



Covenant Health

Accredited with Commendation

October 2019 to 2023

Covenant Health has gone beyond the requirements of the Qmentum accreditation program and is commended for its commitment to quality improvement. It is accredited until October 2023 provided program requirements continue to be met.

Covenant Health is participating in the Accreditation Canada Qmentum accreditation program. Qmentum helps organizations strengthen their quality improvement efforts by identifying what they are doing well and where improvements are needed.

Organizations that become accredited with Accreditation Canada do so as a mark of pride and as a way to create a strong and sustainable culture of quality and safety.

Accreditation Canada commends **Covenant Health** for its ongoing work to integrate accreditation into its operations to improve the quality and safety of its programs and services.

Covenant Health (2019)

Covenant Health is Canada's largest Catholic health care organization with over 14,000 physicians, employees and volunteers serving in 12 communities across Alberta. A major provider in Alberta's integrated health system, Covenant Health works with Alberta Health Services and community partners to create vibrant communities of health and healing through a broad range of programs and services including acute care, continuing care, assisted living, hospice, rehabilitation and respite care.

Accreditation Canada

We are independent, not-for-profit, and 100 percent Canadian. For more than 55 years, we have set national standards and shared leading practices from around the globe so we can continue to raise the bar for health quality.

As the leader in Canadian health care accreditation, we accredit more than 1,100 health care and social services organizations in Canada and around the world.

Accreditation Canada is accredited by the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua) www.isqua.org, a tangible demonstration that our programs meet international standards.

Find out more about what we do at www.accreditation.ca.

Demonstrating a commitment to quality and safety

Accreditation is an ongoing process of evaluating and recognizing a program or service as meeting established standards. It is a powerful tool for quality improvement. As a roadmap to quality, Accreditation Canada's Qmentum accreditation program provides evidence-informed standards, tools, resources, and guidance to health care and social services organizations on their journey to excellence.

As part of the program, most organizations conduct an extensive self-assessment to determine the extent to which they are meeting the Accreditation Canada standards and make changes to areas that need improvement. Every four years, Accreditation Canada surveyors, who are health care professionals from accredited organizations, visit the organization and conduct an on-site survey. After the survey, an accreditation decision is issued and the ongoing cycle of assessment and improvement continues.

This Executive Summary highlights some of the key achievements, strengths, and opportunities for improvement that were identified during the on-site survey at the organization. Detailed results are found in the organization's Accreditation Report.

On-site survey dates

October 6, 2019 to October 11, 2019

Locations surveyed

- **10** locations were assessed by the surveyor team during the on-site survey. Locations and sites visited were identified by considering risk factors such as the complexity of the organization, the scope of services at various sites, high or low volume sites, patient flow, geographical location, issues or concerns that may have arisen during the accreditation cycle, and results from previous on-site surveys. As a rule, sites that were not surveyed during one accreditation cycle become priorities for survey in the next.
- All sites and services are deemed **Accredited with Commendation** as of the date of this report.

See **Appendix A** for a list of the locations that were surveyed.

Standards used in the assessment

- **12 sets of standards** were used in the assessment.

Summary of surveyor team observations

These surveyor observations appear in both the Executive Summary and the Accreditation Report.

During the on-site survey, the surveyor team undertook a number of activities to determine the extent to which the organization met the accreditation program requirements. They observed the care that was provided; talked to staff, clients, families and others; reviewed documents and files; and recorded the results.

This process, known as a tracer, helped the surveyors follow a client's path through the organization. It gives them a clear picture of how service is delivered at any given point in the process.

The following is a summary of the surveyor team's overall observations.

Covenant Health is congratulated on participating in the Accreditation Canada process. Accreditation is one of the most effective ways for organizations to regularly and consistently examine and improve the quality of their services. The standards provide a tool for organizations to embed accreditation and quality improvement activities into their daily operations with a focus on including the client and family as true partners in service delivery.

The Covenant Health Board proudly serves in the spirit of the legacy of the founding Sisters, deeply rooted in caring for and serving all people, particularly the most vulnerable. The Board of Governors are committed, skilled individuals who provide oversight to leverage the strength of the combined Covenant Family and serve Covenant Health with great passion and pride. The three commitments for stewardship accountabilities include: Mission Fidelity, Excellence in Quality and Resource Stewardship. The Board members understand that based on direction from the Bishop "if Covenant Health is not doing better than the competition, they should not be doing it." The board receives education, data and information to monitor and guide Covenant Health in the present, while leading it into the future. In addition to the board, there are community boards and foundation advisory that support the work of Covenant Health. The many communities that are served by Covenant Health, and patients and families are sincerely grateful.

Covenant Health works with Alberta Health Services (AHS) as part of the integrated health system. Covenant Health is accountable to and receives funding from AHS. Community partners speak highly of Covenant Health, indicating that they are collaborative and willing to find a way forward. Partners suggest increasing the awareness of the Covenant brand, while maintaining the appreciation for the unique communities that comprise Covenant Health across the province. Community partners describe Covenant Health as great people with great hearts, and have a deep appreciation for the stability of the leadership and the Mission of the organization.

There is tremendous dedication from the leadership of Covenant Health. The organization is congratulated on being recognized for four consecutive years (2016-2019) as one of the "World's Most

Ethical Companies” by the Ethisphere Institute. Covenant Health has also been recognized as one of Alberta’s Top Employers, and a Most Admired Corporate Culture. The leadership has been innovative with the creation of an “app” called Leaders Link, where information and education is shared in “real time” across Covenant Health.

The leadership is challenged with fiscal restraint and an aging infrastructure. Many sites have outgrown their capacity, so creative approaches are being sought to ensure growth occurs where the needs and gaps are identified.

Covenant Health has been described as warm and sharing, with supportive leadership, and many staff dedicating their entire careers to the organization. The challenge in the non-contract salary freeze over the past few years has led some staff to leave Covenant Health, however often returning. Covenant Health has seen a slight improvement in engagement scores with employees and physicians and is working on actions and strategies to be responsive to the feedback. There are staffing recruitment challenges in some of the rural sites and efforts to increase employee feedback through the performance development process are encouraged. With the phase one roll out of Connect Care, an electronic health record, staff have been actively learning and meeting to prepare for the go live date. Thoughtful change management is required to support staff during the transition. Staff have access to over 2300 online and instructor led courses internally, and an education fund for external education is available.

Covenant Health provides services from birth to the end of life, and has been described as leading the way in innovations towards a more effective system, especially for those who may be underserved and at risk. Covenant Health has implemented strategies to support initiatives such as the “Angel Cradle”, where a parent can safely surrender their infant without judgement, and other initiatives such as the staff building wood coffins for stillborn babies.

Although some of the sites have an aging and limiting infrastructure, staff do their best to ensure safe care. The interdisciplinary team of dedicated physicians, staff and volunteers are proud to work at Covenant Health, and report having good working relationships and comradery. It is impressive to note that there are almost 3000 students in health disciplines learning at Covenant Health, preparing the next generation of care providers.

The approach to family-centred/people-centred care is demonstrated by staff and physicians. “Learning from those we serve” was described by leaders and clinical staff. Covenant Health has initiated the journey on meaningful engagement in partnering with patients, residents and families. Patients and families appreciate the sensitive, respectful and compassionate care they receive. An example is patient and family led rounds which are commendable. Following the legacy of the Sisters in the tradition of hospitality, Covenant Health helps patients feel at home, at times when they are most vulnerable. Patients report family histories of the deep roots established between Covenant Health facilities and their communities across Alberta.

Overview: Quality dimensions results

Accreditation Canada uses eight dimensions that all play a part in providing safe, high quality health care.

These dimensions are the basis for the standards, and each criteria in the standards is tied to one of the quality dimensions.

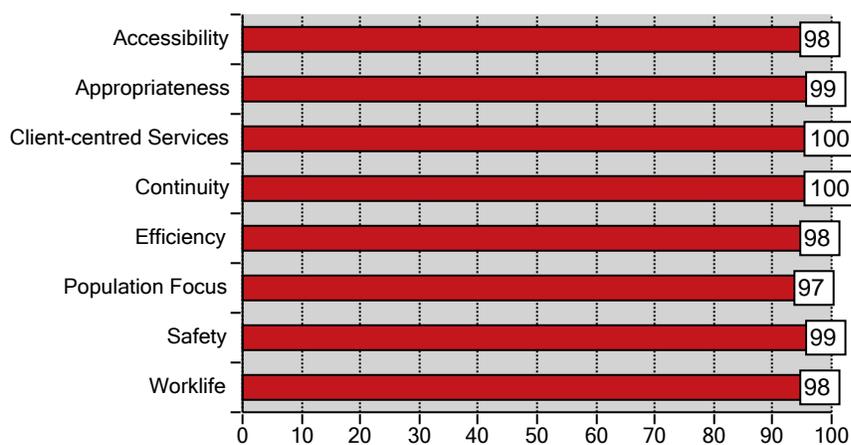
The quality dimensions are:

	Accessibility:	Give me timely and equitable services
	Appropriateness:	Do the right thing to achieve the best results
	Client-centred Services:	Partner with me and my family in our care
	Continuity:	Coordinate my care across the continuum
	Efficiency:	Make the best use of resources
	Population Focus:	Work with my community to anticipate and meet our needs
	Safety:	Keep me safe
	Worklife:	Take care of those who take care of me

Taken together, the dimensions create a picture of what a high quality health care program or service “looks like.” It is easy to access, focused on the client or patient, safe, efficient, effective, coordinated, reflective of community needs, and supportive of wellness and worklife balance.

This chart shows the percentage of criteria that the organization met for each quality dimension.

Quality Dimensions: Percentage of criteria met



Overview: Standards results

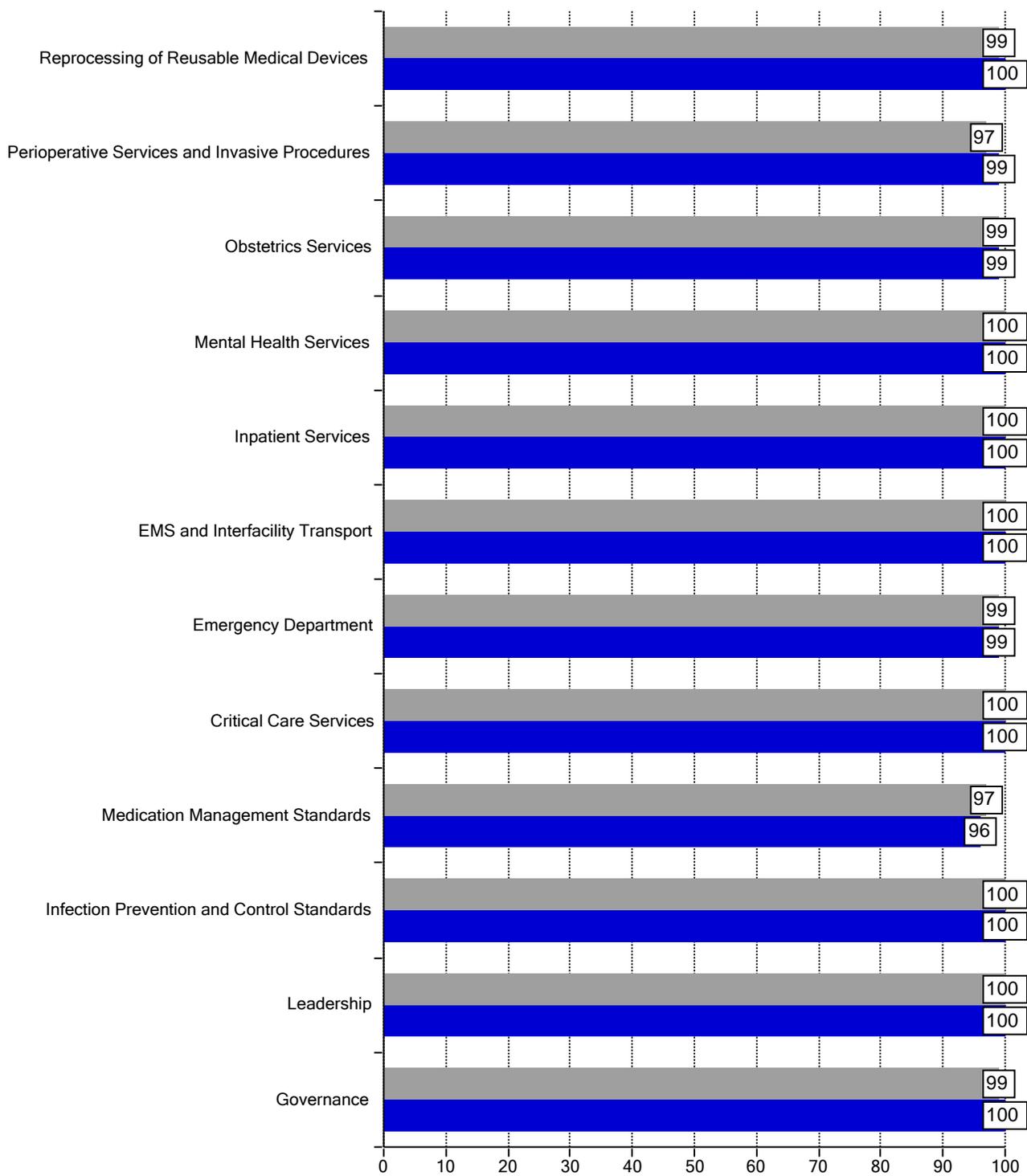
All of the standards make a difference to health care quality and safety. A set of standards includes criteria and guidelines that show what is necessary to provide high quality care and service.

Some criteria—specifically those related to safety, ethics, risk management, or quality improvement—are considered high priority and carry more weight in determining the accreditation decision.

This chart shows the percentage of high priority criteria and the percentage of all criteria that the organization met in each set of standards.

Standards: Percentage of criteria met

■ High priority criteria met
 ■ Total criteria met



Overview: Required Organizational Practices results

Accreditation Canada defines a Required Organizational Practice (ROP) as an essential practice that must be in place for client safety and to minimize risk. ROPs are part of the standards. Each one has detailed tests for compliance that the organization must meet if it is to meet the ROP.

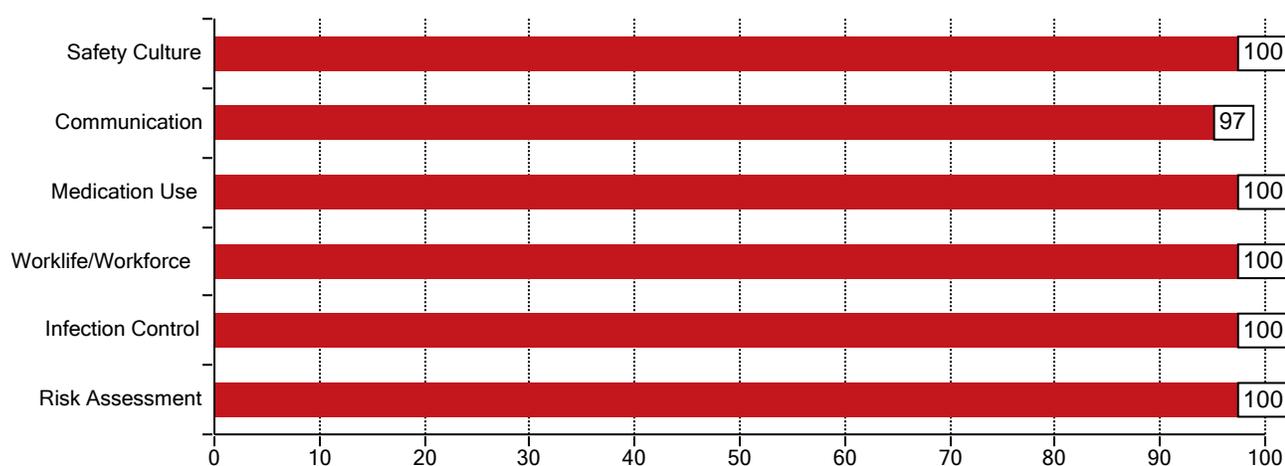
ROPs are always high priority and it is difficult to achieve accreditation without meeting most of the applicable ROPs. To highlight the importance of the ROPs and their role in promoting quality and safety, Accreditation Canada produces the Canadian Health Accreditation Report each year. It analyzes how select ROPs are being met across the country.

ROPs are categorized into six safety areas, each with its own goal:

- **Safety culture:** Create a culture of safety within the organization
- **Communication:** Improve the effectiveness and coordination of communication among care and service providers and with the recipients of care and service across the continuum
- **Medication use:** Ensure the safe use of high-risk medications
- **Worklife/workforce:** Create a worklife and physical environment that supports the safe delivery of care and service
- **Infection control:** Reduce the risk of health care-associated infections and their impact across the continuum of care/service
- **Risk assessment:** Identify safety risks inherent in the client population

See **Appendix B** for a list of the ROPs in each goal area.

ROP Goal Areas: Percentage of tests for compliance met



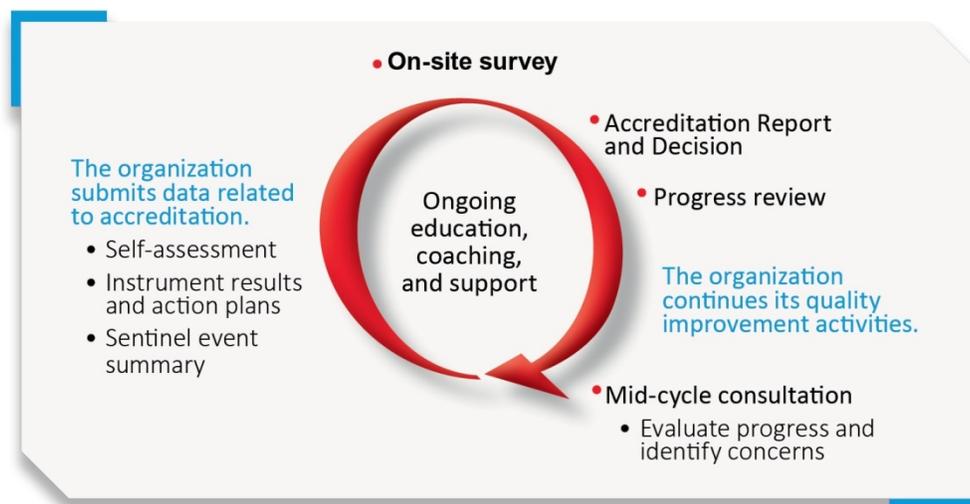
The quality improvement journey

The Qmentum accreditation program is a four-year cycle of assessment and improvement, where organizations work to meet the standards and raise the quality of their services. Qmentum helps them assess all aspects of their operations, from board and leadership, to care and services, to infrastructure.

The program identifies and rewards quality and innovation. The time and resources an organization invests in accreditation pay off in terms of better care, safer clients, and stronger teamwork. Accreditation also helps organizations be more efficient and gives them structured methods to report on their activities and what they are doing to improve quality.

In the end, all Canadians benefit from safer and higher quality health services as a result of the commitment that so many organizations across the country have made to the accreditation process.

Qmentum: A four-year cycle of quality improvement



As **Covenant Health** continues its quality improvement journey, it will conduct an in-depth review of the accreditation results and findings. Then a new cycle of improvement will begin as it incorporates any outstanding issues into its overall quality improvement plan, further strengthening its efforts to build a robust and widespread culture of quality and safety within its walls.

Appendix A: Locations surveyed

- 1 Banff Mineral Springs
- 2 Bonnyville Healthcare Centre
- 3 Covenant Health Corporate Services
- 4 Grey Nuns Community Hospital
- 5 Killam Health Centre
- 6 Misericordia Community Hospital
- 7 Our Lady of The Rosary Hospital
- 8 St. Joseph's General Hospital
- 9 St. Mary's Hospital
- 10 Villa Caritas

Appendix B

Required Organizational Practices

Safety Culture

- Accountability for Quality
 - Patient safety incident disclosure
 - Patient safety incident management
 - Patient safety quarterly reports
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Communication

- Client Identification
 - Information transfer at care transitions
 - Medication reconciliation as a strategic priority
 - Medication reconciliation at care transitions
 - Safe Surgery Checklist
 - The “Do Not Use” list of abbreviations
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Medication Use

- Antimicrobial Stewardship
 - Concentrated Electrolytes
 - Heparin Safety
 - High-Alert Medications
 - Infusion Pumps Training
 - Narcotics Safety
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Worklife/Workforce

- Patient safety plan
 - Patient safety: education and training
 - Preventive Maintenance Program
 - Workplace Violence Prevention
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Infection Control

- Hand-Hygiene Compliance
 - Hand-Hygiene Education and Training
 - Infection Rates
 - Reprocessing
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Risk Assessment

- Falls Prevention Strategy

Required Organizational Practices

- Pressure Ulcer Prevention
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis
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