

October 11, 2024

Wainwright nursing program to welcome new students

Applications are now open for Fall 2025 intake

WAINWRIGHT – Applications have opened for a September 2025 intake of students interested in becoming registered nurses through a local Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) program.

The degree program is a partnership between Alberta Health Services (AHS), University of Calgary (UCalgary) and Wainwright Economic Development. Six students who joined the program when it launched in 2021 are expected to graduate in the spring.

“I’m excited for future students in Wainwright and area who will benefit from remaining with their family and friends in their home communities while pursuing their career goals in healthcare,” says Garth Rowsell, MLA for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

“This Grow Your Own program features innovative partnerships that we believe will yield more bench strength to our healthcare workforce in rural communities, including Wainwright.”

Students will complete 3.25 or 3.5 years of the registered nursing degree in Wainwright, with the program delivered by the Faculty of Nursing at UCalgary, and the classroom space provided by AHS at Wainwright Health Centre. Classes are delivered through a mix of virtual and online learning, as well as clinical and hands-on classes and labs.

“This program has been developed to reduce barriers to learning and increase recruitment to rural communities by training students where they live,” says Carolyn Trumper, AHS Central Zone Executive Director for Professional Practice & Education.

“Our hope and aim is that, equipped with their education, our newest registered nurses will pursue their healthcare careers in Wainwright and surrounding communities.”

“We are proud to provide an exemplary academic and clinical experience for students in their home communities,” adds Heather Bensler, Assistant Dean - Academic Partnerships, UCalgary Faculty of Nursing. “We couldn’t do this without the incredible community partnerships we have. We are grateful for those who have joined us every step of the way and who are key to this program’s success.”

The town and municipal district of Wainwright, as well as members of Wainwright Economic Development, have been key partners of the program.

“The future sustainability of any rural community lies with its young people,” says Wainwright Mayor Bruce Pugh. “We are thankful this program has committed to serve our region, and we will continue to support it to provide opportunities for our younger generation, and for the health and well-being of our community as a whole.”

To ensure its long-term sustainability, the program has adopted a staggered intake in Wainwright to ensure there are enough qualified potential students and nursing positions within the program's geographic area. Following intakes in 2021, 2022 and 2023, the program paused intake in Wainwright in 2024 and launched in Drayton Valley. It is expected the program in Wainwright will open to new students every second year, with intakes planned for the fall of 2025 and 2027.

Applications are open from Oct. 1, 2024, to March 1, 2025. For more information, visit <https://nursing.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/rural> or www.ahs.ca/wainwrightnursing.

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Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Our mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans. Our current focus is on reducing emergency department wait times, improving EMS response times, increasing access to surgeries, and improving patient flow.

- 30 -

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