

# SAFE STAFFING SUMMIT A HUGE SUCCESS



*Also in this issue...*

**NSNU PRESIDENT ACCLAIMED FOR 6TH TERM**

*PLUS*

**THE LATEST NEWS FROM CFNU**

# President's Notebook

By Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA

## Safe Staffing measures— more brains than teeth

On January 20th over 200 nurses, members of the nearly 7000 strong Nova Scotia Nurses' Union (NSNU), met in Truro to discuss contract language that will ensure that staffing shortages that have dogged the health care system for decades happen less often and that the gaps that exist are filled by the right workers.



With existing staff shortages, particularly in specialty areas, and the looming retirement of 800 RNs over the next 5 years, accommodating vacation requests, sick time and leaves of absence (like maternity and parental leaves) sometimes becomes an exercise in futility, and overtime scheduling is often the only resort.

The NSNU, in conjunction with counterpart provincial nurse unions across the country, has for many years been exploring ways to address the problem of excessive workloads that threaten the safety of patient care and the working conditions of nurses. In September 2012, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions safe staffing campaigns culminated in the book *Nursing Workload and Patient Care*, co-authored by NSNU Researcher, Educator, and Government Relations Advisor, Dr. Paul Curry, and nursing policy expert and acting Dean of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. Lois Berry. The book reviews decades of research that clearly demonstrates the relationship between the amount of nursing care a patient receives and her health outcomes, including mortality rates, medication errors, shock and cardiac rest and a host of other morbidities. The lessons could not be any clearer – nursing care improves and saves lives.

In October 2013, the NSNU became the first nurse union in Atlantic Canada to negotiate a workload process that includes the use of an Independent Assessment Committee (IAC). When a disagreement about the ability to provide safe patient care cannot be resolved between a nurse and the employer, the matter may be referred to an IAC that makes

recommendations on improving the work situation. This process gives nurses a strong voice and input into how best to resolve staffing problems given their front line, first-hand experience and expertise.

IACs were chosen as the primary vehicle for addressing nurse workload for a number of reasons. In the first place, they are designed to deal individually with each situation and are therefore adept at addressing the various settings our nurses work in, from large tertiary hospitals to remote health clinics. Members of the Nurses' Union believe it is extremely important to recognize and account for this workplace diversity. Second, and relatedly, a committee can adequately assess and respond to the nuances of a work situation – the education and experience level of staff, the other health care workers present and so on. Most importantly, IACs were chosen because they have been tremendously successful for our sister nurse unions in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. A recent IAC considering a problematic emergency department in a large Ontario hospital, for example, served as a basis not only for increasing core nurse staffing, but also for improving and enhancing the education and training of staff on the unit, updating equipment, improving safety



measures and protocols, increasing the use of ward clerks and other personnel to relieve non-nursing duties and much more.

Safe staffing language is not a panacea for all that ails the health care system, but it does enable nurses to identify and report problems, and it allows the union and employers to track issues and seek resolution at the appropriate level of authority. IACs do not presume that nurses work in isolation, nor that the number of nurses alone is at the root of all workplace issues. Experience has shown that this process can address problem areas in a thorough and well thought out fashion.

At a time when there are no quick fixes or easy solutions, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union has chosen an option that has proven successful, one that takes into account the ever changing nature of patient care and a nurse's own ability to apply more "brains than teeth" to accomplish positive outcomes. The NSNU, in collaboration with its nurse union counterparts across Canada, is pleased to take a leadership role in an initiative that will benefit nurses and patients alike.



PEINU president, Mona O'Shea



## Nova Scotia Minister of Health sends congratulations on NSNU Safe Staffing language

Good Morning Janet,

I do want to convey my interest and the importance of this work. Developing best and safe practices regarding staffing must be acknowledged and acted upon. I look forward to reviewing your document and will use every opportunity to engage nurses in dialogue so I am well informed about your issues. Please extend my sincere regard for the outstanding work nurses are doing and will do in our Health Care System. I look forward to our next opportunity to meet.

Sincere Regards,

Leo Glavine

# Encouraging Support from Our Nurses Counterparts Down Under

On January 20th, Brett Holmes, General Secretary, New South Wales Nurses and Midwives Association sent a video message to NSNU members attending the Safe Staffing Summit in Truro. Many thanks to Brett for taking the time to show his support for our latest contract victory and the nurses of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union.



*Greetings and congratulations to the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union on starting on the path to safer patient care. The recognition of safe staffing is both an industrial and professional issue that must be incorporated in the bargaining agreement, and is a very important step. I encourage all members of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union to use the power of Article 17 to assert yours and your patients' right to safe staffing and safer patient care. Congratulations also on making it clear to patients and visitors who the nurses are in the workplaces with a consistent uniform. Every effort we can make as nurses to have safe staffing levels, delivered by qualified nurses, provides better outcomes for our patients. – Brett Holmes, NSW.*

## Restructuring of DHAs moving forward

Prior to the provincial election in the fall 2013, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union distributed a message to all NSNU members with the intent to generate dialogue between constituents and the candidates about the proposed changes to the District Health Authorities and how these changes could impact seniority and workplace stability.

As you may recall, the Liberal party purchased a newspaper advertisement or Open Letter to clarify that the reduction of 10 boards to one provincial board with four regional management zones and the one board for the IWK would not alter existing collective agreements, successor rights, benefits and salaries.

On February 4, 2014 while in Cape Breton for the province-wide consultative tour on health care, the Minister of Health and Wellness, Leo Glavine announced that unions, NSNU included, are on side with improvements to the administration of district health authorities.

Minister Glavine also implied that a reduction in the numbers of health care collective agreements is something that is under review. Changes to the structure of the DHAs are likely to yield a very different landscape for union representation, changes that ultimately have the potential to alter existing collective agreements.

In response to the comments made by Minister Glavine to the media, Janet Hazelton, NSNU president responded by saying, "We (NSNU) support anything that makes the health care system more efficient and less costly however, our concern is safe patient care which means maintaining and enhancing nursing positions."

The Minister went on to say that the new healthcare structure will be in place April 1, 2015.

The NSNU remains optimistic that a fair and equitable resolution can be achieved – one that does not cause unrest in the labour movement or a distraction to patient care and safety.

# The NEB of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions supports NSNU's safe staffing policy



Representatives from all provincial Nurse Union bodies of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) demonstrated their show of support for the NSNU safe staffing initiative at the National Executive Board (NEB) meetings in Ottawa, February 3-6 by sporting our Safe Staffing Saves Lives t-shirts.

Many of the member organizations have had success with their own safe staffing models and were thrilled to hear about Nova Scotia's new contract language. The group, which has long lobbied for safe staffing under the umbrella of the CFNU offered words of wisdom and shared strategies to ensure safe and appropriate care for patients.

On February 4th, 2014, CFNU hosted a breakfast meeting on Parliament Hill to discuss An Aging Population, Prescription Drugs and the Future of Public Health Care in Canada with presentations by Mr. Cal Martell, and Dr. Steve Morgan. MPs, Senators and a wide range of health and labour stakeholders came together to hear expert speakers address the challenges and realities of an aging demographic, coupled with the rising costs of prescription drugs in Canada.

Mr. Cal Martell, President, Council on Aging of Ottawa is a leader in health service delivery and planning with more than 35 years of progressive experience at regional and provincial levels. He has focused primarily on seniors' health service delivery and planning over the past 25 years.

Dr. Steven Morgan, Director, Centre for Health Services and Policy Research, University of British Columbia and the Leader of Canada's Pharmaceutical Policy Research Collaboration, is a renowned expert in health care financing

and pharmaceutical policy. Dr. Morgan helps governments balance three sometimes-competing goals: providing equitable access to necessary care, managing health care costs, and promoting health innovation.

This spring the CFNU will release Roadmap to a Rational Pharmacare Policy in Canada by Dr. Marc-André Gagnon. The report outlines the actions Canada must take NOW to reduce costs and reinvest in quality health care for our seniors. Email today to reserve your copy: [roadmap@nursesunions.ca](mailto:roadmap@nursesunions.ca).

The NEB also spent time discussing the GNU – Global Nurses United. CFNU has been a key partner in strengthening key international nurses' unions' relationships for many years. The new GNU network was founded in San Francisco on June 22, 2013 at a meeting where nursing union representatives from 14 countries discussed common concerns and interests. Global Nurses United is an international network of nursing unions committed to working together to "protect our professions, our patients, our communities, our work, our health, our environment, and our planet".

GNU was formed because it was recognized that nurses unions around the world were facing very similar challenges. We are stronger if we work together and organize across borders to address these challenges, share experiences and support each other through solidarity activities. All our work will be in solidarity with other organizations such as ICN and PSI.

For more on the activities of the CFNU and its Member Organizations like the NSNU visit [nursesunions.ca](http://nursesunions.ca) or [cfnu.ca](http://cfnu.ca).

# NSNU now on Facebook and Twitter

We are excited to announce that as of late January 2014 the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is using Facebook and Twitter. These are great new communication platforms that we will be using to engage and share information with our members like never before.

We will be posting interesting, relevant content on labour issues as well as nursing and health care information. The core of our content will focus on NSNU activities, as well as our affiliated nurse unions across Canada. Social media will let us share what is happening from coast to coast and help identify national nursing and labour trends.

NSNU Facebook and Twitter can also be a way for Locals to communicate to their own members. For example, if you have an upcoming Local meeting you want advertised, or there is a great education session happening in your region, please let us know so we can do some promotion on your behalf. These new tools are another way for us to effectively bridge offline activities directly to members.

For your own protection, please do not send private messages with sensitive information regarding work situations through either Facebook or Twitter.

Like our page and follow us on Twitter:

Facebook: Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

Twitter: @NS\_nurses



# Long-Term Care Project Update

The Minister of Health and Wellness recently concluded an experts roundtable on the future of continuing care in Nova Scotia and has promised to begin consulting with the public in the development of a new strategy.

As you may recall, the NSNU has recently produced a working paper that brings the nursing perspective to bear on the challenges and problems with our long-term care system. Our long-term care nurses participated in a survey and four focus groups were held with members across the province. Our sister provincial nurse unions across the country have shown a keen interest in our work to date and we have been sharing our research and recommendations with them.

Now that the Department of Health and Wellness is actively involved in the development of a new strategy, the NSNU will again engage with the Department and the Minister to ensure that the voice and expertise of front-line nurses is not overlooked. To paraphrase one nurse from our consultations – so long as we quietly acquiesce to the status quo, things will never get better.



*LTC consultative group, Cape Breton*

# NSNU president visits NSCC nursing students

Janet Hazelton is routinely invited to address nursing students throughout the province studying at the various universities and NSCC campuses. Typically Janet discusses the realities of nursing and working with your union to create a safe and stable work environment. The students have a bounty of relative and thought provoking questions about the challenges ahead as they embark on their careers.

On November 2, 2013 Janet attended a professional practice course at the NSCC Waterfront Campus held for practical nursing students who graduated in January of this year. One of the goals of this course is to examine the role of unions for health care professionals. Janet's presentation fit the

bill, offering the students a glimpse into how NSNU works closely with its members to advocate for nurses, patients and universal healthcare.

A storm did not prevent Janet from visiting the Truro NSCC campus but the weather did cut her presentation to those students short in order to get everyone safely home.

On February 11, Janet visited the Kingstec Campus of the NSCC in Kentville to deliver the same message. Janet's many years as a practicing nurse and a union activist make her an ideal guest lecturer.



*NSCC Kingstec Campus, February 11, 2014*



*NSCC Waterfront Campus November 2, 2013*

## Regional Meetings

Two Regional Meetings have been confirmed for April. The Eastern Regional Meeting will take place on April 3rd from 7pm-9pm in room 3612, the large classroom in the education department of the Cape Breton Regional Hospital located at the back of the building on the 3rd floor.

The Western Regional Meetings will take April 14th at the Yarmouth Hospital at 7:30pm. The second will take place on April 15 at the Bridgewater Hospital, 7:30pm. The third will be held at the Middleton Hospital, again at 7:30.

The Central Regional Meeting will be held March 31st at 7:00pm in the Banook Room at the Holiday Inn Harbourview, Dartmouth.

Please visit [nsnu.ca](http://nsnu.ca) for meeting room locations and updates on meetings in the Northern Region.



# Day of Remembrance

On December 6, 2013 a gathering was held at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia to acknowledge victims of domestic violence – those who live with it, those who have escaped it and those who have succumbed to abuse.

In a theatrical presentation, women and men shared their stories of violence in the spoken word and in song to mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.



*Janet Hazelton and Stephanie MacInnis-Langley, December 6, 2013*

A solemn ceremony followed later that day at Province House where life-size, silhouette cut-outs of women whose lives were taken at the hands of their partners stood as “silent witnesses”.

Stephanie MacInnis-Langley of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women led the tribute that attracted politicians, including Premier Stephen MacNeil, representatives from policing authorities, media, the general public and other concerned citizens.

The event was held on the anniversary of the Montreal Massacre when in 1989 fourteen female engineering students at l’Ecole Polytechnique were murdered in a gender-based attack by a gunman.

Statistics reveal that last year 2,659 Nova Scotians were victims of police-reported violence caused by domestic partners yet many more acts of such violence go unreported and unaccounted in statistical data.

Though the day was somber hope for a better future remains, illustrated in their slogan - together we have, together we can, together we will end violence against women.

## Atlantic Nurse Unions meet in St. John’s, NL

On January 7 and 8, 2014, the leaders of the four Atlantic Member Organizations of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions including Janet Hazelton from NSNU, Marilyn Quinn from NBNU, Debbie Forward of the NLNU and Mona O’Shea from PEINU met in St. John’s for their Annual Atlantic Caucus meeting.



High on the agenda was ongoing contract negotiations within the Atlantic Region. These meetings provide an opportunity for the nurse unions to strategize on bargaining issues, share success stories on nurse and patient advocacy work, and prepare for challenges in the nursing sector including accessibility and identity.

The group also spent time planning for Eastern Labour School which will be held in Moncton in late May of this year.

Also in attendance were the Executive Directors for each MO – Jean Candy, NSNU, David Brown, NBNU, John Vivian, NLNU and Kendra Gunn, PEINU.

# CNSA National Conference 2014 – an energizing experience

by Lindsay Smith

I recently had the opportunity to represent the Dalhousie School of Nursing as the Official Delegate (OD), for the Canadian Nursing Students Association (CNSA) National Conference, hosted by Langara College in beautiful Vancouver, B.C. I really feel energized, moved and motivated to make a difference in any way that I can now that I'm back from the conference and have been sharing my stories and experiences with fellow nursing students back at Dalhousie. There was a huge camaraderie that developed amongst the 750 nursing students from across the country, as we all shared a passion for CNSA in all that it represents and a thirst for knowledge surrounding the current nursing topics in today's society. This certainly enhanced my scope of knowledge, as my eyes were open to many issues faced in the field, specifically surrounding diversity.

The key-note speakers explored diversity in relation to culture, gender and sexuality within our communities. A common theme that emerged from these Social Determinants of Health was the need and importance of using gender-neutral language, and the effect we as nurses in the field can have on individuals where we must be sensitive to their beliefs and values. In developing a therapeutic relationship with our clients holding no judgements, the goal is to help them open up and communicate clearly with us about topics that may be uncomfortable for them to discuss, such as gender or sexuality. Today's society holds unrealistic ideologies that tend to make people feel ashamed to express themselves the way they would like, and that to me indicates the need for change. As a Caucasian female, I am considered

to have “white privilege,” which is the concept that as a white person, I essentially go through life without realizing that I (or any Caucasian), have an air of entitlement in being said race. For the first time in my life, I had to think about what it meant to be white and the opportunities that have enabled me to get where I am today.



*Lindsay –bike ride*

I have worked hard to get to the place I am of course, but the concept of “white privilege” is now something I will be consciously aware of. The need for non-Caucasians to have their voices heard in terms of how they are treated by the healthcare system is dire, as there is for example, great need for reconciliation amongst the First Nations People. Resolution statements are needed to support Jordan's Principle, for CNSA to show support to indigenous persons. Jordan's Principle was established in response to the death of 5-year-old Jordan River Anderson, a child from Norway House First Nation who suffered from Carey Fineman Ziter Syndrome, a rare muscular disorder that required years of medical

treatment in a Winnipeg hospital. After spending the first two years of his life in a hospital, doctors felt he could return home. However, the federal and provincial government could not resolve who was financially responsible for the necessary home care in order for Jordan to return to his family in his home community 800 kilometres north of Winnipeg. After spending over two years in hospital unnecessarily while governments argued over who should pay for his at home care, Jordan died in hospital in 2005.

As a future nurse, I really feel the need to educate myself and become more culturally aware, culturally sensitive and culturally competent of my surroundings so that I am able to help spark change and make a difference.

As the OD for Dalhousie University, I had the opportunity to attend Atlantic Regional Executive Meetings, involving delegates from other nursing schools across the Maritimes as well as National Assembly meetings, involving delegates from across the country. These meetings were conducted in a professional manner using Bourinot's Rules of Order. The Board of Directors was comprised entirely of nursing students and it was truly inspiring to see such a passionate and intelligent group of people. Riek van den Berg was appointed as Parliamentarian should the president need any guidance and there were other professional representatives present to help mediate the National Assembly meetings. It was great to see students come together to support each other in issues such as Quebec region's struggle to obtain Chapter School membership with CNSA, as well as an issue an Ontario school faced when a student's resolution statement was denied only days before the conference. As a group, we worked through and openly discussed these issues and many other motions as voting members and I really learned a great deal in attendance. This was an incredible way to broaden my horizons about nursing on a national level and I plan on continuing to attend future meetings at future conferences with the aim to one day sit on the Board of Directors!

All in all, this conference was one to remember and it surely will have an impact on my role and voice as a student and future nurse in the field. I believe whole-heartedly of the importance and value CNSA has on student involvement and participation, as it really does change you for the better and helps open your eyes to the bigger picture in the field of nursing. Why not maximize learning, networking and developing lasting relationships with fellow nursing students throughout your time as a student? I know for me, it will only make my experience at Dalhousie a more enjoyable and memorable one!

Thank-you so much to the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union for allowing me to reflect on such an incredible experience.

Sincerely;

*Lindsay Smith*

Dalhousie Nursing student

## NSNU Executive Assistant leaves NSNU

The NSNU bid farewell to long-time Executive Assistant Debbie Grady on January 10th as she moves on to an EA with the Nova Scotia School Board Association.

Debbie has worked for the NSNU since September 2008 and was a very familiar face (and voice) to NSNU members at AGM's and other large-scale meetings. Debbie worked closely with the Board of Directors and was known to pitch in on any project that needed an extra set of hands.

Her kind heart, sense of humour and knowledge of pop culture brought lightness to the office on even the cloudiest of days. Debbie was a phenomenal co-worker and team player in our tight knit staff. Her presence in the NSNU office will surely be missed.

The NSNU staff, Board and members wish Debbie all the best in her new position.



# National Patient Safety Summit



By Dr. Paul Curry, NSNU Researcher/Educator and Government Relations Advisor

On December 11th and 12th, 2013, I had the opportunity to participate in the Quality Patient Care = Safe Patient Care roundtable, co-hosted by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and the Canadian Nurses Association, with the support of a working group including members from Accreditation Canada, the Academy of Canadian Executive Nurses and the Canadian Patient Safety Institute. The roundtable brought together representatives from employers, governments, unions, patient advocacy groups and Health Canada, with the aim of bringing policy leaders together to discuss how to break the impasse and begin to take concrete steps to improve workplaces and patient care.

The CFNU's recent book, *Nursing Workload and Patient Care* (Berry and Curry, 2012), served as one of the pivotal background documents underpinning the day's discussion. Lois Berry, Acting Dean of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan, and co-author of the book, provided a brief overview of our key findings.

Roundtable members agreed that quality and safe patient care depends on several key factors, including ensuring a voice for patients and an emphasis on patient outcomes, increasing accountability at all levels of the health system, collaboration among key stakeholders and support for nurses providing direct care and services.

The working group and roundtable members are currently engaged in developing a framework for an action strategy that will bring increased collaboration and focus to the safe patient care agenda.

Nurse unions across the country have taken a leadership role in bringing together the appropriate stakeholders in order to ensure that evidence-based nursing research does not remain on the shelf collecting dust. This evidence is meant to inform staffing decisions and the design of our health system, and nurse unions have committed to continue with our efforts until this comes to pass.

*PHOTO: From left to right- Paul Curry, NSNU Lois Berry, Acting Dean of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan, Anne Sutherland Boal, CEO, Canadian Nurses Association, Theresa Fillatre, Canadian Patient Safety Institute Bernadette MacDonald, Vice President, Programs and Services, Accreditation Canada, Linda Silas, president- CFNU*

# CFNU Professional Practice Committee

By Dr. Paul Curry, NSNU Researcher/Educator and Government Relations Advisor

I also recently had the opportunity to participate in the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions Professional Practice Committee which met with CFNU President Linda Silas on January 28th and 29th, 2014. The newly constituted committee is designed to provide an avenue for provincial nurse unions to share information and collaborate in the promotion of working conditions that allow nurses to practice according to their professional standards. The committee attempts to address issues including nurse workload, the replacement of nurses with unregulated health care providers, helping nurses deal with professional practice issues and nurse union relations with licensing bodies.

I took the opportunity to share the NSNU's new Clinical Capacity Reporting process and toolkit with colleagues from across the country. It was extremely beneficial to hear that our sister unions have been using similar processes, including Independent Assessment Committees, with great success.

The committee also considered various workload tracking mechanisms employed by different nurse unions and expressed the desire to be able to develop a common framework in order to better track workload trends on a national basis in the future. Such a database, which would contain factual information without identifying information, would allow for invaluable research which could lead to the development of policies and contract language to further enhance the safe staffing agenda. A central plank in our efforts to address nurse workload and working conditions must be the production of solid data that governments and employers cannot ignore.

Going forward, NSNU Labour Relations Representative and Professional Practice Consultant Patti Humphries will represent NSNU on the CFNU Professional Practice Committee. Over the years, Patti has taken on a leadership role at NSNU when dealing with professional responsibility issues. I am certain her provincial nurse union colleagues will appreciate her wisdom, spirit and humour in the years to come.



*From left to right - Chris Axtell - UNA, Debbie Winterton - MNU, Rozanna Haynes - ONA, Suzanne Maltais - NBNU, Donna Smith - UNA, Mariana Markovic - ONA, Linda Silas - CFNU, Paul Curry - NSNU*

# BARGAINING

Your Provincial Negotiating Committee would like to provide this brief update on bargaining activities and encourage you as a member of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union to become familiar with your contract and understand your rights under this agreement. It is incumbent on each member to know the terms of the contract by which you are employed. Please take the time to learn more about the NSNU, your collective agreement and your employer's commitment to you.

NSNU contracts can be viewed or downloaded at [www.nsnu.ca](http://www.nsnu.ca).

## ACUTE CARE

- The acute care agreement was signed January 16, 2014.
- Employer anticipates retro will be paid mid February
- Classification review for current classifications has a deadline of April 16, 2014 for submissions (see refer to language included in this newsletter)

## VON

- The agreement was signed on December 1, 2013
- Retro paid mid January 2014

## LONG TERM CARE

- As agreements are being signed they are posted on the website
- Contact your Employer regarding retro if your agreement has been signed
- 29 Employers represented by HANS: 20 agreements have been signed, 5 are waiting for Employer to sign, 4 have not yet been sent to the Union for review
- 16 Employers not represented by HANS: 6 agreements have been signed, 5 have been sent to Employer for signing, 5 drafts for Union to review and submit for signing

## CBS

- Electronic proposal exchanged with the Employer Feb 17th
- The Employer and NSNU Provincial Negotiating Committee meeting February 26, 27 and 28, 2014 to begin the bargaining process

## RECLASSIFICATION

### ACUTE CARE

#### 8.16 New Classification

- a. Should a new position or new classification be created within the Bargaining Unit during the term of this Agreement, the Employer and Union representatives of the Bargaining Unit Grievance and Labour Management Committee will decide the rate of pay. In the event that the Parties cannot agree on the rate of pay it may be referred to Compensation Analysis Services at Health Association Nova Scotia for determination. The determination will be final and binding on the parties. Nothing herein prevents the Employer from filling such positions and having Nurses working in such positions during such negotiations. The salary when determined will be retroactive to the date on which the successful candidate commenced work in that classification.
- b. Where a Nurse identifies that her current position is no longer classified appropriately due to changes in the position implemented during the term of the current collective agreement the Nurse may submit a written request for a classification review in accordance with the process in Appendix "H".

This Article is not applicable to positions where the salary was determined or agreed to between the Parties in accordance with article 8.16 (a) unless there has been a change in the position after the agreement reached in Article 8.16(a).

# BULLETIN

## APPENDIX "H" CLASSIFICATION REVIEW PROCESS

### ACUTE CARE

Where a Nurse identifies that her current position is no longer classified appropriately due to changes in the position implemented during the term of the collective agreement the Nurse or the Union may submit a written request for a classification review, indicating the rationale for the request, to the Union members of BUGLM, with any supporting documentation.

If supported by the Union members of BUGLM, the request will be forwarded to BUGLM, Labour Relations/Human Resources, copied to the Manager.

If the BUGLM Committee is unable to come to an agreement, the matter will be submitted to the Compensation Analysis Services (the "Service") at Health Association Nova Scotia for a review to provide a final and binding decision on the appropriate classification.

The Service will review the position and all supporting documentation and make a final determination in writing within 60 days as to the appropriate classification within Appendix "A". The Parties agree that the result of this review is not subject to further appeal.

If the Service supports that the position is no longer appropriately classified, the employer will implement the classification change determined by the Service. The salary when determined will be retroactive to the date on which the request for review was submitted to the BUGLM.

The cost of the review by the Service will be shared equally between the Union and the Employer.

## MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT # 6

### INITIAL EXTENSION OF CLASSIFICATION REVIEW PROCESS

#### ACUTE CARE

Whereas the classification review process in Article 8.16 (b) is new language, the

Parties are agreed that Nurses may submit classification reviews in respect of changes to the Nurse's position even if it occurred prior to effective date of the current collective agreement provided that any such claims are forwarded within 90 days of the signing of this collective agreement.

No requests may be submitted in respect of any classification that was reviewed in accordance with the Job Evaluation Process MOA (2006-2009 collective agreement) between the Parties unless there has been a subsequent change to the position.

Classification reviews requests submitted pursuant to this MOA will be undertaken in accordance with the process agreed to in Appendix "H".

This MOA expires 90 days after the signing of this collective agreement and thereafter the parties will only consider requests for a classification review brought forward in respect of changes that occurred during the life of the collective agreement under which the request is brought forward in accordance with Article 8.16(b).



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# St. F.X. Professional Development Day

On February 6th, 2014, Janet Hazelton lectured as a guest speaker for the Annual Professional Development Day hosted by St. F.X.'s Nursing Society. Other speakers included Dr. Charmaine MacPherson, nursing professor at St. F.X., Peter MacDougall, President of the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia, and Dr. Judith Shamian, President of the International Council of Nurses (ICN). The day provided an opportunity for nursing students from St. F.X. and across the province to gain insight and encouragement from nurse leaders.

ICN President Dr. Judith Shamian spoke of the need for nurses to seek out and occupy leadership positions, both formally and informally. Dr. Shamian, former President of the Canadian Nurses Association, and former President and CEO of the Victorian Order of Nurses, claimed that nurse union leaders have shown the need to engage in politics to advance the nursing agenda in this country and she called on the entire nursing community to become more engaged.

Janet Hazelton took the opportunity to explain the efforts nurse unions across the country have collaborated on in order to address nurse workload. She also spoke about the importance of nurse identity in a world where the value and contribution of nurses is being overlooked and shortchanged. Lastly, she offered the soon-to-be nurses some advice on thriving in the workplace, including the value of nurse mentors, the appropriate use of social media and the importance of knowing workplace rights and responsibilities.

“Thank you Janet for accepting our invitation to come. I personally was truly inspired! You are an inspirational leader and one that knows and represents everyone as equals – traits I believe we all can strive for. I hope to attend the AGM this year with the NSNU....I also look forward to getting involved in any way I can in the NSNU, something I am so passionate about,” says Timothy Harnish, President of the St FX Nursing Society.

Special thanks to Timothy for extending the invitation to NSNU to participate.



*St. FX Nursing Students February 2014*



*St FX nursing students*



*From left to right Charmaine McPherson, Judith Shamian, Timothy Harnish, Janet Hazelton and Aleaha Zampaloni.*

# NSNU Board of Directors and Trustee Nominations

In May, all positions on the Board of Directors and NSNU Long Term Disability Trustee will expire following a two year term. All members of the Board and the Trustee representative must be members-in-good-standing and working nurses in order to apply. Only one position has not been acclaimed. The current Vice President of the Western Region, Teresa Ogilvie will not be reoffering as she plans to retire within a year or so. The NSNU received three nominations for that position – Michelle Lowe, Karlene Pynch and Karen MacDonald. There will be a vote held on April 28 in Truro at the Western Regional Meeting to select the new VP of Western Region.

**VOTING TAKES PLACE APRIL 28**

With the exception of this position, the Board of Directors of the NSNU remains:

**Janet Hazelton** – President

**Christine VanZoost** – Vice President

**Lillian Fynes** – VP Finance

**Gerri Oakley** – VP Eastern Region

**Cheryl Barker** – VP Central Region

**Ann Marie Murdock** – VP Northern Region

**Jennifer Chapman** – VP Community Care Component

**Maria Langille** – VP LPN/Grad Component

**Sheri Gallivan** – VP Long Term Care Component

## VP Western Region - Teresa Ogilvie bids farewell to Board duties

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my members in DHA 1, 2 and 3 for their support in my role as VP Western Region.

My plan is to retire from nursing in another year or so therefore I will not reoffer for another term at the next AGM.

All the best to the candidates vying for this very rewarding position and experience.

Teresa



# Candidates for the VP Western Region

**Karen MacDonald** – Karen received her Diploma in Nursing in 1986 from the Halifax Infirmary and completed her BScN from St. FX. in 2000. She is employed at Valley Regional Hospital and is currently working in the OR. Karen has been the President of her Local the past ten years and co-chair of the Joint Occupational Safety and Health committee for her site. She sat on the Provincial Negotiating Committee of the NSNU four of the last five contracts negotiated by the Nurses' Union. She has attended several Eastern Labour School conferences studying such topics as addictions, conflict resolution and negotiations. Karen has continually developed her professional accreditation including the completion of a Perioperative Nursing Program in 2008 and in 2010 she received her Certification in Perioperative Nursing.

“I have been a union activist for most of my career both locally and provincially and truly feel the union plays a huge role in our work and quality of life. I would like to hold regular meetings and discover where our Region would like to see improvements in order maximize our potential.”



**Michelle Lowe** – Michelle works for the Health Services Association of the South Shore and is a Shop Steward at her local. She graduated from the VG School of Nursing in 1985 and has worked in numerous areas of nursing, the last nine years in oncology. Michelle is a past member of the Board of Directors of the NSNU having once before held the VP Western Region position. She has represented her region on the Provincial Negotiating Committee. She has also held the positions of Local President, Local Vice President, Chair of the BUGLM, Chief Shop Steward and Shop Steward. Michelle has pursued labour education on an ongoing basis and has been diligent in achieving her professional development and educational goals since the onset of her career.

“I am passionate about nursing and who we represent. I am a team member who wants to fight for the NSNU as our nursing union, encourage involvement at both a local and provincial level and a proud representative for all nurses.”



**Karlene Pynch** – Karlene is a graduate of the VGH School of Nursing, 1976. She is in her 38th year of nursing currently working at the Valley Regional Hospital where she has spent many years. Karlene has served at the local level as a Secretary, Vice President and President. She has served on the Provincial Negotiating Committee for 4 terms. She has been a member of various Standing Committees of the NSNU including Education and Constitution & Resolutions. She has represented her facility on BUGLM as Chief Shop Steward and Recording Secretary. Karlene has had extensive exposure to labour education at Eastern Labour School, CFNU Biennial Conference and various locally sponsored workshops. In addition to her labour experience, Karlene has worked as a preceptor and annually meets her Practice and Leadership Premium quotas.

“I wish to represent the Western Region and participate in a provincial leadership role. I want to help continue the goals and objectives of the NSNU: to promote the professional image of the NSNU.”



# NSNU member on the mend



Sue Henry, an outspoken and active member of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is on the mend after a sudden illness. Sue, president of the NSNU local at Eastern Shore Memorial and the Chair of the Bargaining Unit Grievance Labour Management Committee in DHA 9, took ill several weeks ago but has since been making progress.

NSNU president Janet Hazelton recently paid Sue a visit bringing heartfelt best wishes to our popular Nurses' Union enthusiast. Sue's dedication to the NSNU is unshakeable. Her positive attitude and energy are contagious, barely dampened by her current state of health. She is certainly a force to be reckoned with.

Sue wanted all who have expressed concern for her to know she plans to return to active duty as a nurse and a stalwart NSNU supporter as soon as she is back to her old self.

We all wish Sue a speedy and full recovery.



## NSNU Christmas Toy Drive

NSNU staff enjoyed the spirit of the season and, for the second year in a row, participated in our own version of 'Secret Santa.' The twist on our 'Secret Santa' is to buy a gift for the inner child of the person whose name you have secretly selected. NSNU LRR Patti Humphries was appointed Santa for the day – hilarity ensued as each staffer unwrapped their present. Following this exchange NSNU donates the toys to the C 100 Cineplex Annual Toy Drive. This year over 3,500 toys were collected for children in need. The toys are distributed in Christmas hampers through The Salvation Army Community and Family Services Halifax. Congratulations NSNU Staff Association!



*NSNU communications assistant Kate Jamieson, centre, drops off toys from the office staff to C100 Street team Jazz Campbell and Dana Thompson (intern)*

# In The News...

## Janet Hazelton acclaimed Nurses' Union president for sixth term

Halifax, February 6/14

Janet Hazelton has once again been acclaimed to the position of President of the Board of Directors of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union. This is the sixth consecutive term for Hazelton, a registered nurse who has held the position since October 2002.

Ms. Hazelton has enjoyed many victories on behalf of the 6700-plus registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and nurse practitioners she represents. In 2011, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union introduced a standardized uniform to bolster the accessibility and identity of nurses across the province. To date, this trend has been piloted by five other provinces in Canada and has garnered international attention from nursing and health organizations alike.

In October 2013, the NSNU was the first nurse union in Atlantic Canada to negotiate a workload process that includes the use of an Independent Assessment Committee (IAC). This process provides a means of ensuring safe staffing and safe patient care, giving nurses a voice in how best to resolve staffing problems using their front line expertise. This model is currently in practice in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

Hazelton, a long time resident of Truro, is a graduate of the school of nursing at St. Francis Xavier and in 2010 completed her Masters degree in Public Administration at Dalhousie University. Janet sits on the Board of Directors for the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, the Provincial Nursing Network of Nova Scotia, and the National Executive Board of the Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions. She is also the NSNU Trustee for the Nova Scotia Health Employees' Pension Plan.

In late 2013, she was named by the Speaker of the House of Assembly Kevin Murphy to a three member MLA remuneration review panel. The MLA Remuneration Review Panel will review compensation packages, including salaries, benefits, pensions, travel and constituency allowances for MLAs.

Roy Salmon will serve as chair of the panel. He served as auditor general of Nova Scotia for 14 years, retiring in 2006. He is currently a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered



Accountants and a certified internal auditor from the Institute of Internal Auditors.

John Merrick, a known consumer advocate and former counsel to Public Inquiry into the Westray Mine Disaster, will also serve as a panel member. Mr. Merrick holds a mediation certificate from the Harvard Law School Mediation Program, and is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

This latest acclamation means Ms. Hazelton will hold the position for another two-year term, in time to welcome one thousand nurses from across the country when the NSNU hosts the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions biennial conference in Halifax, June 2015.

Janet received numerous congratulatory messages from her Nova Scotia nursing and labour counterparts from across the country including this note from Ellie MacFarlane, professor, St. F.X. School of Nursing:

*Dear Janet,*

*Congratulations on being selected yet again as the President of the NSNU. To have earned the respect, appreciation and trust of so many nurses in this province and elsewhere, over such a long period of time is an amazing accomplishment. You & union colleagues do so much for nursing. Although I am not a NSNU member, I do appreciate all you have achieved and do individually, and as the leader, along with your team and members.*

*I hear that your address to students during their professional day at St. F.X. was positively received and remarkable as usual. I was unable to stay and did not get to meet & greet as intended.*

*Best wishes & cheers*

*Ellie*

# NSNU LTD Assistance Program

Hopefully, you will never need any assistance with CPP/LTD appeals as you will never be injured or become disabled throughout your career. But if you ever find yourself in this unfortunate situation, NSNU is here to help you through a difficult and confusing process.

The NSNU Labour/Legal Assistance program offers NSNU members legal counsel to assist them through the appeal process of LTD or CPP should their claim be denied. NSNU has contracted with Steve Topshee (former NSNU Executive Director) from Burchell MacDougall Law Firm to manage our appeals. Steve has many years of experience handling appeals and he has had many successful outcomes for NSNU members.

Disabled nurses who have been denied their claims are generally very frustrated by the time they contact the Union. The appeal process can be complicated and may not be an easy process for those who are vulnerable due to their disability. Members often express their extreme gratitude via letters and emails for the help they receive from their Union.

Here are a few quotes from grateful NSNU members:

*"I wanted to write this letter to let you know what an excellent service Mr. Topshee provides. He was very thorough in reviewing my file and he was extremely friendly and pleasant to deal with throughout the entire appeal process. I am very happy to tell you that he won my Long Term Disability appeal which has improved my situation greatly.*

*Thank you so much for directing me to Mr. Topshee. He is an extremely valuable resource and his help will never be forgotten."*

*"Mr. Topshee's professionalism and expertise was recognizable by his remarkable patience in answering all of my questions as well as in the obtaining, clarification, and submission of the appropriate and relevant information to support and validate my claim.*

*I am proud to be a member of a union that supports its members by offering comprehensive and courteous advice while providing such quality services to its members. I am confident that the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union will be just as helpful should I require assistance during my return to work process."*

*"Mr. Topshee has been a constant source of expert advice and support. I can't thank him enough, and the NSNU, for all your help and support in helping me to secure LTD."*

*"Within an hour a lawyer, Stephen Topshee, from Burchell MacDougall Lawyers in Truro contacted me and discussed my case. My questions and concerns were handled very courteously and professionally. He told me how to proceed step by step. His services were so beneficial. I am now in receipt of LTD. So thank you NSNU for providing legal counsel and doing what nurses do best, helping those who need help."*

*"I know that I could never have done this without Stephen Topshee's expert legal advice, and I feel very fortunate to be represented by such a competent lawyer and to belong to NSNU which provides this service to its members. Although this process has been long and stressful, it has been worth the effort. Thanks so much for your help and support – it means a lot to me."*

*"For three years, he (Stephen Topshee) worked tirelessly and persistently on my case, and finally his efforts have resulted in a successful conclusion."*

*“Lawyer, Steve Topshee and Legal Assistant, Ashley Ettinger soon became my solace for the many months that followed. I really cannot express enough how I deeply appreciated their compassion and esprit de corps. They were both always accessible and beyond reproach. I would just like to thank the NSNU for providing me with such a legal team that treated me like one of their own. I highly recommend these legal professionals for any future cases for which they are deemed to qualify.”*

*“You gave me guidance and referred me to the union lawyer Steve Topshee and from that day forward my days became lighter, day by day.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the NSNU for standing behind me and helping me through this very difficult time.*

*I was fortunate to have had Steve Topshee as my lawyer. This man took my case and quickly eased all my stress and fear. He handled every aspect of the case efficiently, while keeping me well informed every step of the way.*

*The Nurses’ Union should be proud to have such a wonderful lawyer that can be retained by our nurses for our nurses when they require these services.*

*Once again I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the NSNU and to Steve Topshee of Burchell MacDougall, without whom my situation could have had a very different ending for my family and myself.”*

*“Mr. Topshee’s legal guidance during this time has been invaluable to me. He was always available if I had any questions, and I had no problem contacting him.”*

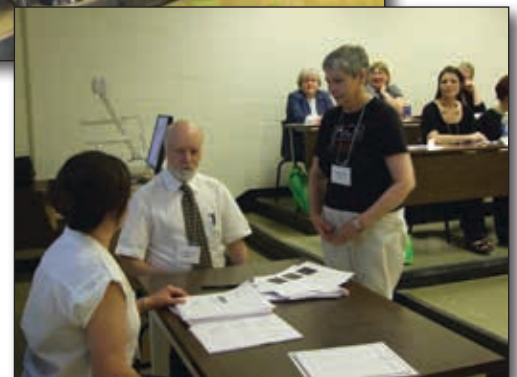
**If you are ever in need of this service, please contact your Labour Relations Representative or the Union office.**

## Eastern Labour School

Please be advised that Eastern Labour School will take place in Moncton from May 25-27 on the Campus of Université de Moncton.

Every other year, hundreds of nurses – members of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, Atlantic Division – come together in a structured forum to learn from experts in labour relations and nursing work-life subject matter. Courses will range from a wide curriculum: General Labour Relations, Social Media, Workplace Bullying, Personalities and Generations at Work, Nursing Workload and much more.

Mark the date on your calendar and watch online and in your email inbox for details on registration and participation.



## March 18 Workshops in Cape Breton

A regional education session on Clinical Capacity Reports will be provided by NSNU Researcher/Education, Dr. Paul Curry in Cape Breton on March 18th. The first session will be offered at 1pm - 3pm in the large classroom at the Northside Hospital, 5th floor. The second session will be from 7pm-9pm in the large classroom of the Cape Breton Regional, 3rd floor.

# NSNU shows solidarity for workers on picket line

In a show of solidarity, Janet Hazelton withstood frigid temperatures on the picket line with CUPE president, Danny Cavanaugh on January 28th and hundreds of union members.

Striking members of CUPE Local 3890, more than 400 custodians, bus drivers and trades people took this stance to demand job security from the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board

Less than 48 hours into a strike, the parties agreed to a government appointed mediator, ending the strike. Veteran mediator Bruce Outhouse will assist in the contract negotiations between CCRSB and CUPE.

The NSNU wishes the workers and their Union the best of luck with their mediation.



# NSNU welcomes two new locals

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is happy to welcome North Queens in Caledonia and Highland Manor in Neils Harbour, both long term care facilities. The NSNU looks forward to a long relationship with both our new locals and we are eager to meet their local representatives at our upcoming Annual General Meeting.



## Deadline for Expression of Interest for Standing Committees Extended

All Standing Committees are due for selection this year. Expression of Interest forms can be found on our website [www.nsnu.ca](http://www.nsnu.ca). The deadline for the Expression of Interest on Standing Committees has been extended to April 30, 2014 for the AGM/Nominations and Operations Committee. The deadline for all other Standing Committees – Finance, Education, Constitution & Resolutions - has been extended to August 15, 2014. Please return your forms to the provincial office by mail or scan your document then email it c/o [cindy.herbert@nsnu.ca](mailto:cindy.herbert@nsnu.ca).



# Joint Education Session - January 21, 2014

An Acute Care Joint Education Session was held by representatives of the NSNU, Provincial Negotiating Committee and acute care employer group in Truro on Tuesday, January 21 to review the most recent Collective Agreement.

Following the conclusion of bargaining the NSNU and our acute care employer group sponsor a session in order to communicate changes to language in the agreement and “test drive” new language.

This meeting was open to BUGLM members and Presidents of all our Acute Care locals. The event was well attended and provided an opportunity for our leaders and employers to familiarize themselves with the new contract. Tracy MacPhee, Legal Counsel for Health Association Nova Scotia, Janet Hazelton and Chris Albrecht, NSNU Chief Negotiator chaired the meeting.



# A Member's Gratitude

Dear NSNU Members:

As I sit and reflect on what my union has done for me, all I can say is thank you.

Over the last several months, I have received an abundance of support and leadership from the NSNU. My goal was simple, to have my position reclassified and salary adjusted to recognize my position as a Clinical Nurse Specialist under the NSNU collective agreement.

The NSNU Labour Relations Representative, on my behalf, established that my position was worthy of reclassification and recognition for parity with other Clinical Nurse Specialists working in the province. The union also worked towards establishing retroactivity from the effective date of hire for my position, which in their opinion needed to be acknowledged and brought forward to my employer.

So, as I contemplate the benefits and rewards of being an active NSNU member, I can only celebrate and reflect on the significant contributions my union has made on my behalf over this past year.

The NSNU is the driving force behind a leading force for change in nursing. It highlights the vital role that nurses play in working collaboratively with one another and with other professions to lead practice, research, education and policy initiatives that strengthen our work place in the health care delivery system.

There are many challenges in the system and leading change takes courage. Quality health care and quality work environments are definitely worth pursuing. I am proud to have this support with the NSNU as they acknowledge and recognize the work of its members.

In the last year I have had the opportunity to work closely with labour relations staff of the NSNU. I have witnessed their courage and their commitment as leaders who ensure fairness, recognition under the collective agreement and accountability for a quality work environment.

I want to personally thank my union for the courage and the commitment they bring every day to facilitate both professional practice and personalized accessibility for all nurses in the province.

For the guidance, direction, support and words of encourage, I again thank you. I look forward to many more years working as an NSNU member.

Thank you,

Sheldon MacKinnon, BScN RN MN  
Clinical Nurse Specialist  
Cape Breton District Health Authority



# VON Multi Site Labour Management Meeting

Representatives from all twelve VON locals from across the province, the VON employer group and the NSNU attended a VON/NSNU Multi Site Labour Management Meeting at the NSNU in Dartmouth on January 14, 2014.

Dwayne MacKinnon, Labour Relations Representative and Equity and Diversity Consultant for the Nurses' Union and Phil Veinotte, Regional Director Labour Relations - VON, co-hosted the meeting which covered a variety of topics. Jennifer Chapman, NSNU VP Community Care was on hand to lend her voice and vast experience to the dialogue.

High on the agenda was the ongoing redesign at VON, remote location policy update, ongoing collective bargaining, workplace safety, Leadership and Practice Premiums, and other matters.

The NSNU would like to thank the VON for their collaborative approach to resolving issues and continued show of support for nurses.



# Nova Scotia Federation of Labour

The NSNU would like to send a belated thank you note to all members who attended the 47th Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Convention, October 27-30, 2013 which took place in Halifax. This was the largest delegation of Nurses' Union attendees to date. We would like to also thank NSFL president, Rick Clarke for hosting a great event which our participants found to be informative and enlightening.



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## NSNU Staff

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<b>Cindy Herbert</b> , CA	<i>Director of Finance and Operations</i>
<b>Paul Curry</b> , BA, MA, PhD	<i>Researcher Educator Government Relations Advisor</i>
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<b>Shannon Wark</b> , RN	<i>Labour Relations Representative, Occupational Health and Safety Advisor</i>
<b>Lilo Wessels</b> , RN CCNP	<i>Labour Relations Representative, Mental Health and Addictions Consultant</i>
<b>Chris Albrecht</b> , RN	<i>Labour Relations Representative, Chief Negotiator</i>
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