

# Office of the Alberta Health Advocates

# Who Are We?

The Office of the Alberta Health Advocates includes two advocates:

## Health Advocate

- Established April 1, 2014
- Independent of Health Authority
- Arm's Length from Ministry
- Reports to the Minister of Health
- Submits Annual Report



**Janice Harrington**

**Appointed by Lieutenant  
Governor**

## Mental Health Patient Advocate

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- Independent of Health Authority
- Arm's Length from Ministry
- Reports to the Minister of Health
- Submits Annual Report

# Vision, Mission, Values

## Vision

The Office of the Alberta Health Advocates envisions a coordinated, integrated and responsive health system that supports Albertans as full participants in their care and fairly addresses their concerns about health services.

## Mission

The Office of the Alberta Health Advocates assists Albertans in managing concerns about services impacting their health and becoming effective advocates. The Office represents the voices of Albertans in the ongoing development of the health system.

## Values

Respect

Integrity

Compassion

Engagement

Excellence

# The Health Advocate

# What Do We Do?

- Education and Awareness of Alberta's Health Charter
- Refer to the appropriate concern resolution mechanisms
- Navigate existing health related problems
- Review complaints
- Report to the Minister of Health

• Establishes Health Advocates and Charter  
• Sets out roles and responsibilities of regional health authorities, provincial health boards, professional colleges, and the Minister of Health related to the AHA and charter  
• Sets out process for public input into regulations under the AHA

Health  
Act

• Guides the actions of regional health authorities, provincial health boards, operators, health providers, professional colleges, Albertans, and other persons specified in the regulations  
• Sets out the expectations when Albertans interact with the healthcare system

Health  
Charter



# Alberta Health Charter

Familiarize yourself with the *Health Charter* to know what to expect and understand the possible questions one may be asked.

## ALBERTA'S HEALTH CHARTER



March 2014

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

- Have my health status, social and economic circumstances, and personal beliefs and values acknowledged
- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Have access to team-based primary care services
- Have the confidentiality and privacy of my health information respected
- Be informed in ways that I understand so that I may make informed decisions about my health, health care and treatment
- 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
- Receive information on the health system and education about healthy living and wellness
- Have timely and reasonable access to safe, high quality health services and care
- Have timely and reasonable access to my personal health information
- Have the opportunity to raise concerns and receive a timely response to my concerns, without fear of retribution or an impact on my health services and care

### **Taking my circumstances into account and to the best of my abilities, when I interact with the health system, I understand that I will be asked to:**

- Respect the rights of other patients and health providers
- Ask questions and work with providers to understand the information I am being provided
- Demonstrate that I, or my guardian and/or caregivers, understand the care plan we have developed together and that steps are being taken to follow the plan
- Treat health services as a valuable public resource
- Learn how to better access health services
- Make healthy choices in my life

### **As I work to be a healthy citizen within Alberta, I expect that:**

- When economic, fiscal and social policies are being developed by the Alberta government, the impact of those policies on public health, wellness and prevention will be considered and steps taken to ensure that public policy is healthy policy

For more information contact the Alberta Health Advocate

P: 780-422-1812 Toll Free: 310-0000

[www.AlbertaHealthAdvocates.ca](http://www.AlbertaHealthAdvocates.ca)



# Laws in Alberta impacting Health

- Mental Health Act
- Health Act
- Health Information Act
- Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship
- Protection for Persons in Care
- Ombudsman Act
- Personal Directives Act
- Patient Advocate Regulation
- Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act

# How can we help you?

- Answer questions and clarify details of .....
  - Processes, forms, criteria, rights, etc.
  - Clarify boundaries around relevant pieces of legislation
- Case consultation
  - Help to analyze a situation to identify options and formulate a plan
  - Assist and advocate identifying supports and services, reducing barriers
  - Raise systemic issues to the Advocate



# The Mental Health Patient Advocate

# What Does the Mental Health Patient Advocate Do?

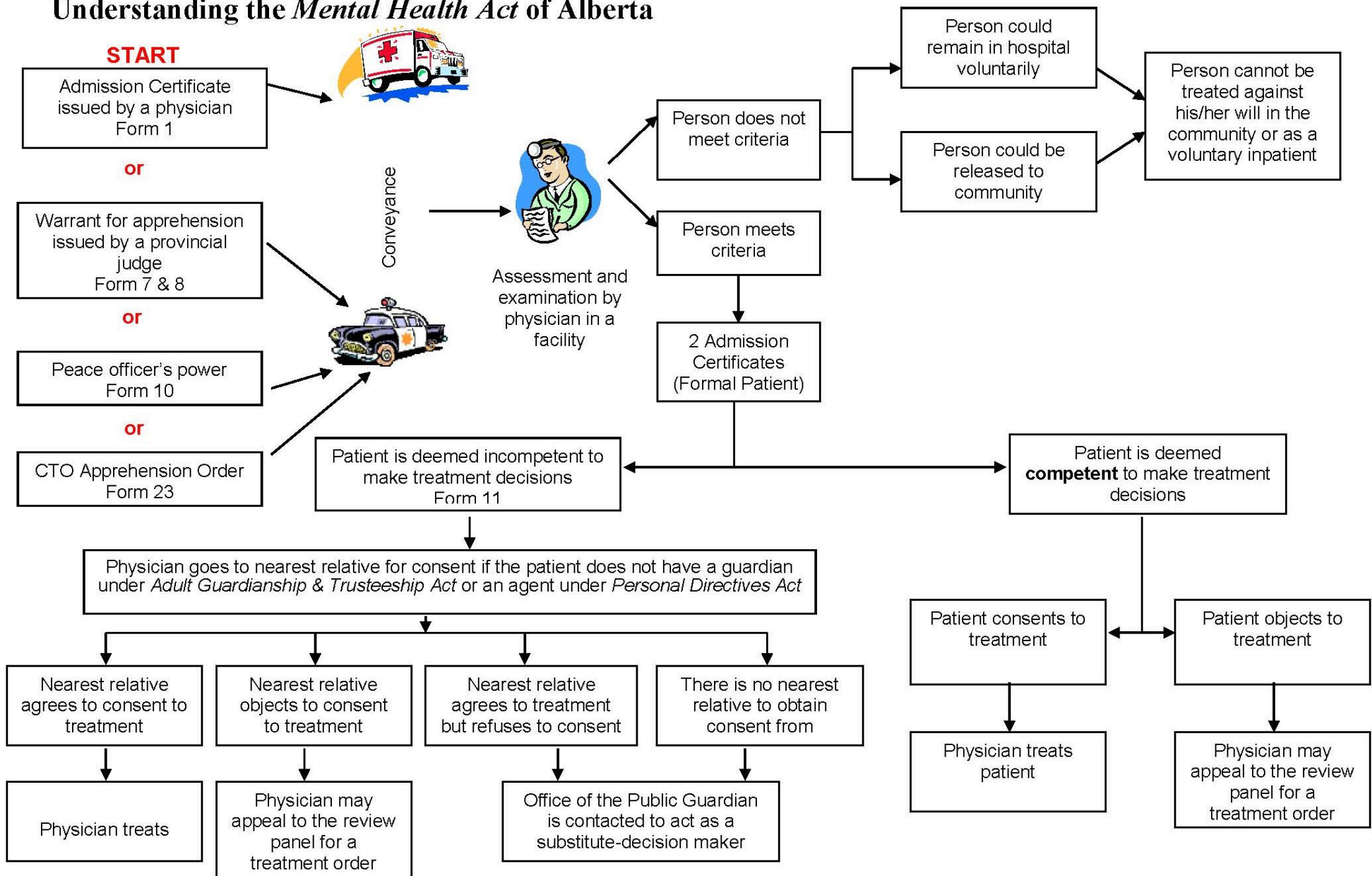
- Promote and Protect Legislated Rights
- Investigate with or without a complaint
- Educate
- Advocate
- Make recommendations regarding:
  - Patient care
  - Patient treatment
  - Patient rights
- Report to the Minister of Health

Legislated  
under the  
Mental  
Health Act

Assist  
persons who  
are under 1-  
2 admission  
certificates

Assist all  
formal  
patients

# Understanding the *Mental Health Act* of Alberta



# Designated Mental Health Facilities

- Alberta Hospital Edmonton
- Centennial Centre for Mental Health and Brain Injury
- Peter Lougheed Centre
- Foothills Medical Centre
- Misericordia Community Hospital
- Royal Alexandra Hospital
- University of Alberta Hospital
- Grey Nuns Community Hospital
- Chinook Regional Hospital
- Medicine Hat Regional Hospital
- Northern Lights Regional Health Centre
- Queen Elizabeth II Hospital
- Rockyview General Hospital
- Claresholm Centre for Mental Health and Addictions
- Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre
- Southern Alberta Forensic Psychiatry Centre
- St. Therese, St. Paul Healthcare Centre
- Villa Caritas



# Patient Rights Under the Mental Health Act

- Notification/copy of certificates and Community Treatment Orders
- Consent for Treatment
- Appeal to Review Panel
- Appeal to the Court of Queen's bench
- Send and Receive Written Communication
- Receive Visitors
- Protection and Confidentiality of Health Information
- Access Lawyer
- Access Mental Health Patient Advocate



# Collaborative Approach

## The Role of Advocacy in Mental Health:

- Promotes hope, respect and support
- Interest in the person and their history
- Inclusion in decision making – empowerment
- Faster recovery, better discharge plans, less re-admissions
- Stigma
- Protection of patient and family's legislated rights

**Thank You!**  
**albertahealthadvocates.ca**

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