

# About

## Strategic Clinical Networks™ (SCNs™)

SCNs™ empower and support physicians, leaders and care providers from Alberta Health Services and the community to work with patients and their families to develop and implement health improvement strategies across Alberta.

**The Kidney Health SCN™ was launched in January 2016. This Transformational Roadmap sets out the Kidney Health SCN™'s course for the next three years.**

## Why a Kidney Health SCN™?

- Chronic kidney disease affects approximately 450,000 Albertans, or more than 1 in 10 adults, and the number continues to grow.
- Kidney disease usually starts without symptoms and develops over a number of years. It is often not detected until kidney function is quite low.
- Kidney disease is an independent risk factor for heart attacks, stroke and other blood vessel (or vascular) diseases.
- If diagnosed early and proven treatment is implemented, many patients can preserve kidney function and their risk for vascular disease is diminished.
- When patients have end-stage kidney disease and they develop symptoms of kidney failure, they require treatment with:
  - kidney transplantation
  - dialysis
    - peritoneal dialysis at home
    - hemodialysis at home
    - hemodialysis in a health centre
  - non-dialysis supportive care (or conservative kidney management)
    - medications to manage symptoms and delay progression of disease

# Kidney Health SCN™

## Transformational Roadmap Summary

2016-2019

### Our Vision:

Optimal kidney health for all Albertans

### Our Mission:

The Kidney Health Strategic Clinical Network™ partners with Albertans to achieve excellence in sustainable quality kidney care and outcomes. Through innovation and use of best evidence, we will optimize prevention, early identification and appropriate management across all ages and stages of kidney health.

Patients with chronic kidney disease cost the Alberta health care system close to \$5 billion each year

# The Issues

## Prevention and early stage kidney disease

- There are gaps and variability in care of people with early stages of chronic kidney disease across the province. Only 55-60% of people who are at very high risk of progression to end-stage kidney disease use the medications that have been shown to delay disease progression and improve survival. Medications to decrease blood cholesterol levels are only used by 35% of eligible people even though they have been proven to decrease cardiovascular and kidney disease risk.

## End stage kidney disease

- 95% of adults with kidney failure under age 60 begin treatment with dialysis rather than undergoing a pre-emptive transplant, despite the fact that kidney transplantation is considered the optimal therapy for eligible patients as it improves both survival and quality of life. In 2015, Alberta had 60% of the transplant rate of British Columbia – the best performer in Canada.
- Peritoneal and home hemodialysis provide equivalent benefit to patients as compared to in-centre hemodialysis, and often leads to better quality of life. Both peritoneal dialysis and home hemodialysis are substantially less costly compared to in-centre hemodialysis.
- However, four out of every five Albertans currently on dialysis are on in-center hemodialysis.
- Dialysis is not for everyone, yet access to conservative kidney management is not equitable across the province.

# We need to

- Increase rate of kidney transplantation
- Increase uptake of home dialysis therapies
- Improve access to conservative kidney management
- Ensure people at risk for kidney disease or who are in the early stages of kidney disease are identified and on the appropriate therapy

# The Plan

## Kidney Health Strategic Clinical Network

**VISION:** Optimal kidney health for all Albertans

**MISSION:** The Kidney Health Strategic Clinical Network™ partners with Albertans to achieve excellence in sustainable quality kidney care and outcomes. Through innovation and use of best evidence, we will optimize prevention, early identification and appropriate management across all ages and stages of kidney health.



# How was the plan developed?

Building this transformational roadmap was a collaborative effort of a broad network of almost 400 stakeholders with an interest in improving kidney health across Alberta. This included nephrologists, researchers, nurses and other front-line staff, administrators, policy advisors, community members, and most importantly, people with kidney disease and their families.



**Bonnie Corradetti,**

*Patient and Family Advisor, **Kidney Health Strategic Clinical Network™**  
Core Committee*

“As a person with a long history of kidney disease, ten years on various modalities of dialysis and recently a kidney transplant, I am able to share these personal health experiences as a patient advisor and seek to influence and guide strategies in our healthcare system to help create optimal kidney health for all Albertans. As a member of the Core Committee I participate at all meetings as a patient voice giving feedback on policies, strategic goals, patient education materials and research projects. Helping to influence improvements in the lives of patients with kidney disease and working with dedicated professionals is an exciting and rewarding challenge.”