

Recognizing 2025 Rhapsody Physician Award nominee: Dr. Debbie Dehlen
Community: Lac La Biche



A long-time Lac La Biche physician is being recognized for her commitment to living and leading by example in the northeastern Alberta community.

“The past few years have truly been a challenge with the reduced number of doctors and nursing staff in our community,” writes Sharon Behnke.

“Dr. Dehlen arose to the challenge. She is a truly committed medical individual not only to her practice but to the community.”

Behnke is one of several community members and colleagues who nominated Dr. Dehlen for the 2025 RhPAP Rhapsody Physician Award.

“Dr. Dehlen stands out in her field,” adds Nicole Yackimec, a registered nurse at the William J. Cadzow - Lac la Biche Health Centre, who has worked with Dr. Dehlen for 20 years.

Yackimec says her colleague “never forgets that she is a service provider to a community that is uniquely challenged by the pace of change it faces every day.”

The physician works in the emergency room, acute care, long-term care, assists with caesarians and acts as the “baby doctor,” as well as seeing patients in clinic.

Whether she is on the job or out in her community, Dr. Dehlen stands out.

“She carries herself both personally and professionally with dignity, humility, and grace,” says Yackimec.

In her spare time, Dr. Dehlen contributes to her church in various ways including starting a coffee time.

“Quite early on in her membership, Debbie and her family recognized the need to build richer community and relationships,” says Candace Cadieux.

“Something that sounds so simple has been a big commitment and provides a welcoming environment to all who have come into our building.”

Carrie Froehler has experienced Dr. Dehlen’s compassion and expertise with family members on more than one occasion.

“From cancer diagnoses and treatments to kidney failure, falls, and burns, Dr. Dehlen has been there for us with skill, kindness, and a personal touch,” she says.

The physician treated Froehler’s mother like family, despite not being her family doctor.

“Dr. Dehlen was there, going above and beyond, providing support to both her and our family, and offering the comfort that only a compassionate and skilled doctor can provide in such a difficult time.”

Lisa Sparks, who serves as site manager at the Lac La Biche Healthcare Centre, says Dr. Dehlen plays an active role in recruiting area health professionals.

Six years ago, Dr. Dehlen welcomed Dr. Tracy-Lee Lindenberg into the community.

“She is always available, happy to offer advice, always willing to help with shared care, and an all-round team player,” says Dr. Lindenberg.

“She was, and still is, an excellent mentor.”

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