

Media Release

For Immediate Release

RDP announces new Healthtech Centre to Meet Growing Workforce Demand

ACI Architects Inc. selected to design project

Red Deer, June 9, 2026 – Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) is advancing a major step to address critical healthcare labour shortages in central Alberta with the launch of its new Healthtech Centre for Applied Learning & Innovation (HCALI).

This transformative project will expand RDP's capacity to train healthcare professionals by adding 1,000 new program seats to strengthen the regional workforce pipeline and address growing demand across Alberta's health system, while advancing applied research and innovation.

The Healthtech Centre will house the Rural and Remote Health and Wellness Centre of Excellence. Launched last year in collaboration with Covenant, its mandate is to deliver workforce training and develop innovative solutions that support and improve health outcomes in Alberta's rural and remote communities.

The 118,000 sq. ft. Healthtech Centre will serve as a leading hub for interdisciplinary learning, applied research and industry collaboration, equipping graduates with the hands-on, technology-enabled skills needed in today's evolving healthcare environment.

"Central Alberta continues to face growing demand for skilled healthcare professionals," says Stuart Cullum, President, Red Deer Polytechnic. "The Healthtech Centre will significantly expand our ability to prepare graduates for in-demand careers and support the long-term sustainability of healthcare services across our region."

With the Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre expansion expected to open in 2030, an estimated 3,600 additional healthcare professionals will be required to support full operations. Red Deer Polytechnic currently offers 15 [healthcare programs](#), ranging from the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree to Medical Laboratory Assistant certificate. The new Healthtech Centre will expand capacity within existing programs while also supporting the development and delivery of new healthcare programs.

"The Healthtech Centre for Applied Learning and Innovation will be instrumental in developing the skilled workforce required for Red Deer Regional Hospital's expansion and for healthcare delivery across the province," comments Karen Foudy, Senior Operating Officer, Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre and Sylvan Lake Advanced Ambulatory Care, Alberta Health Services.

RDP has selected ACI Architects Inc. to lead the design of the new facility. The western Canada-based firm brings extensive experience in post-secondary and healthcare infrastructure, with a strong focus on collaborative, flexible and technology-rich environments.

"Selecting ACI Architects is an important milestone for this project," adds Cullum. "Their expertise in designing complex educational and health-focused spaces will help us create an environment that reflects the future of healthcare education and innovation."

Equipped with state-of-the-art virtual and immersive technology, simulation labs, flexible learning environments and collaborative, industry-focused innovation spaces, the new Healthtech Centre will:

- **Expand capacity** in RDP's high-demand health programs by adding 1,000 new seats
- **Strengthen the healthcare workforce pipeline** in central Alberta and across the province
- **Support applied research and innovation** in emerging health technologies
- **Enhance partnerships** with healthcare providers, industry and community organizations
- **Address workforce needs** in rural, remote and underserved communities

“Our design team is excited to be part of a project that brings together two areas we care deeply about—education and healthcare. The Healthtech Centre is an opportunity to help deliver a future-ready facility for Alberta that reflects shared goals for innovation, accessibility and excellence in healthcare education,” comments Allan Colpitts, Partner, Principal, Architect [Project Lead], ACI Architects.

The project reflects RDP's broader commitment to expanding programming in health and wellness, supporting student success and contributing to economic and social development across central Alberta and beyond.

Design work will begin immediately, with further project updates to be shared as planning progresses. To learn more, visit rdpolytech.ca/healthtechcentre.

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About Red Deer Polytechnic: Aligning more than 80 industry-relevant credit and non-credit programs, hands-on training and applied research, Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) provides dynamic opportunities to approximately 10,500 credit, non-credit and apprenticeship students in diverse sectors. RDP creates opportunities that align with the aspirations of its learners and the needs of the region.

With four areas of focus, Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care and Health Technology, Energy Innovation and Social Innovation, RDP makes a positive impact contributing to Alberta's economic and social priorities.

Red Deer Polytechnic's campuses are located on Treaty 7, Treaty 6 and Métis ancestral lands. This is where we will strive to honour and transform our relationships with one another.

For more information, visit: rdpolytech.ca | [LinkedIn](#) | [facebook](#) | [instagram](#)

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Backgrounder

Current snapshot of the central Alberta health landscape

More healthcare professionals are needed to support a growing population and to ensure the success of new facility investments.

- 52,000 health workers needed by 2033 across Alberta based on National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes
- 25% growth in health care employment projected between 2025 and 2033 in Alberta based on Lightcast data
- 23% growth in health care employment projected between 2025 and 2033 in central Alberta based on Lightcast data
- Over 450,000 central Albertans within 150 km of Red Deer access healthcare at Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre
- \$1.8 Billion invested into Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre expansion
- 3,600 additional healthcare professionals needed to fully operate expanded Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre
- Fastest-Growing Occupations in central Alberta (according to Lightcast 2026):
 - Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses — Approximately 4,820 jobs expected in 2033
 - Nurse Aides, Orderlies and Patient Service Associates — Approximately 3,229 jobs expected in 2033
 - Paramedical Occupations — Approximately 995 jobs expected in 2033

At RDP health is what we do

- 1,567 seats currently offered in health programs
- 2,567 seats offered with our new Healthtech Centre for Applied Learning and Innovation
- Nearly 3,000 applications—over 600 from fully qualified, waitlisted applicants—received every year for our health programs