

## Urgent Care, Sylvan Lake and Area, Community Update

On January 16, 2017, Sylvan Lake and area residents received the news we've been waiting to hear - that our government had heard our concerns regarding a serious gap in access to local health services. Not only were we heard, but our proposal for a cost effective enhanced health care facility was accepted, and our government had committed to provide Sylvan Lake and area with a facility that is open 7 days a week with extended operating hours, and offers treatment for non-life threatening injuries, with lab and x-ray on site.

This is the news that the Sylvan Lake and Area Urgent Care Committee has worked for the past 6 years to secure. Our partners consist of the County of Red Deer, the County of Lacombe, the Town of Eckville, Bentley, Sylvan Lake and the 5 Summer Villages around Sylvan Lake. The combined area population that would benefit from enhanced medical services in Sylvan Lake is approximately 25,000 and that does not include the approximate 800,000 visitors that travel to Sylvan Lake during the summer months.

Our committee is made up of 17 members who are local Mayors, councillors, RCMP, doctors, pharmacist, medical professionals, local service club members and community members. We have become a close knit team that is passionate about our cause, gives freely of our time and has become well versed in all things health related.

Our residents, surrounding communities, and visitors will soon have access to timely medical treatments for non-life threatening injuries, and avoid long wait times in local emergency rooms.

When lobbying the government, our Committee considered our current health service gaps, as well as the most time and cost efficient strategy to fill those gaps as soon and as effectively as possible. The improved health care service will be located in Sylvan Lake in the David Thompson Health Unit where laboratory and x-ray are currently accessed. \$2 million has been set aside for the renovations to the health unit. This new service should be up and running early 2018.

The Urgent Care Committee has raised \$200,000.00 from events, donations and coin box collections. All monies are held in trust and will be turned over to Alberta Health, Central Zone for the purchase of medical equipment for the new care centre.

We will continue our work with our partners at Alberta Health Services, Central Zone, local doctors, Wolf Creek Primary Care Network, the David Thompson Health Advisory Committee, and our community partners to set up a care clinic that will make a difference in the overall health of our citizens. Now we will be able to provide the right care at the right place in the most appropriate manner for the people and visitors of this area.

We want to thank Sylvan Lakers for your support over the last few years; we did this together. A special thank you to Sylvan Lake Tim Horton's for supporting us in your Smile Cookie Campaign, the Spirit of Sylvan Yuletide Festival for supporting us during your annual festival, and everyone who helped with fundraising and organizing of our annual golf tournament.

Susan Samson, Chair  
Urgent Care Committee

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