s administrative burden with Connect Care
	3 To strengthen collaboration between sections, ensuring smooth coordination of care and promoting holistic well-being for patients and health care teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current strengths and opportunities regarding collaboration between sections • Facilitate opportunities for in person handovers and multiservice rounds. • Continue monthly Section Chief meetings

<p>Department member wellness</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>To create safe, supportive, and healthy work environments that prioritize wellness and mental health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an inventory of resources and technology that Department members need to complete their work and develop a plan to address gaps • Foster opportunities for inter- and intra-departmental communication, collaboration, and relationship building • Provide resources and support for fulfilling and sustainable work at all career stages (early, mid-career, late-career and retirement) • Increase awareness of available mental health and wellness services. • Increase opportunities for formal (e.g. internal and external awards) and informal recognition of Department members
<p>Equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>To promote equitable access to high-quality Pediatric care for Indigenous communities and other equity deserving populations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategy to promote Pediatrics as a career choice to physicians-in-training who are Indigenous or are part of other equity deserving groups • Partner with AHS and U of C teams to build relationships with leaders of equity deserving communities • Examine barriers to care and co-design solutions with members of the target population(s)

Table 2: Research goals and objectives

Themes	Goals	Objectives
Patient-oriented research	6 To drive discovery and innovation through foundational and transformative research with meaningful impact on the health and well-being of children, youth and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace patient-focused research methodologies and implementation science principles as part of everyday practice • Identify opportunities for Departmental shared core research infrastructure, including research assistants, support for grant writing, mentors, and funding • Foster the relationship with ACHRI and the other research institutes to enable resource sharing, networking and access to research expertise • Create easily accessible resources and guidance for clinicians who are interested in engaging in research • Support outreach strategies to engage patients and families in research • Increase recognition of the broad array of Departmental research and scholarly work through awards, communications, and events
Quality Improvement and Patient safety	7 To enhance effectiveness and patient safety through a robust continuous quality improvement approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support department member CME and professional development in quality improvement and patient safety • Identify and advocate for access to data required for quality improvement and patient safety initiatives • Foster cross-departmental opportunities for collaboration and mentorship specific to quality improvement and patient safety

Table 3: Education goals and objectives

Themes	Goals	Objectives
Medical learner education	8 To provide comprehensive and supportive training experiences for learners, preceptors and their patients at every stage of the medical education journey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with UME and PGME to ensure that clear expectations are conveyed to learners, preceptors and patients and families with respect to medical education across the Department • Support preceptors, program directors and learners in the implementation of institutional/national education initiatives. • Increase recognition and awareness of educational service and scholarship occurring across the Department
Clinician continuing medical education	9 To provide opportunities for lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate existing continuing medical education initiatives, identify opportunities for improvement and develop a plan to build on successes and address gaps • Facilitate faculty development opportunities that enhance self-efficacy, wellness and fulfilment • Identify opportunities to leverage existing and new technologies in medical education and faculty development. • Foster leadership training and cultivate opportunities across the Department • Cultivate networking, cross-department collaboration and mentorship opportunities

Summary

The 2024-2029 Department of Pediatrics Strategic Plan was developed using a robust strategy to engage and cultivate agency among members. The goals and objectives described above reflect members' perspective and ideas for how the Department can be successful over the next five years. It is imperative that members remain actively involved in the implementation of the plan – without this, the goals and objectives cannot be achieved. Given the shifting landscape of healthcare delivery in Alberta and the changing demographics and healthcare needs of people in the province, this document will play an important role in guiding the future work of the Department of Pediatrics.