

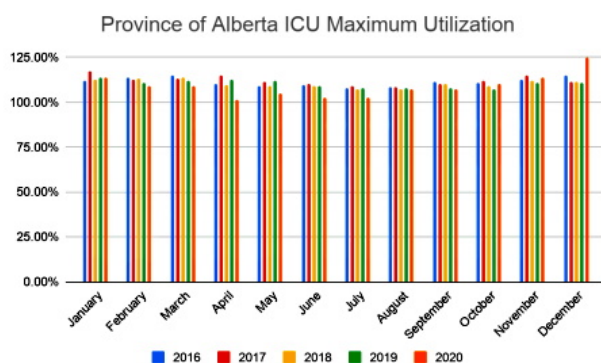
Alberta Government's Own Data Shows Hospital Bed and ICU Utilization at Five-Year Low

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by [Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms](#)

May 5, 2021

CALGARY: The [Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms](#) today released extensive [government data](#) (see links and images throughout) showing that Alberta's hospitals are not overcrowded, are in no immediate danger of being overwhelmed,



- The above chart represents the maximum number of ICU beds required at some point in each month.
 - Dataset does not provide for the number of days the ICU was in this position. It only indicates a minimum of 1 day.
 - For the 5 year period 2016-2020:
 - Lowest maximum utilization was April - July 2020
 - Highest maximum utilization was December 2020

and haven't been in serious danger of turning away patients for more than a year.

Source: Data from Justice Centre FOIP Request to AHS

Alberta Government data contradicts the assertion of Premier Jason Kenney that further restrictions on *Charter* freedoms of

association and peaceful assembly, and the shutdown of personal wellness, bars, restaurants and small businesses, are necessary to protect Alberta's health-care system from being "[overwhelmed](#)." On Tuesday, May 4, 2021 Jason Kenney [announced](#) a fourth wave of extreme lockdown measures including closing hair salons, tattoo shops, personal wellness services, schools, post-secondary institutions and outdoor patios, among other closures.

Evidence uncovered by the Justice Centre through [Freedom of Information](#) (FOI) requests reveal that regular hospital beds as well as Intensive Care Units were in [significantly less demand](#) and [usage during 2020](#) and 2021 than in any year as far back as 2015. In fact, [2020 ICU admissions](#) were at their lowest level since 2015. ([FOI Request](#))

In January 2021, bed utilization was 90.12%, compared to 95.21% bed utilization in January 2020. The same pattern is repeated for February 2021, when Alberta was eleven months into lockdown restrictions. [View the dataset](#).

In March through May 2020, [bed utilization plummeted](#), likely as a result of lockdown cancellations of more than 22,000 scheduled surgeries, which resulted in the death of Gerry Dunham in Medicine Hat. In early 2021, the 93% utilization rate was below the 96% level recorded in the years [2015 through 2019](#).

The government has not provided further ICU utilization numbers for 2021. However, during the last quarter of 2020, ICU utilization province-wide was comparable to, or less than, previous years. There was a slight rise in December 2020, but ICU spaces in Alberta were still well below full capacity.

On 3rd April 2020, the Alberta government had 1,935 acute care beds available for COVID-19 patients. According to a [modelling document](#) the government posted on its website on April 8, 2020, AHS planned to expand the number of acute care

beds dedicated to COVID-19 patients to [2,250 by the end of April 2020](#). The same document also stated: “AHS plans to be able to increase ICU capacity by 1081 beds for COVID-19 patients by the end of April, if necessary.”

“Obviously the Alberta government has failed to follow through on these [commitments made in April of 2020](#). Creating necessary capacity to treat patients would have cost a lot less than the daily damage that lockdowns inflict on Alberta’s society and economy, and the physical, mental, emotional and financial well-being of Albertans,” states lawyer and Justice Centre President John Carpay.

“We are now in our fourteenth month of *Charter* violations and economic destruction. The government has had ample time to increase hospital and ICU capacity, but instead blames Albertans for trying to live their lives normally,” concludes Mr. Carpay.

Row	Col	Value
46	Green Elizabeth Hospital	ICU Capacity: 32
47	Green Elizabeth Hospital	ICU Occupied: 4%
48	Green Elizabeth Hospital	ICU Available: 28
49	Stewar Classical Regional Hospital	ICU Capacity: 361
50	Stewar Classical Regional Hospital	ICU Occupied: 3%
51	Stewar Classical Regional Hospital	ICU Available: 358
52	Medicine Hat Regional Hospital	ICU Capacity: 229
53	Medicine Hat Regional Hospital	ICU Occupied: 2%
54	Medicine Hat Regional Hospital	ICU Available: 227
55	Total beds available	6,379
56	Total beds used	6,112
57		96.6%

Year	Capacity	Occupied	Available
2016	94,800	2,115	92,685
2017	95,100	2,017	93,083
2018	94,520	2,018	92,502
2019	94,520	2,015	92,505
2020	96,300	2,030	94,270
2021	91,315	2,011	89,304

Month	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	95.82%	95.43%	96.84%	94.56%	95.22%	95.12%
February	96.68%	95.28%	96.94%	93.25%	96.82%	95.82%
March	98.68%	98.70%	98.13%	93.87%	98.29%	93.18%
April	95.12%	94.81%	94.79%	94.59%	74.51%	
May	95.93%	94.85%	93.78%	94.28%	85.87%	
June	94.82%	95.63%	93.07%	94.29%	85.47%	
July	92.83%	96.53%	93.60%	91.82%	88.26%	
August	92.74%	93.99%	92.12%	91.12%	89.42%	
September	93.14%	94.89%	91.89%	93.90%	90.93%	
October	94.55%	95.90%	95.10%	94.15%	95.28%	
November	95.20%	96.30%	95.11%	92.52%	95.82%	
December	94.52%	94.52%	92.11%	91.99%	88.28%	

SECURITY WARNING: External Data Connections have been disabled. Enable Content

P2125 ICU125/N2125

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
2124		Funded Bed	Avg Occupancy	Utilization	Funded Bed	Avg Occupancy	Utilization	Funded Bed	Avg Occupancy	Utilization	Funded Bed	Avg Occupancy	Utilization	Funded Bed	Avg Occupancy	Utilization	
2125	January	375.0	315.1	84.0%	399.0	335.9	85.2%	405.0	334.1	82.5%	409.0	332.3	81.2%	409.0	345.8	84.5%	
2126	February	370.0	322.7	87.2%	399.0	327.2	82.0%	403.0	315.6	78.3%	409.0	329.8	80.6%	409.0	331.6	81.1%	
2127	March	399.0	335.4	84.1%	399.0	327.2	82.0%	403.0	314.7	78.1%	409.0	325.8	79.7%	409.0	301.2	73.6%	
2128	April	399.0	313.3	78.5%	399.0	313.3	78.1%	405.0	318.8	78.7%	409.0	332.5	81.3%	410.0	238.4	58.2%	
2129	May	399.0	299.9	75.2%	399.0	318.2	79.7%	405.0	315.1	77.8%	409.0	332.2	81.2%	410.0	277.8	67.8%	
2130	June	399.0	303.4	76.0%	399.0	316.5	79.3%	405.0	305.7	75.5%	409.0	311.4	76.1%	410.0	292.2	71.0%	
2131	July	399.0	299.9	75.2%	399.0	306.0	76.7%	405.0	299.9	74.3%	409.0	311.4	76.1%	410.0	291.7	71.0%	
2132	August	399.0	302.1	75.7%	399.0	304.3	76.3%	405.0	306.0	75.6%	409.0	318.1	77.5%	410.0	314.8	76.8%	
2133	September	399.0	317.6	79.6%	399.0	312.6	78.1%	408.5	316.3	77.4%	409.0	328.2	80.2%	410.0	318.2	77.6%	
2134	October	399.0	314.1	78.5%	399.0	315.9	79.2%	409.0	327.1	80.0%	409.0	328.5	80.4%	410.0	321.0	78.0%	
2135	November	399.0	328.8	82.4%	399.0	311.4	78.1%	409.0	318.2	77.8%	409.0	315.5	77.1%	410.0	323.8	78.9%	
2136	December	399.0	324.4	81.3%	402.2	312.7	77.8%	409.0	327.5	80.1%	409.0	335.6	82.1%	410.0	358.6	87.5%	

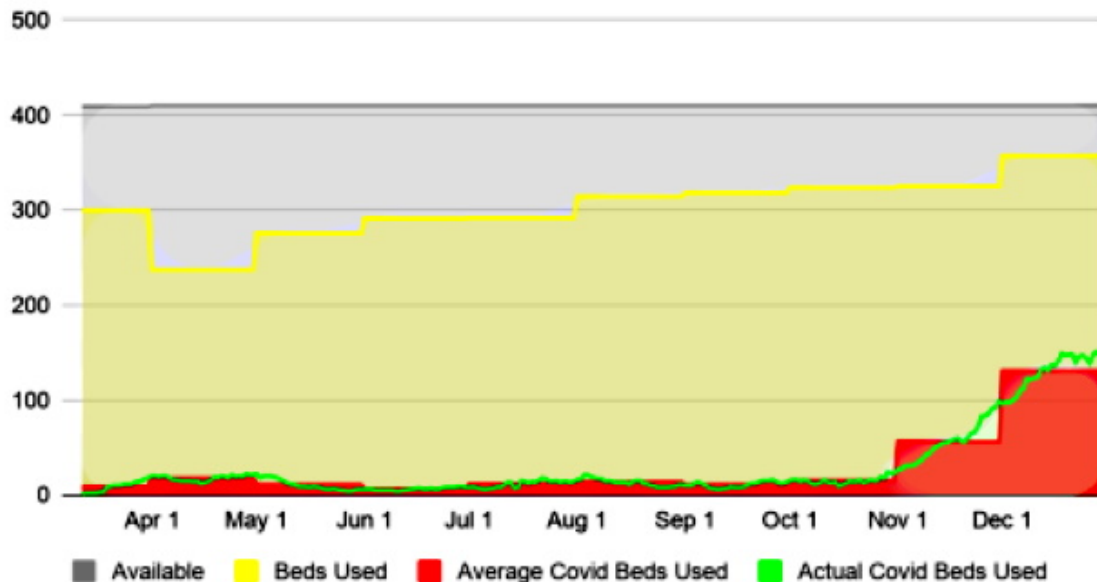
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2141 ICU Utilization

2142	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
2143	January	84.0%	85.2%	82.5%	81.2%	84.5%
2144	February	87.2%	82.0%	81.1%	80.6%	81.1%
2145	March	84.1%	82.0%	81.3%	79.7%	73.6%
2146	April	78.5%	81.1%	81.3%	81.4%	58.2%
2147	May	75.2%	76.7%	77.8%	81.2%	67.8%
2148	June	76.0%	76.3%	79.3%	81.0%	71.0%
2149	July	75.2%	76.7%	74.0%	76.1%	71.0%
2150	August	75.7%	76.3%	75.6%	77.1%	76.8%
2151	September	79.6%	78.8%	77.4%	80.9%	77.6%
2152	October	78.5%	81.7%	80.0%	78.4%	78.8%
2153	November	82.4%	81.1%	82.7%	78.1%	78.9%
2154	December	81.3%	82.7%	80.1%	82.1%	87.5%

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Province of Alberta ICU Average Utilization 2020



- Grey area is the number of funded beds available per dataset.
- Yellow area is the average number of ICU beds used per month per dataset.
- Red area is the average number of ICU beds occupied by Covid patients per GOA website.
 - This area is also part of the yellow area and is not separated from it.
- Green line is the actual number of ICU beds occupied by Covid patients per GOA website.
- Other than November/December the average number of Covid beds required in ICU was negligible.

At no point throughout the year was the average number of beds above capacity of "budgeted" beds.

Source: Data from Justice Centre FOIP Request to AHS

Table 1. ICU Admissions by Zone, Site and Calendar Year

		Calendar Year					
Zone	Site	2015*	2016*	2017	2018	2019	2020
1 - South Zone	Chinook Regional Hospital	75	975	967	1,000	885	629
	Medicine Hat Regional Hospital	227	616	608	573	533	398
2 - Calgary Zone	Alberta Children's Hospital	888	915	893	879	900	717
	Foothills Medical Centre	4,517	4,514	4,591	4,891	4,863	4,624
	Peter Lougheed Centre	1,077	1,194	1,202	1,185	1,193	1,187
	Rockyview General Hospital	1,052	1,124	1,115	1,119	1,089	932
	South Health Campus	500	554	570	590	654	647
3 - Central Zone	Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre	-	855	1,082	940	934	857
4 - Edmonton Zone	Grey Nuns Community Hospital	1,072	1,229	1,209	1,234	1,190	1,135
	Misericordia Community Hospital	762	1,116	1,053	1,056	1,121	861
	Royal Alexandra Hospital	2,280	2,328	2,331	2,329	2,414	2,379
	Stollery Children's Hospital	1,133	1,178	1,268	1,300	1,355	1,101
	Sturgeon Community Hospital	796	1,013	875	931	948	784
	University of Alberta Hospital	5,019	5,063	5,018	5,018	5,036	5,380
5 - North Zone	Northern Lights Regional Health Centre	61	403	471	483	497	414
	Queen Elizabeth II Hospital	-	362	395	411	398	364
Provincial Total - All Sites		19,459	23,439	23,648	23,939	24,010	22,409

Note: * Incomplete data for some ICU units in 2015/2016, before electronic records



Province of Alberta Actual ICU Utilization - With Modeling Built In

On April 8 the Government of Alberta released a model in which they stated the following was being done:

Building Acute Care Capacity

- **AHS plans to have 2,250 COVID-19 designated acute care beds by the end of April:**
 - As of April 3, 2020, 1,935 are available for COVID patients; and
 - New COVID dedicated spaces are being brought online.

And;

Building ICU Capacity

- **AHS plans to be able to increase ICU capacity by 1081 beds for COVID-19 patients by the end of April, if necessary.**

Source: <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-case-modelling-projection.pdf>

www.jccf.ca

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