

Final Report

Mission to London, England and Paris, France
February 20-26, 2005



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Alberta Health and Wellness Minister Iris Evans was invited to London, England to attend the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) 4th Conference on e-commerce. The conference was an opportunity to learn how electronic health systems have improved health delivery and patient outcomes. As Alberta is committed to implementing an electronic health record for all Albertans by January 2008, Minister Evans was exploring the strengths and weaknesses of other systems being tested elsewhere.

While attending the Conference, Minister Evans was able to meet individually with representatives from numerous IT companies, as well as government officials from other countries to discuss new and emerging electronic technology. These meetings will help lay the groundwork for the development of an e-health system to enhance the well-being of all Albertans.

Minister Evans also traveled to Paris, France for meetings with government and health care officials to learn more about the French health care system, ranked as one of the leading countries in health care success.

MISSION OBJECTIVES:

- To gain knowledge and insight into how to best to develop an electronic health record.
- To make appropriate connections with the IT industry.
- To meet with policy makers and health care providers and discuss solutions to health care concerns.

OUTCOMES:

London, England - ASEM Conference

The Conference focused on five themes of e-commerce, including e-health. Minister Evans was able to meet numerous representatives from IT companies who have been involved in developing systems for other countries. She was also able to learn from other governments the challenges and successes they were facing with implementation.

The Minister received advice regarding Alberta's requirements for an e-health strategy and suggestions about the importance of keeping the vision of an electronic health record patient focused. As delivery and access change, technology needs to be able to adapt. These contacts made may assist in Alberta's development and implementation of an electronic health record by January 2008.

Speakers and presentations from the conference are available at www.asemec-london.org.

OUTCOMES:

Paris, France

The Minister met with many health officials and stakeholders. She established numerous contacts for potential future partnerships and will consider the implementation of numerous initiatives to increase health efficiency.

Minister Evans met with Mr. Gerald de Pouvourville, President of the Health Economist Association and Dominique Polton-Director of the French Institute for Research and Information on Health

Economics. Their discussions revolved around the role of the public and private sector in France and the cost benefit analysis to each. Alberta will review the studies related to the French system to see how they may or may not be relevant to the Alberta system

She also met with Michel Ballereau, Deputy Director of the Office of the French Minister of Health. They spoke about government priorities in health care and progress that had occurred in the following areas: cancer, nutrition, environment, workplace health and mental health. As well, the Health Benefits Plan France is shifting towards a more public health and wellness focus and is looking to Canada for inspiration. Minister Evans was able to establish contacts for potential future learning partnerships/exchanges to explore the statistical evidence related to wait times.