

# TOWN & COUNTRY NEWS

COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE

BEAVERLODGE ♦ SEXSMITH ♦ WEMBLEY

ESTABLISHED 1956 - PMA#42597023

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2022 \$1.50 INC. GST



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Paleo-Palooza came to roost at the Philip J. Curie Dinosaur Museum this weekend. Outside, families enjoyed a pack of prehistoric fun, from food and games to family-friendly experiments and crafts. Inside, young explorers took shelter from the Cretaceous displays and tuned in to talks and presentations hosted by palaeontologists.

(Photo by Austin Payeur)

## Staying afloat in physician shortage

# Patience among patients: Beaverlodge doc

AUSTIN PAYEUR  
COMMUNITY REPORTER  
TOWN & COUNTRY NEWS

The emergency department of the Beaverlodge Municipal Hospital was without an on-site physician overnight Monday and Tuesday this week.

It comes on the heels of a similar shortage on Aug. 1 for 12 hours.

Alberta Health Services reports that the emergency department was without a doctor Monday evening until Tuesday at 9 a.m.

A second interruption occurred for another 12 hours, from 8 p.m. on Tuesday till 8-9 a.m. on Wednesday.

"Nursing staff remain on-site in the emergency department providing urgent triage and assessments and referrals for patients to alternate emergency departments in neighbouring communities," said AHS.

Dr. Erin Clow of Beaverlodge Health and Wellness says that everyone is feeling the province-wide doctor shortage.

Rather than take it out on front-end staff, Dr. Clow urges residents to direct their ire to the provincial government.

"I really want patients that are angry and not satisfied not to take it out on my staff or me," she says.

"I would like them to direct it towards the politicians."

In April, Clow launched a walk-in clinic as a strategy to cope with the shortage.

The walk-in clinic is only open for her patients on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

She says she has seen a mixed response from her patients.

"My patients wanted same-day access, and they were having to wait eight weeks," she says.

"So we decided to move to this so I could see my people to prevent them from going to emerg or to other walk-in clinics.

"I feel that it is good, because I can see my patients that day, deal with their issues and that way prevents them from stressing about it or going and waiting lengthy hours in the emerg."

"We'll never get it so that everybody's happy," adds clinic manager Becky Isley.

Isley said the walk-in model will mitigate the problem of "a lot of patients were getting quite upset all the time, especially with the front-end staff."

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