



Title: Enhancing care of patients with digestive diseases through partnerships with primary care networks.

Digestive Health Strategic Clinical Network (SCN)

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The Digestive Health SCN will employ interventions that improve capacity of care within the patient's 'medical home' that is housed within Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in Alberta. PCNs are comprised of geographically demarcated groups of family physicians, supported by a myriad of allied health professionals (nutrition services, behavior health, pharmacy, nursing), aimed to better coordinate and support quality, patient-centered primary care. The Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology in the Calgary Zone has developed an innovative and unique relationship with the PCNs. The first collaborative initiative between gastroenterology and PCNs was titled "The Enhanced Primary Care Pathway: Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)". Using this proven and operational model for IBS, the SCN in Digestive Health will expand this program to facilitate primary care management of digestive diseases across Alberta. Other pathways that have been developed but are in need of formal testing and evaluation are dyspepsia, GERD, Treatment of Helicobacter pylori infection and constipation.

Students applying for the Alberta SPOR Graduate Studentship in Patient-Oriented Research will have the opportunity to collaborate with the Digestive Health Strategic Clinic Network to develop research projects focused on the development, implementation and evaluation of clinical care pathways for digestive diseases. Students will work with a multidisciplinary team of clinicians, epidemiologists, and AHS' staff to develop a patient-oriented research project. Specifically, the student will develop research that engages patients as partners, focusses on patient-identified priorities, and aims to improve patient outcomes.

