

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****September 12, 2013****Health Quality Council of Alberta
board chair responds to departure of Dr. John Cowell**

Dr. Tony Fields, chair of the HQCA board of directors, released the following statement today regarding the recent departure of its chief executive officer, Dr. John Cowell:

"We are very sorry to see Dr. Cowell leaving the HQCA, but we are confident that his extensive background with Alberta's healthcare system and his demonstrated commitment to improving healthcare for all Albertans will be a tremendous asset to his role at AHS. Dr. Cowell's contributions to the HQCA have been significant.

Dr. Cowell leaves behind a strong organization that will work seamlessly through this transition. It is the role of the HQCA board of directors to appoint a new chief executive officer. We will start a rigorous recruitment process immediately to find a suitable candidate for the position.

In the meantime, it is business as usual for the HQCA. We will continue to pursue the many quality and safety initiatives underway. For example:

- quality assurance reviews of the provision of home care services in Alberta and nutritional supplement protocols at AHS
- a review of the AHS policy - continuing care waitlist: first available appropriate living option
- education programs such as the certificate course in patient safety and quality management
- primary care measurement
- surveys and analysis of patients' satisfaction and experiences with the healthcare system overall, and in specific areas such as continuing care and emergency departments

The HQCA remains a stable and reliable organization. Legislated by the *Health Quality Council of Alberta Act*, it operates independently of Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services providing an objective source for information about quality and safety in Alberta's healthcare system."

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