

December 18, 2023

To Erick Ambtman, Chair, Edmonton Police Commission
Dale McFee, Chief of Police, Edmonton Police Service

Cc His Worship Amarjeet Sohi, Mayor of Edmonton

Councillor Erin Rutherford, Ward Anirniq
Councillor Aaron Paquette, Ward Dene
Councillor Jennifer Rice, Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiahtsi
Councillor Keren Tang, Ward Karhiio
Councillor Ashley Salvador, Ward Métis
Councillor Andrew Knack, Ward Nakota Isga
Councillor Anne Stevenson, Ward O-day'min
Councillor Michael Janz, Ward Papastew
Councillor Tim Cartmell, Ward Pihêsiwin
Councillor Sarah Hamilton, Ward Sipiwiyiniwak
Councillor Jo-Anne Wright, Ward Sspomitapi
Councillor Karen Principe, Ward Tastawiyiniwak
Lyle Oberg, Chair, Alberta Health Services Board
Athana Mentzelopoulos, CEO, Alberta Health Services
The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of the Province of Alberta
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
The Honourable Mike Ellis, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services
The Honourable Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Health
The Honourable Rachel Notley, Leader of the Opposition
The Honourable Janis Irwin, Housing Critic

Dear Community Leaders,

As healthcare providers, we were shocked by the December 15th news from the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) outlining a plan to decamp 134 dwellings in central Edmonton, just one week before Christmas. This is a heartlessly timed and needlessly harmful and traumatizing plan. We expect that the EPS are aware of reduced capacity for community organizations to absorb this shock during the holiday season, however, this action is misguided regardless of the time of year. There is no clear evidence of benefit of such decampments, and robust evidence of significant risk. This plan will cause harm to unhoused Edmontonians directly impacted by decampment, but significant harm will also come to people indirectly impacted, in ways that the EPS has not considered.

We feel compelled to remind the EPS of the multiple health harms that can be expected as a result of this plan. Available evidence tells us that the following outcomes can be expected as a result of this planned action:

- Increase in preventable cold related injuries such as severe frostbite, resulting in the need for limb amputation and prolonged hospital admission with lifelong disability

- Increase in fatal drug poisoning events, owing to isolation and disruption of existing supports
- Spread of sexually transmitted and blood borne infections, owing to the need to engage in higher risk behaviour (e.g. survival sex in exchange for a place to stay)
- Spread of other infectious diseases, such as influenza and Shigella, owing to displacement from adjacent public washrooms
- Retraumatization of people already experiencing complex trauma and mental health concerns
- Disruption of established communities of support that exist within encampments
- While many of these harms will impact the broader Edmonton population, we know that some people, including the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, youth, seniors, and pregnant people, will be disproportionately harmed
- Indigenous people are over-represented in encampments; this is not a choice, but a direct result of a long and violent colonial past. Police action like this proposed decampment is further colonial trauma and does damage to any attempts at true reconciliation.

Moreover, we are currently trying to provide care in an already overwhelmed acute care system, and we anticipate that involuntary displacement of this magnitude will lead to the following:

- Loss of contact with existing community-based supports (e.g. wound care, medications, chronic disease care)
- Barriers to accessing and continuing mental health and substance use care, including disrupted treatment with medications like methadone or buprenorphine/naloxone
- Increase in preventable hospitalizations and ICU admissions at a time when hospitals and ICUs are already struggling above 100% capacity, disrupting and compromising medical care for ALL Edmontonians and Northern Albertans
- Delays in EMS response times for ALL Edmontonians
- Increase in emergency department wait times for ALL Edmontonians
- Increase in the moral distress and burnout frontline workers are already feeling in an overwhelmed health system

Some of the solutions advanced to help people being involuntarily displaced include accessing temporary shelters, attending drug treatment, or becoming involuntarily hospitalized. None of these are meaningful or long term solutions to the lack of accessible and appropriate housing needed to reduce encampments. Current shelter spaces are not accessed by many unhoused people for complex reasons, including health and safety concerns. Moreover, none of the proposed measures have the capacity to absorb the problem created by this planned displacement. Decampment will not disperse houseless community members as intended; but it will increase their vulnerability to a multitude of potential harms.

We implore the Edmonton Police Service to consider the downstream health and health system repercussions of decampment, and instead advocate for meaningful socioeconomic support from the provincial government for people who are simply trying to survive in a housing crisis.

This is a moment where our community needs increased support, collaboration, and cooperation to bolster available services to ensure we are ALL equipped to survive the winter.

We look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Cheryl Mack	MD MA FRCPC	Adjunct, John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre, Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Alberta Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine, University of Alberta Department of Pediatrics Resident Doctor, University of Alberta Department of Medicine, Division of Neurology
Kaylynn Purdy	MD MS	
Kinnon Ross	RN, BScN	
Ginetta Salvalaggio	MD MSc CCFP(AM)	Professor, University of Alberta Department of Family Medicine
Marliss Taylor	RN, BScN	Director, Streetworks
Kate Colizza	MD FRCPC ISAM DRCPC (AM)	General Internal Medicine and Addiction Medicine Specialist Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Calgary
Patty Wilson	F-NP	
Emma Osterling	BScN	Registered Nurse
Andrea Dieterman	RN, BScN	Registered Nurse - Home Living
Jenna Toogood	BScN, RN	RN/ Streetworks
Claire O'Gorman	RN	Registered Nurse
Stacey Schaaf	LPN	Community health Nurse
Srgun Sidhu	MD	Family physician
Michael van Manen	MD, PhD	Physician
Mary Melnyk	BScN	University of Alberta Hospital ED RN
Tannis Spencer	MD, CCFP	
Angela Staines	LPN	Nurse
Heather Morris	PhD RN	Assistant Professor, Faculty of Nursing, University of Alberta
Kelti gore	Social worker	Social worker
Michael Lee	NP	Alberta Nurses Coalition for Harm Reduction
Doug Klein	MD FCFP MSc	Family Physician

Maya Riley	RN	Community nurse
Taylor Wilson	RPN	Nurse
Katherine Senio	RN	Nurse
Brian Knight	MD FRCPC	Physician
William Flexer	MD	Anesthesiologist
James Determan	BScN, RN	Registered Nurse
Sindi Addorisio	Social worker	Researcher
Jodi schommer	RN	Registered nurse
Roshan Abraham	MD	Associate Professor
Darren Markland	MD	Critical care
Linda Lam	MD CCFP	Family Physician
Danielle Chuang		Registered Nurse
Cayla Gilbert	MD CCFP	
Aulora Oleynick	MD, CCFP	Family Physician
Genevieve Eggen	RN	RN
Simon Colgan	MD	Physician
Stephanie Scanlan	LPN	LPN
Brandy Love	MD	Resident physician
Lesley Dacks	RN	Nurse
Ainslie Gilchrist	MD, FRCPC	Physician
Raegan Kijewski	MD, CCFP	Macewan University Health Centre
Tia Smith	BScN	RN
Laetitia Postnikoff	LPN	LPN
Albert Yeung	MD	Resident physician
Lara Fainsinger	MD CCFP	Physician
Harmony McRae	BN, MSc	Registered Nurse
Ronald Shute	MD CCFP	Family Physician
Lara Nixon	MD CCFP	Family physician, Associate Professor, University of Calgary
Filip Wysokinski	MD CCFP	
Jaime gregory	BScN	RN
Janelle Syring	MD	Family doctor
Cari Mackintosh	BScN	RN

Elizabeth Dogherty		
Kyle Sue-Milne	MD	Family physician
Avery Wynick	MD MSc CCFP	Family Physician, Edmonton
Meera Grover	CCFP(AM) ISAM(C)	Physician
Anne Kittler	MD, CCFP	Family physician
Tessa Penrod	MD CCFP FCFP	Family Doctor
Emma Gibbons	Family Physician	CUPs & the Alex Community Health Centre
Jessica Kirkwood	MD CCFP (AM)	Family Physician and Assistant Professor
Kathryn Dong	MD, MSc, FRCPC, DRCPSC	Physician
Freda Lo	MD	Family Medicine, University of Alberta
Sheena Katigema	MD	Family Doctor
Cristina Zaganelli	MN NP	Nurse Practitioner
Raquel Feroe	MD	Retired
Helen Bouman	MD	Addiction Medicine Physician
Elizabeth Mackay	MD, MPH	Physician
Lisa Walkey	MD, FRCPC	Physician (Psychiatrist)
Kirstie Lithgow	MD	Physician
Shannon Ruzycki	MD MPH	Physician
Gabriel Fabreau	MD, MPH, FRCPC	Physician - University of Calgary
Mandy Karr	MN, NP	Nurse practitioner
Akshatha Raghuveer	MD	Physician
Jeyaram Thangeswaran	MD	Resident physician
Karine Meador	MD CCFP(AM)	Physician
Tania Pannu	MD FRCPC	Physician
Prabh Lail	MD	Physician
Jessica Krahn	BScN, MD	Resident Physician
Katherine Smith	MD, FRCP	Emergency Physician
Shannon Grant	MD CCFP	Physician
Shereen Nessim	MD	Family Physician
Eeshita Arora	MD, CCFP	Family Medicine, Addiction Medicine
Priya Gupta	MD	Family Physician
Shelby Suazo	LPN	Drug checking program manager

Elizabeth Brindle	BSP	Pharmacist
Jasmine Lo	MD	Family Medicine, University of Calgary Addiction physician/Rapid Access Addiction Medicine
Troy Mitchell	MD, CCFP, ISAM, MSc.	Clinic
Laura Evans	MD	Family Physician
Bonnie Larson	MD	
Todd Peterson	MD	Physician
Jasminder Soin	MD, CCFP	Physician
Kerri Treherne	MD FCFP	Family Physician
Sarah Stein	RN, BScN	Registered Nurse
Melissa Crowshoe	LPN	Licensed Practical Nurse
Lydia Vezina	MD, CCFP (AM), CCSAM, CISAM	AHS
Gillian Lermeyer	PhD, RN	Assistant Professor
Nicole Veltri	MD	GIM Physician
Spencer Krahn	MD CCFP (AM) ISAM	Addiction Medicine Physician
Adrian Kelly	LPN	Outreach Nurse BoyleStreet
Div Shah	MD	Resident
Victoria Dang-Bondarenco	RN	AHS, Edmonton Zone - Birth Control Centre, RAH Labour and Delivery
Dr. Lynora Saxinger	MD FRCPC	Infectious diseases physician, Professor of Medicine
Alexander Kilborn	Paramedic	Primary Care Paramedic
Megan McCreary	MD	Resident physician
Katie Olsen	RN	Registered Nurse
Anita Baker	BScKin, BScN	RN
Monica Chawla	MD	Physician
Alex Kennedy	MD, CCFP(AM)	Physician
Susan Bornemisza	MD	Addiction Medicine
Ameeta Singh	BMBS (UK), MSc	Physician
Isiah Manaois	RN	StreetWorks Outreach Overdose Response and Prevention
Judy Mill	BN, MN, PhD	Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Nursing, University of Alberta

Zahra Saleh	MD	Family Physician
Andrea Shysh	MD	Resident physician
Jane Slessor	MSW, RSW	Social Worker
Kristin Voss-Dahl	LPN	Licensed Practical Nurse - Streetworks
Vera Caine	PhD	Adjunct Professor, UofA Faculty of Nursing and Professor, UofVic
Zahra Saleh	MD	Family Physician
Krista Piebiak Patterson	MD	Family Physician
Kaylin Kim	BScN, RN	Registered Nurse, Covenant Health
Sheila Wang	MD	Physician
Jessica Buss	MA Counselling Psychology	Clinical Counsellor
Tehseen Ladha	MD, FRCPC	Physician
Monty Ghosh	MD FRCPC MPH	Assistant Professor, university of Calgary and university of Alberta
Katherine Bisby	MD, CCFP	Family Physician
Morgan Penrod	MD, CCFP	Family Physician
Danielle Larivee	BScN	RN
Karolyn Au	MD, FRCSC	Physician
Christine Froelich	MD, FRCPC	Psychiatrist
Alyssa Vegter	RNBN	Street Cats YYC
Mukarram Zaidi	MBBS, CUS, MSc, MD, CPHRM, MCFP. PPP	Department of Family Medicine, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary
Barbara Jones Layng	BScN, RN	
Paveena	Advanced Care paramedic	Advanced Care paramedic
Chantal Moreau	MD FRCPC	Physician
Sudhakar Sivapalan	MD	Physician
Nick Wong	BN	Registered Nurse
Matthew Medrek	Primary Care Paramedic	Primary Care Paramedic/Outreach Paramedic
Kathleen Perreault	MD FRCPC	Psychiatrist
Amy Poelzer	MD	University of Alberta Resident
Cathy Scrimshaw	MD FCFP	Family Physician
Esther Tailfeathers	MD	Community Physician

Morgan Magnuson	PhD(c), MPH, RN	Registered Nurse
John Gudgeon	MD	Family Physician
Christin Hilbert	BMedSc, MD, CCFP (AM) FCFP	Physician / Addiction medicine
Jackie Mann	MD	
Sabrina Mueller	BScN, RN	Registered Nurse
Sarah Janke	BScN	Registered Nurse
Jazmin Marlinga	MD CCFP(AM) ISAM	Family Physician
Cassandra Felske-Durksen	MD CCFP	Family Physician
Jill Galipeau	MD	Physician
Candace Marsters	MSc, PhD, MD	Resident Doctor, University of Alberta, Department of Medicine, Division of Neurology
Ricardo Menjivar Hernandez	BScN	Registered Nurse
Aqila Walji	BSc Psychology	
Roderick MacArthur		Physician
Alana Maennchen	BScN	RN
Dinesh Witharana	MD, CCFP	Family Physician
Evan Hagen	MD	Resident Physician
Elizabeth Erasmus	MD, CCFP, BScN	Physician
Katharina Cardinal	MD, CCFP	Family Physician
Jennifer Zhang	MD	Family physician
Matthew Roberts	MD	Family Physician
Kirby Tunski	RPN	
Dalal Awwad	MD, CCFP	Physician
Sarah Elliott	MD MPH	Physician
Derek Chan	B.Sc. (Pharmacy)	Medical Student
Rebecca Rich	MD MSc FRCSC	Obstetrician & Gynaecologist, Royal Alexandra Hospital
Ellen L Toth	MD	University of Alberta
Jourdana Kozak	Primary Care Paramedic	Primary Care Paramedic (Medavie Health Services/Aeromedical EMS)
Karishma Mehta	MD, CCFP	Doctor
Sandi Culo	MD	Physician

Cherie Nicholson	MD	Family physician
Sara Axford	MD CCFP	Family Physician
Nancy Easton	MD CCFP	Family doctor
Dan Grover	RN	
Kevin Desmarais	MD	Family Physician
Chelsea Mowat	Masters Degree	Nurse Practitioner Family/All Ages
Francesco Mosaico	MD	Physician
Janet Wright	MD FRCP	Physician
Christine Carter	MD	Psychiatrist
Jaspreet Khangura	MD	Physician
Cameron Barr	MD, FCFP, CCFP (AM)	Inner city family physician
Sandy Dong	MD	Emergency Physician
Amber Farrelly	BSW, RSW	Addiction Counsellor
Rukia Swaleh	MD, FRCPC	Physician
Tally Mogus	MD	Physician
Marc sonntag	MD	Family physician

Additional signatures:

Oluseyi Oladele	MD	Family Physician, Addiction Medicine
Kat Chief Moon-Riley	MD	Physician
lisa hornberger	MD	Pediatric Cardiologist
Teresa Dzavik	RN	RN- critical care
Yolanda Knister	BA, MACP	Addiction Counsellor
Lucas Vasas	MD	Resident Physician
Christine Kennedy	MD	Physician
Jennifer Weekes	MD	Physician
Jeremy Quickfall	MD	Physician
Melanie Meardi	MSc	Registered nurse
Hakique Virani	MD FRCPC DABAM	Physician
Prabhpreet Hundal	MD	Resident Physician
Ismat Ali	MD, CCFP	Physician

Sajida Afridi	MBBS, FRCPC, DABPM, DABAM, MPH, MBA	Public Health Preventive Medicine & Addiction Medicine Specialist
Caroline Turner	MD CCFP FCFP	Physician
Krystal van den Heuvel	MD	Physician
Nicole Cardinal	MD	Family Physician
Tamina Gravelle	BScN	Registered Nurse
Tania Luthra	MD	Resident
Darian Perruzza	Resident Physician, MD	OBGYN resident physician
Sheri Klassen	MD	Physician
Janet Butler	Registered Nurse	Registered Nurse
Stephanir	BScN	RN
Harriet Halse	MN NP	Nurse practitioner RAH
Joanna Mundell	MBChB, CCFP	Family Physician
Samina Ali	MD	Emergency Physician
Daina Thomas	MD, FRCP	Doctor
Matthew Montgomery	MD, FRCPSC PEM	Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Stevi Golden-Plotnik	MD	Physician
Bruno Svajger	MD, Ph. D	Resident physician
Eric Meen	MD	Physician
Pawel Niemczewski	MD	Family Physician
Victor Guo	PharmD	Pharmacist
Sydney Berger	Bachelor of social work, registered social worker	Social worker.
Jason Hamm	MD CCFP FCFP	physician
Parker Vandermeer	MD CCFP	
Yasmeen	PharmD	Pharmacist
Donny Padmore	PharmD	Pharmacist
Lisa Evered	MD	Pediatric Emergency physician
Lesley amerkel	MD	General Internal Medicine
James Talbot	M.D. Ph.D.	Adjunct Professor
Nina Lam	MD, FRCPC	Emergency and Addictions Physician
Amaly rahman	MD	
Patricia Araneta	MD	Physician

Cathy Flood	MD FRCSC	Physician
Patrick Black	LPN	Nurse
Curtis Rabuka	MD	physician
Simone Lebeuf	MD FRCPC	Physician
Brooke Some	Primary Care Paramedic	PCP/EMS
Stefan Slomp	MD FRCPC	Physician
Kiran Talwar	MD	Physician
Chris Cardinal	Peer Support	Peer Support Worker
Shauna Regan	MD	Resident Physician
Dr Nicole Mensik	MD	Family Physician
Melanie Lewis	MD FRCPC	Paediatrician
Hajira Dania	MD	Physician
Rahim Janmohamed	MD FRCSC	Physician
Michael Kim	MD	Trauma Surgery/Critical Care Medicine
Stephanie Koper	MD	Emergency Medicine Resident Physician
Kathryn Schultz	BScN, Hon	Registered Nurse
Archana George	Bsc Psychology & Social Work	Addictions Counselor