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| Alberta seeks partners to provide more surgeriesJanuary 31, 2020 [Media inquiries](#media-contacts)The province is looking for independent providers to perform more surgeries and reduce wait times.Alberta Health Services has posted an expression of interest to gauge the interest and ability of independent facilities to provide more publicly funded surgeries. This work is part of the Alberta Surgical Wait-Times Initiative, an ambitious commitment to provide all medically necessary surgeries within clinically appropriate times by funding 80,000 more surgeries in hospitals and independent clinics over the next three years.“We’re eager to hear from independent providers who want to help us improve access. They already perform thousands of surgeries for Albertans, providing safe care that’s convenient for patients and reduces costs. We’re going to make the best use of hospitals and independent providers to give every patient the right care in the right setting, and give Albertans the best access to surgery in Canada.”Tyler Shandro, Minister of Health Last year, 42 of 80 independent providers (also known as non-hospital surgical facilities) in the province provided about 40,000 publicly funded surgeries under contract with AHS at no cost to patients. The province and AHS want to hear from existing independent providers, as well as new ventures, to see if they have capacity to perform more procedures starting as early as fall 2020.“Developed collaboratively, the Alberta Surgical Wait-Times Initiative reflects the input of patient advisors, operational leaders, physicians, surgical teams and quality improvement programs. This initiative is a complex endeavour and requires collaboration across the whole health system. As part of that collaboration, we’re working with non-hospital surgical facilities to increase capacity, which will be a critical part of this initiative.”Dr. Francois Belanger, vice-president, quality and chief medical officer, Alberta Health Services AHS is also exploring if independent clinics could provide surgeries that are currently performed exclusively in hospitals, such as hip and knee replacements. Right now, non-hospital surgical facilities perform low-risk day surgeries. As independent clinics take on a wider range of surgeries, they will free up capacity in hospitals for emergency surgeries and more-complex procedures.Respondents have until Feb. 28 to submit their expressions of interest.Later this spring, a request for proposals will move forward with formal applications from interested respondents.Quick facts* Currently, about 293,000 surgeries are completed in Alberta each year.
* Hospitals provide about 260,000 of these surgeries, or about 85 per cent, with non-hospital surgical facilities performing the remaining 15 per cent.
* All non-hospital surgical facilities must be accredited by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta and follow safety and quality standards.
* All surgeries, whether they are done in public hospitals or under contract in independent clinics, are performed by accredited surgeons and health staff at no cost to patients.

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