

Your health, your voice.

Did you know there is an **Alberta Health Charter** that outlines how patients and health care providers can work together to improve the quality of the health care you receive?

You are a partner in your health care. The **Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA)** and **Office of the Alberta Health Advocates** are sharing three ways you can be a more active partner so that you feel heard and supported.

1 Be prepared

You know yourself and your health best. Prepare before your appointment so you can communicate clearly with your provider.

When it's time to speak with your health care provider, do your thoughts feel scattered? It happens to many of us.

- **Write down your symptoms, questions, and concerns.** Make notes and plan the conversation ahead of time to help make the most of your visit. If you have multiple concerns, call ahead to ask for extra time or see if you need additional appointments.
- **List all your medications and dosage.** Take along a current list of your prescription and non-prescription medications, including vitamins and herbal remedies.



2 Ask questions

You are a partner in your health care. Talk with your provider to gather information before making decisions.

If you don't understand what your provider is telling you, let them know.

- **Learn about your treatment options.** Make sure you understand the advantages and disadvantages of available treatments.

- **Use lots of open-ended and “if/then” questions.** These are questions that can't be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.” These types of questions will prompt your provider to answer with more detailed information.

Instead of asking like this:

Do I need an MRI?

Will I experience side effects from this medication?

➔ **Try asking like this:**

➔ What tests are required to diagnose the symptoms I have?

➔ If I take this medication and experience a side effect, then what do I do?

3 Get connected

You can find the support you need. Connect with those who can help you navigate your health care.

Ask someone you trust to go with you to your appointment. They can help you ask questions, write down instructions, and remember explanations.

The health system is complex and can be difficult to navigate.

The Office of the Alberta Health Advocates is available to:

- assist you to find your way in the health system and plan a path to your health goal
- listen to your concerns and support you in finding ways to resolve them
- provide education about the Alberta Health Charter

Contact the Office of the Alberta Health Advocates at:
780-422-1812



For more Health Quality Council of Alberta resources visit:
www.HQCA.ca/info

Alberta's Health Charter says

When I interact with the health system, I expect that I will:

- be able to participate fully in my health and health care
- be supported through my care journey and helped to find and access the health services and care that I require
- be informed in ways that I understand so that I may make informed decisions about my health, health care and treatment

See the complete Health Charter by visiting:
www.alberta.ca/alberta-health-charter

