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This presentation is an overview of the events and processes that lead to the establishment of the Cochrane Community Health Centre in rural Alberta, Canada.

The outcome was a result of strong team collaboration by providers and community over a long period of time – a strong vision that was operationalized because the community participated in the planning and direction for health services – not only just the provision of specific services but also the philosophy of how the services would be provided.

This is the story of a journey of tenacity and opportunity – it is also the story of what can be accomplished by patience and multisectoral teamwork. One of the significant community connections was the establishment of Team Health for Cochrane – a healthy community coalition established to assist in shaping health services for Cochrane and area. The group was brought together representatives from the community, town council, physicians, Emergency Medical Services, Family and Community Support Services, continuing care providers, targeted stakeholder groups and health care providers.

One aspect of the work of Team Health was the development of a conceptual model for health service delivery for Cochrane - using the principles of primary health care. The framework provided a health and wellness focus and a culture of integrated services across the continuum of health care. It was guided by cooperation and teamwork regarding the provision of services, the organization of service delivery and the interaction of all people involved.

A new health centre was opened in 2011 and the success of the community health centre is due in large part to the community involvement in planning and the focus on primary health care and integration of health services delivery.