

What's **NU**?

COURAGE TO **LEAD** • CONFIDENCE TO **CHALLENGE** • COMMITMENT TO **CARE**



Building for the Future: A Proud NSNU Milestone

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- Working Group Releases Report on Workplace Violence
- New NSNU Education Initiatives
- NSNU Open House Welcomes Members and Friends to New Building



President's Notebook

By Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA



Improving Workplace Safety in Nova Scotia's Community Emergency Departments

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There have been many positive initiatives resulting from advocacy work the NSNU has been involved in over the course of my activism with the Nurses' Union. The release of a recent report, *Improving Workplace Safety in Nova Scotia's Community Emergency Departments*, is certainly one that I am very pleased to see come to fruition.

On October 21, 2016 Premier Stephen McNeil and I took part in a news conference where we announced that a joint-committee, co-chaired by NSNU, would examine safety in community emergency departments. The announcement came in response to a troubling incident at Soldier's Memorial Hospital earlier that month. When the NSNU and media raised alarm bells regarding the safety of patients, staff and visitors in that environment a working group was tasked with developing recommendations to improve community emergency department safety.

The working group was co-chaired by NSHA and the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union (NSNU). The following organizations participated: NSHA, Department of Health and Wellness; NSNU; Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU); Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE); Unifor; Workers' Compensation Board (WCB); Department of Labour and Advanced Education; AWARE-NS; RCMP; Paladin Security; and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality Policing Service.

The committee met weekly between October and end of December. The group examined the existing safety protocols in community-based emergency departments in the province. They sought to identify areas for improvement based on research and best practices. By the end of the year, the group's report identified 12 recommendations to help ensure the right measures are in place so that staff, patients and visitors of community emergency departments remain safe.

As stated in the report, the risk of workplace violence in healthcare is significant. Healthcare employees in emergency departments see patients and families during difficult and stressful circumstances. Patients and visitors may become violent or aggressive, for any number of reasons. These individuals may be acting on feelings of helplessness or frustration in response to their environment or because of unmet needs. Nova Scotians need to know that they can access care on even their most difficult days and employees need

to know that they can provide excellent care in a safe and supportive environment.

Work on the recommendations is expected to take place throughout this year, with the full implementation process to happen January 2018.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge some of the people behind the scenes who worked diligently to prepare and write the report – much of it over the holidays in late December. Katrina Philopoulos, Manager, Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness, Central Zone, Tanya Penney, Director, Emergency Program of Care at NSHA, and Alex Smith, Director, Health Sector Labour Relations and Compensation, HHR Supply Management Branch, Public Service Commission, worked very closely with NSNU's own Dr. Paul Curry to document the research findings and the recommendations that flowed from the meetings.

This report serves as an example of the solutions employers and unions can create when they work together.



Webinar

The NSNU was eager to share this information with our members, scheduling a webinar on Thursday, January 19 at 2pm. An overview of the report was presented, and a question and answer period followed. The report and recommendations focus on community emergency departments, but the information contained in the report is relevant to all working nurses. Nurses from all sectors are encouraged to learn about these developments. A link to the report and recording of the webinar is posted on the homepage at nsnu.ca.

Recommendations:

1. Collaboration: Unions and employers will work together to prevent workplace violence. Unions will also encourage their members to take part in training and to participate on JOHS committees. A provincial occupational health and safety (POHS) will meet at least once every three months to discuss trends using leading and lagging indicators and to look at issues affecting workplace safety in the province.

2. Workplace violence prevention program: Develop and implement a workplace violence prevention program for the NSHA in consultation with safety, health, and labour organizations, and occupational health and safety committees. It will include: education and training; a violence risk assessment process; policy and procedures; reporting structures; investigation processes; staff supports including mandatory incident debriefing protocols inclusive of time lines; data management and monitoring.

3. Data Management System: Create a single data management system in which staff can record the following: incident reports; electronic submission of reports to WCB; hazard assessments; inspection reports; injury reports; investigation information; training records and expiry dates; notifications; immunization records and expiry dates; health assessment records; compliance reports; and case management documentation.

4. Workplace Violence Risk Assessments: A common risk assessment tool will be developed and used for the entire NSHA. All community emergency departments will consult with their local JOHS committees to conduct a violence risk assessment and prevention plan.

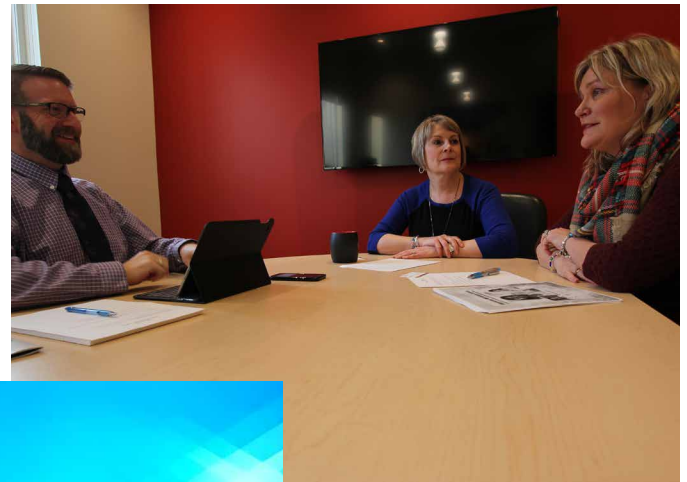
5. Emergency Response: Develop comprehensive emergency response and management policies and procedures to help control the environment when there is a situation of violence. Common codes specific to healthcare such as Code White and tools such as Access Control/Lockdown will help to alert

Getting the Word Out

There has been a great deal of interest generated by this report. Since its release on January 20, the NSNU has been contacted by numerous media outlets and other provinces that are keen to provide their health care workers with safe workplaces.

Prior to the release of the report, Janet sat down with Tim Guest, CNA Board Member (Nova Scotia)/ CRNNS Representative and the co-chair of the working group, Carmelle d'Entremont, VP People & Organizational Development, NSHA on January 13th. Tim wanted to know about our goals and expectations, as well as the impact the recommendations will have on nursing. That information will be published by the CNA.

Right: CNA's Tim Guest interviews Carmelle d'Entremont and Janet Hazelton on January 13th



Left: Janet Hazelton, Premier Stephen McNeil and Carmelle d'Entremont during the news conference on January 20th

employees to a situation where resources will be deployed to help mitigate risks of violence.

6. Education and Training: Use a risk assessment tool to decide which level of training each employee needs, given their job and risk of violence.

7. Security: Use facility risk assessments at all community emergency departments in the province to decide how many security personnel are needed.

8. Employee Communication Devices: Give employees who may be alone with patients, visitors, or family a tool to contact other staff or to request assistance. Use the risk assessment to decide who should be given such tools.

9. Reporting violence in the workplace: Allow staff to report violence in different ways including online, using a mobile phone or tablet, and even on paper.

10. Violence Alert Identification: Put an NSHA-wide client identification alert system in place to alert staff of potential danger, and to signal that a

patient may need additional care. The system may use visual or electronic cues that the healthcare team will recognize. Such a system balances the need for employee safety and patient privacy.

11. Health and Safety Organizations and working groups focused on Health and Safety should learn from each other: Make sure that all work being done to improve workplace health and safety builds upon violence prevention programs of AWARE-NS and the WCB. Make sure the recommendations from this report fit with the overall development of the provincial safety action plan by sharing them with the Steering Committee for Workplace Safety Action Plan for Nova Scotia's Health and Community Services.

12. Implementation: The NSHA will provide an annual report to the Minister of Health and Wellness as an update on the implementation of the recommendations in the report. This is expected in January 2018.

To link to the full, detailed report and other pertinent information visit nsnu.ca.



Below: Janet Hazelton speaks with CTV's Kayla Hounsell following the news conference on January 20th

Below: Janet Hazelton speaks with CTV's Kayla Hounsell following the news conference on January 20th





NSNU Board of Directors Meetings

Bargaining Update

The Health Care Council Bargaining Committee is made up of six members from the NSGEU, three members from CUPE and one from Unifor. The NSNU has representation at that table for information purposes only, as our number of positions/members in the Health Care Bargaining Unit does not allow for a voting member to be at that table.

After many months of preparation, the Health Care Bargaining Council exchanged proposals with the Employers (NSHA and IWK) in October 2016. In spite of scheduling numerous dates with the Employers, bargaining has stalled because the Employers have refused to table proposals for three crucial benefits of the new collective agreement. Those proposals are related to sick leave, health and life benefits, as well as pay plan maintenance. The Health Care Council Bargaining Committee has informed the Employers that in order to continue with bargaining they must provide the Committee with the proposals. To date, the Employer has refused.

A complaint has been filed by the Committee to the Labour Board asking that the Board order the "Employers to prepare and table forthwith a comprehensive proposal for a collective agreement for the Health Care Bargaining Unit."


The complaint to the Board further states: "This is a unique and challenging round of collective bargaining. The Parties are in a new bargaining relationship that was imposed by legislation. They must draft a single collective agreement to replace five agreements containing terms that, in many instances, are distinctly different."

At the time of publication of *What's Nu?*, dates have not yet been determined for the Labour Board hearing.

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union Board of Directors meets regularly to discuss current issues and business relating to the Union. The Board is made up of nurses representing all sectors of nursing, including Acute, Long Term and Community Care.

Members are reminded that they have the right to attend meetings of the Board. If you would like to join the Board for a meeting, we ask that you state your intention to attend at least one month in advance by emailing Lorna.Myers@nsnu.ca.

The most recent board meeting was held over two days on February 21st and 22nd. Upcoming board meetings will be held at the NSNU office in Burnside on the following dates:

- March 27, 2017
 - May 17, 2017
 - June 23, 2017
- 

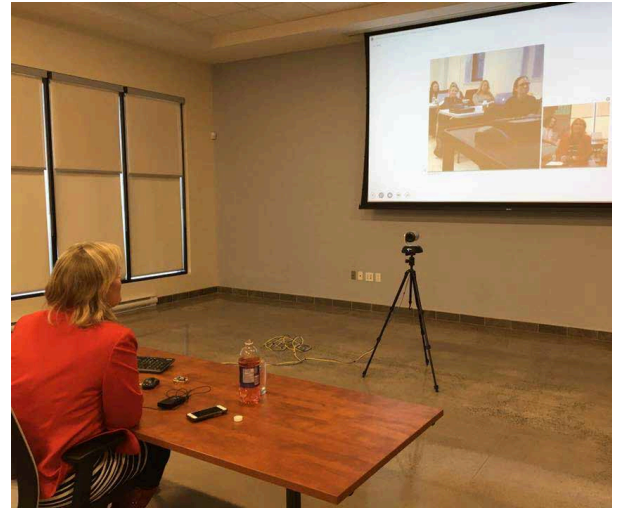
Janet Hazelton Speaks to NS Nursing Students

Several times each year, NSNU president, Janet Hazelton visits universities and colleges around the province to speak with nursing students about labour relations, the value of becoming involved in the union, the realities of nursing, the importance of understanding their future collective agreements, and their obligations as professionals.

On January 31st Janet spoke to students in the nursing program at Dalhousie. Due in part to the technological upgrades of the new NSNU building, Janet was able to video conference with students from the office. It was the first time that she had called into a classroom remotely, and the experience was very positive. Students were engaged in the conversation, asking questions and probing about issues that were on their minds. Janet was able to provide insight into the profession they will be entering in the near future.

The following day, Janet made the trip to the NSCC Waterfront Campus in Halifax to speak to students in their Practical Nursing Program. On February 2nd she went to the NSCC campus in Stellarton to greet students there. Although technology provides a great way of reaching out to people, Janet always enjoys meeting students face-to-face.

Thanks to Dalhousie and NSCC for inviting Janet into your classrooms. Beyond her role as a labour leader, Janet has been a nurse for many years and greatly enjoys sharing her experiences with those who are about to begin their careers.



Janet chats with Dalhousie Nursing Students on January 31st



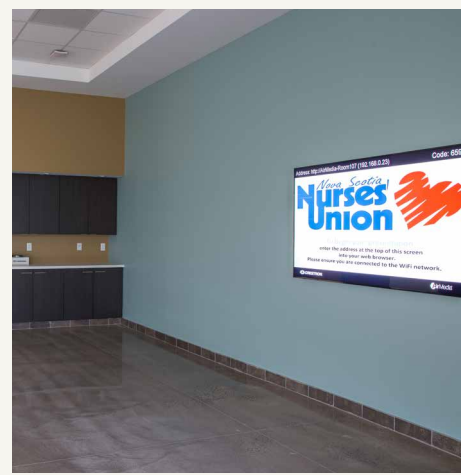
NSCC nursing students at the Waterfront Campus with Janet Hazelton on February 1st



Janet with LPN students during her trip to the NSCC campus in Stellarton on February 2nd



The reception area at 150 Garland Avenue



The building has three public meeting rooms an ample storage

150

Grand Opening Garland Avenue

NSNU staff have settled into the new building since moving on October 31st, and we are greatly appreciating an office space that finally meets all of the needs of our staff, Board and membership.

On December 12th we held an open house to welcome members and friends to our new building on Garland Avenue. As Murphy's Law

would have it, the weather was not in favour of our little shindig, as we were bombarded with a massive snowstorm that kept away all but the hardiest of travellers. Not to be deterred, we opened our doors again the very next day for dozens who came through to see what our builders, Lindsay Construction, had been working on for so many months.

Janet Hazelton cutting the ribbon on the new building



Jean Candy, Janet Hazelton and former long-time NSNU staff member, Dianne Geddes

Jamie Stewart, local president, Queens General Hospital, and Michelle Lowe, VP, Western Region



NSNU executive director, Jean Candy, CFNU president, Linda Silas, and Tom Patterson, founder and former executive director of the NSNU



Janet Hazelton and Danny Cavanagh, president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour

A new building has been a long-time coming for the NSNU. Our previous address left us in cramped offices and lacking storage. The small parking lot could barely accommodate a staff of 17, let alone the Board of Directors and visitors to the office.

The NSNU is pleased to finally be able to show members the new

space that will serve as home-base for Union activities going forward. It is a functional and stylish workspace that fosters an environment of creativity and teamwork. We anticipate continued good work happening within these walls for years to come.

Thank you to all who braved the snowy and icy conditions to attend

our open houses in December. We hope more members will come through our doors in the future to see the hub of activity that is your provincial Union office.

Please enjoy these photos of the building interior, courtesy of Lindsay Construction, and some candid snapshots from the open houses.

Stronger Together 2017 NSNU AGM



Tim Hague Sr.

An Introduction to Your Keynote Speaker

This year's Annual General Meeting promises to be another productive and instructive event. Staff and committee members are busy planning an agenda that is full of interesting local, provincial and national presenters who will inform and engage us with their knowledge and storytelling. This year we are very pleased to have a keynote address. On Wednesday, April 26 Tim Hague will bring his unique perspectives on living your best life.

Tim Hague Sr. is a compelling speaker, Parkinson's advocate, educator and motivator. As the Winner of The Amazing Race Canada Season #1, Tim has leveraged the opportunities of that platform to reach a broader audience.

Born in Texas, Tim was adopted and grew up in the State of Kansas. At the age of 25, Tim and his young wife Sheryl moved to Winnipeg, Canada, setting-out on what has proven to be a truly amazing journey. Tim earned his Registered Nurse designation in 1995 and has cared for many Parkinson's patients throughout his career. In addition, Tim's adopted father also had Parkinson's Disease which added to the deep understanding and compassion that Tim holds for people living with Parkinson's. Tim is far too well acquainted with this disease; however, it is this close professional and personal association that brings power and poignancy to his presentations.

"I have watched people die in despair and I witnessed my father live in victory despite his ongoing suffering with this disease. His legacy of determination and courage is what motivates me to

both follow in his example and help others 'Live Your Best,'" says Tim.

In 2013 Tim and his son Tim Jr. applied for, competed in, and subsequently won the first season of The Amazing Race Canada. This incredible journey has had an indelible impact on Tim's life. Having been the first person with Parkinson's to ever run and win The Amazing Race competitions, Tim has been thrust into the spotlight as an advocate. This is a role that he has embraced and continues to use to educate and raise resources toward the work of finding a cure and helping individuals living with Parkinson's to live their best.

Winning The Amazing Race has also created the opportunity for Tim to speak to thousands across Canada and the U.S., encouraging them to 'Live Your Best'. This message is wrapped in the idea of having the Strength to do your best, the Courage to be content with what your best produces, and the will to Persevere. Tim has shared his message of living and excelling through adversity with small and large audiences from the schoolroom to the boardroom. Tim's message is personal, powerful and moves beyond the mere 'fluff' of the typical motivational speech and teaches how to prevail and overcome life's struggles.

Now in his early 50's Tim is married to Sheryl and has four children and one grandchild. He lives and works in Winnipeg.

We are looking forward to hearing more from Tim in April at our AGM. Members attending the AGM are encouraged to register online at nsnu.ca by March 24th.

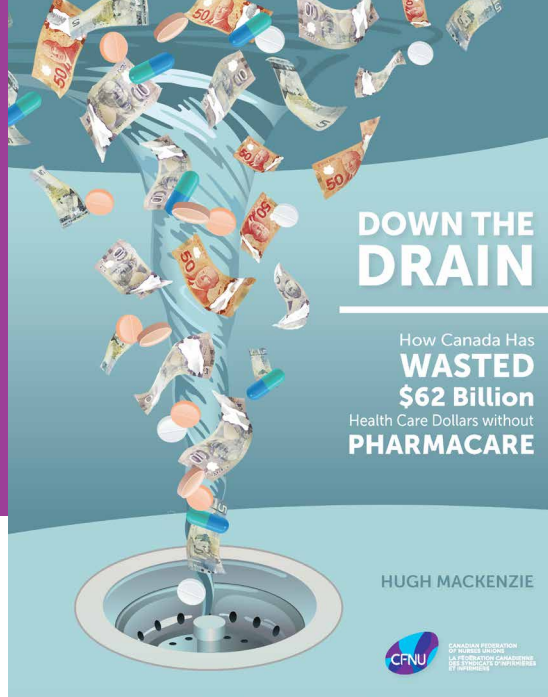
CFNU Standing Up for Pharmacare Now!

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions hosted a breakfast for Members of Parliament on February 7th on Parliament Hill to discuss the very important matter of a national pharmacare program.

In December 2016, the CFNU released a new report titled: *Down the Drain: How Canada Has Wasted \$62 Billion Health Care Dollars without Pharmacare*, where noted economist Hugh Mackenzie calculates the disturbing amount Canada has wasted over the past 10 years by not implementing national pharmacare.

The report calculates the waste from 2006-2015. Mackenzie starts the clock two years after 2004, when Canada's premiers unanimously called for the federal government to implement national pharmacare. Today the rate of waste continues to grow, adding even more to the growing missed opportunity of pharmacare. This year, Canadians will waste an additional \$7.3 billion, equaling \$14,000 squandered health care dollars every minute of every day, due to Canadians paying among the world's highest prices for prescription drugs.

The breakfast was well attended by politicians, CFNU member organization representatives (including Janet Hazelton, NSNU) and other advocates of pharmacare.



The report cover and CFNU infographics demonstrate the need for a national pharmacare program

Edson Castilho, a registered nurse who works at the IWK, shared stories about young patients and their families in need. He recounted an incident where a nine year old in Nova Scotia was repeatedly admitted to hospital for care because her family simply could not afford her asthma medications. Stories like this make no sense and speak to the true monetary and humane value of providing a national pharmacare program.

The data clearly supports a national pharmacare program – one that makes ethical, economic and common sense.

The CFNU was pleased to see support from MPs and Senators, members of the HESA committee (national Standing Committee on Health) including the chair, Bill Casey of Nova Scotia and Dr. Don Davies, Peter MacLeod Chair of the Citizens Reference Panel on Pharmacare and of course, guest speakers Hugh MacKenzie and Edson Castilho, an RN.

Step by step, we are getting closer to making this a reality!

In the last ten years, Canada has wasted **\$62 billion** health care dollars without pharmacare.

In Nova Scotia alone, this is a total waste of **\$2 billion** that could have been reinvested back into health care.



NSNU member, Edson Castilho provides the nurse perspective on national pharmacare



Janet Hazelton with Dave MacKenzie, NSGEU, Alex Furlong, CLC, and Geoff Regan, Speaker of the House of Commons and MP for Halifax West in Ottawa



CFNU Introduces “Speak Up” Mobile App

Following the 2015 federal election, CFNU began working on a mobile app for Apple and Android to help keep the conversation alive and make it easier than ever for nurses to become involved in advocacy and political action. The app is called “Speak Up”.

Launched in early summer of 2016, the app is starting to take stride, calling on even more nurses to “speak up”!

“We as nurses are the most trusted spokespersons in health care, and we must use our powerful voice to influence legislators on the issues that matter,” says CFNU president, Linda Silas.

“‘Speak Up’ unifies and empowers nurses from coast to coast to coast, enabling us to speak directly to our representatives in Ottawa, provincial premiers, ministers and policymakers in the House of Commons, and ultimately attempt to influence real change.”

How it Works

The app is made up of three main components: Issue Alerts, Legislators, and Reports. They are created to enable Canada’s nurses to present a united front on issues that truly matter.

Issue Alerts

The Issue Alerts feature explains different health care issues, each page offers a brief outline of what action the CFNU and provincial nurses’ unions are calling for. With step-by-step instructions and options for you to take action and amplify these calls to legislators, members will have no problems having their voices heard.

Legislators

The Legislators feature allows users to look up government officials by name, geographic location, or postal code. Each legislator page features a short bio of the MP, minister, or premier. Riding and contact information, website, social media, and voting data as noted on the public record is also accessible.

Reports

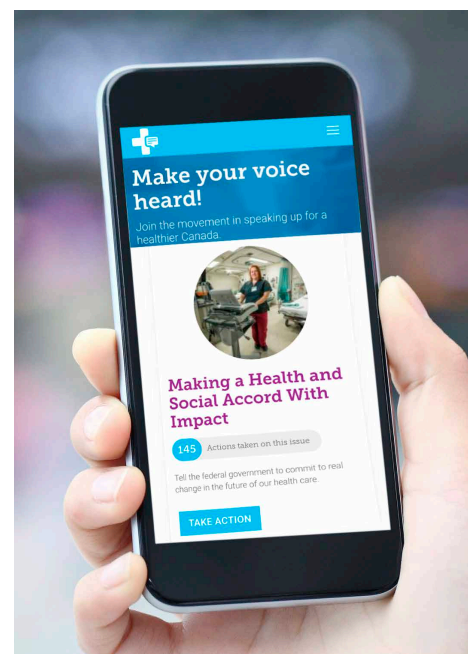
This feature allows users to keep track of what has been said and done on the issues profiled or of interest to CFNU’s members. This includes media reports, statements in legislature, and meeting reports as they apply.

This app is exclusively for members of the CFNU and will focus on

issues that matter most to Canada’s Nurses. Silas will join the NSNU for our Annual General Meeting in April, during which time she will speak about the app and provide a demonstration for members in attendance.

“We at the CFNU feel very positive about the feedback that we have received thus far, and we are excited about the opportunity to open it up to even more users and nurses across Canada,” says Silas.

For updates regarding the CFNU Speak Up app, follow the CFNU Facebook Page, Twitter and visit their website, nursesunions.ca.



The Wait Is Almost Over - The NSNU App is Coming Soon!



Our new mobile app is almost here! With a sleek design and valuable, functional features, the MyNSNU app should be available for download mid-spring. If you're looking to access contract information, eager to receive news and information, keen to participate in polls and up to the minute discussions on issues that affect you - make room on your device for the new NSNU app!

Several months ago, the NSNU Board of Directors approved the development of an app for our members. The app will work on your phone (Android and iOS/iPhone), tablet, and desktop/laptop computer. The test period for the app with office staff is about to begin, and it will be available to the membership at large in time for our Annual General Meeting in late April.

The app is an exciting opportunity to reach more members, and to be able to target messages to specific groups. It will allow the NSNU to push out important news updates and messages to those who wish to access this feature. It will include a resource library with easily searchable collective agreements, and provide links to our online education opportunities. It will allow for polling so we can gauge members' opinions quickly on a variety of topics. It will also feature a calendar option so nurses can keep track of their schedules and Union sponsored events.

We've built the app from scratch, taking into consideration your every online requirement in order to develop a mobile experience that is intuitive, smart and dramatically simplifies your searches. We know time is scarce, especially for nurses, so we made it as easy as possible for you to connect to your NSNU network and stay informed about the conversations and content most relevant to you.

Staytuned - more information will be communicated via email, web, face to face meetings and social media as we get closer to our launch date.

NEW!

NSNU Education Modules Coming Soon

In the fall of 2016, NSNU began the development of our online education program. We contracted a company to help with the creation of our foundations course on General Labour Relations. The course has been divided into two parts, and each part will take one hour to complete. Each one-hour part is divided into three 20-minute modules. This will allow members to complete the course

in several sittings rather than all at once. Each one-hour part is intended to contribute 5-points towards a practice premium for members who have not already done the course.

Moving forward, we plan to build our library of online course offerings. We still plan to offer in-person education to locals who request it, and we are also able

to offer training via webinar. The online modules provide us with one more method to reach as many members as possible, keeping nurses informed of their labour relations rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

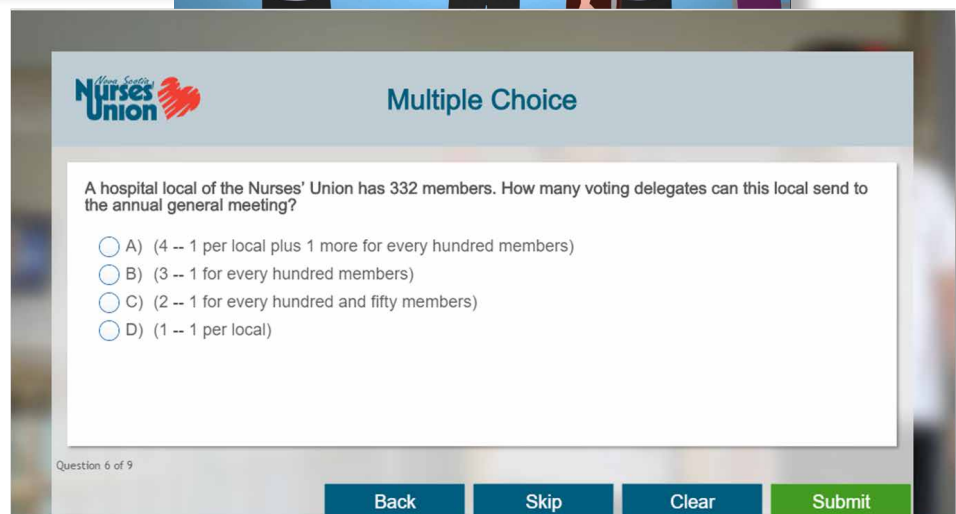
The modules are well into development at this time and will be launched at or before our Annual General Meeting in April.



These characters are part of instructional videos that will be included in the modules. The videos are designed to help members navigate leadership and practice premiums.



The education modules will include tests for each section to help members learn about the Union, while earning leadership premiums.



Canada's Nurses and Nursing Students Call for Changes to the NCLEX-RN Exam

"Which should it be? Study to be a Canadian nurse, or study to take an American exam?"

That's the question CFNU president, Linda Silas, and the Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) were asking during the CNSA Annual National Conference in January.

CNSA, CFNU and NSNU have been vocal in our dissatisfaction with the NCLEX-RN, the entry-to-practice exam imported from the United States and retrofitted for Canadian grads. On the final day of the CNSA Conference, that organization issued a release highlighting three main areas of concern:

- Insufficient testing for Canadian-specific competencies, such as social determinants of health and indigenous health.
- Poor translation, leading to a high rate of failure among francophone writers.
- Low passing rates across the board, due in large part to left-over American-specific content that does not relate to what Canadian graduates learned in the classroom.

What happens when a **U.S. test** is used for **Canadian** nursing graduates?

Passing rates fell by **20%** overall

Confusing translation for French materials – passing rates fell by **60%** for Francophone students

Limited Canadian competencies, such as Indigenous health,

Does successful completion of the NCLEX-RN exam lead to safer patient care?

Visit speakup.cfnu.ca to take action to support the future of Canadian nursing.



An infographic released by CFNU and CNSA shows some of the most troubling issues with the NCLEX-RN exam

According to the release, "After one year of implementation, the first-time pass rate was 69.7% nationally, and 27.1% for francophone writers, compared to a previous national pass rate of 87% with the CRNE exam: a shocking discrepancy for newly graduated students."

Since the exam was adopted in Canada, several provinces have dropped the limit of three attempts per person due to low success rates, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Alberta and, most recently, Ontario. In 2015, 76% of Nova Scotian graduates passed on their first try, and only 89% passed after three tries, leaving 43 new graduates without a nursing license.

Requiring that graduates pass the NCLEX in order to work in the province puts many new nurses and health care facilities in a difficult position. Because of the make-up of the test, qualified

candidates were at risk of being let go from positions they had already been hired for. During a nursing shortage, the province simply can't afford to lose out on well trained, skilled and capable young nurses.

Although it appears the NCLEX is here to stay, CFNU, CNSA, NSNU and our nurse union counterparts across the country are still working to make the process more fair for new graduates. We hope to see the exam modified, with students receiving more support as they prepare for the test.

This issue will continue to be a focus for the NSNU until our nursing graduates are no longer subjected to a test that does not adequately represent their ability to do their jobs and provide a high level of care for patients in Nova Scotia.

Supporting the Halifax Typographical Union One Year Later

On Monday, January 23rd the Halifax Typographical Union marked an unfortunate milestone: one year on strike, and little progress to speak of with their employer, the Chronicle Herald.

Since talks broke down in late January, discussions between HTU and the Chronicle Herald have been infrequent and have not produced the results that either party would have liked. As the strike wears on, fewer workers remain on the picket lines, as talented journalists and experienced newsroom workers are picked up by competing news agencies. However, those who are still waiting to go back to work are hopeful that a new round of planned discussions will bring a positive conclusion to this drawn out process.

Widespread Support

On January 23rd labour activists from all sectors came out to support HTU members with rallies across the province. Events were held in Halifax, Yarmouth, Sydney, Amherst, Bridgewater and Port Hawkesbury. In Halifax, NSNU vice-president Chris Van Zoost took the mic to offer a few words of solidarity from the Union.



Vice president, Chris Van Zoost, brings greetings from the NSNU during the Halifax Rally on January 23rd

But the events on January 23rd are only the most recent in which members of the labour movement, local and federal, have shown their support. Many organizations have offered donations to the HTU strike fund, including the NSNU. On December 12th the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions became one of the most recent national organizations to offer a donation to help keep those on the picket line afloat. CFNU president, Linda Silas, made the trip to Nova Scotia to present the HTU local leadership with a cheque in person.

Local Xpress

One of the hardest things about this strike for Herald workers has been the inability to do the jobs that they love. In efforts to continue their work, journalists, editors and other striking newsroom workers chose to continue producing content for their own online news site, Local Xpress.

The content on Local Xpress is provided by some of the province's most prolific journalists, and the quality of the work they produce is comparable to any major news organization. Despite its humble beginnings, Local Xpress has become an important part of our local news landscape in a very short amount of time.

Through rallies, donations, shares on social media, conversations and shared experiences, the labour movement and the NSNU have been behind HTU every step of the way. We will continue to stand with them until they are back to work, which we hope happens sooner than later. One year on the picket line is too long; it's time for a resolution.



Janet Hazelton with HTU representative Frank Campbell and CFNU president, Linda Silas as she presents a donation to HTU on December 12

Solidarity for Nova Scotia's Teachers

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union has been in the midst of difficult negotiations with our provincial government for more than a year, resulting in two rejected Tentative Agreements (TA). At the time this newsletter went to print, the voting results of their third tentative agreement were not yet known.

Throughout this time, the NSNU has been steadfast in its support for the NSTU. Although the Teachers Union is not affiliated with the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, the NSNU and other Unions within the Fed have shown genuine solidarity with our brothers and sisters in this fight. Much like students, parents, labour advocates and others, representatives from the Nurses' Union have ventured out into the cold to support their friends and neighbours.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton has attended and spoken at rallies in Halifax and Truro. She has offered words of encouragement from Nova Scotia's nurses, and reminded NSTU and the government of the strong support that exists for teachers within the labour movement.

"This is a difficult time for the labour movement. Increasingly, we witness more and more backlash towards unions. Dedicated and hardworking employees are struggling to maintain or obtain contract language that makes it possible to do their jobs well. In the meantime, unreasonable pressures in the workplace stack up. We stand united with teachers as their fight is universal," says Hazelton.



Janet Hazelton speaks during the December 5th NSTU rally in Halifax

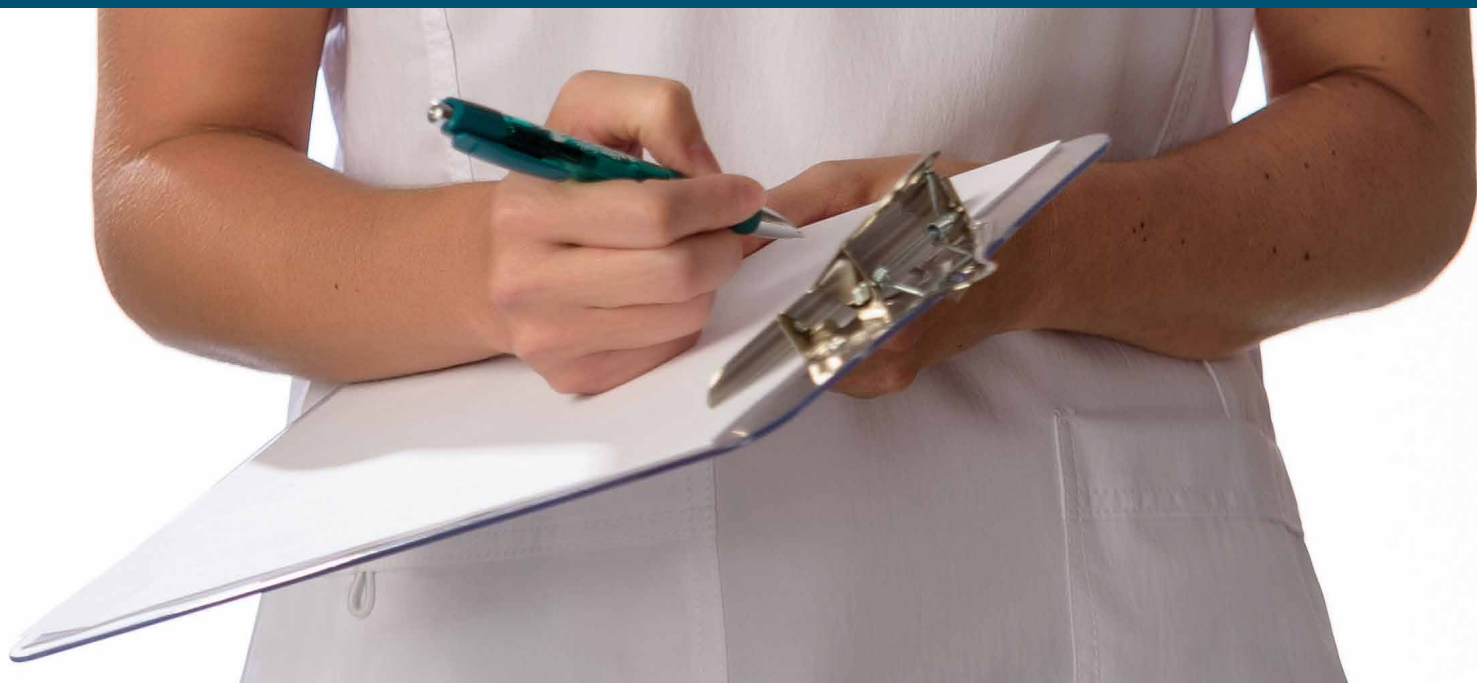
Regardless of the outcome on this third TA, it is clear that the labour movement in Nova Scotia is as strong as ever, and activists are willing to stand up for one another. We expect this trend will continue as more unions head to the bargaining table in the near future.



Members gather for the NSTU rally in Cape Breton



Part of the NSNU contingent at the rally in Yarmouth



Nova Scotia Signs Federal Health Transfer Deal

In 2014 the Canada Health Accord expired under the leadership of then-Prime Minister, Stephen Harper. The Health Accord was designed to ensure equal access to quality health care for all Canadians, regardless of location or ability to pay. Part of the Health Accord is the Canada Health Transfer, which is a transfer of money from the federal government to the provinces that is earmarked for health care.

It was known going into Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's first term that the renewal, revamping or replacement of the Health Accord would be a major focus, one that required attention not only from federal leadership, but provincial leadership as well, as the administration of health care is a provincial portfolio.

Over the past several months provincial leaders have been meeting with Federal Minister of Health, Jane Philpott, and Minister of Finance, Bill Morneau, to negotiate the specifics of the Canada Health Transfer. Negotiations have been far from smooth, with many disagreements along the way about criteria for determining how transfers would be allocated, and how much money should be provided to the provinces for health services.

In December talks became strained between the provinces and the federal government and it appeared that all provinces would walk away for the time being without a deal. However, just before Christmas, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and New

Brunswick signed deals with the federal government for bilateral health agreements, opting to step away from further discussions. In the New Year, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island all signed similar deals.

While the specifics of Nova Scotia's deal are not fully clear, according to CBC news, "The Nova Scotia government said the province will receive \$287.8 million in new funding through the agreement. Of that, \$157 million will go toward home care and \$130.8 million will go towards mental health services."

In total, Nova Scotia will receive \$983.6 million for the 2017-18 year, which is 4.1% higher than the 2016-17 Health Transfer.

It also appears that the government has secured a "me too" clause, which means if another province is able to negotiate a better deal, Nova Scotia will get the better deal as well.

Since the Federal Election campaign in 2015, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and its member organizations, including the NSNU, have been campaigning for a new Health and Social Accord which includes a national prescription drug program, a safe seniors strategy and a health human resources plan. Although these items have not been promised at this point, CFNU leadership continues to meet with federal leaders on these issues and others, speaking for nurses and all Canadians.



NSNU Holiday Toy Drive

"Pop guns! And bicycles! Roller skates! Drums! Checkerboards! Tricycles! Popcorn! And plums!"

The NSNU holiday toy drive may have been less adventurous than the Christmas described in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* – there were certainly no roller skates or bicycles involved – but it was still a wonderful show of generosity from staff who each brought in an item to be donated to kids in need.

Every year the NSNU holds a Secret Santa in which staff members exchange gifts that reflect the "inner child" of one of their colleagues. Opening the gifts is always a lot of fun, and there is no shortage of laughter in the office as the toys are unwrapped.

On December 9th NSNU president, Janet Hazelton brought all of the toys to the C100 Toy Drive at the Bayer's Lake Cineplex. The recipient was the Salvation Army, which distributes the toys to families in need. This year, more than 17,000 children across the Maritimes received a gift from the toy drive.

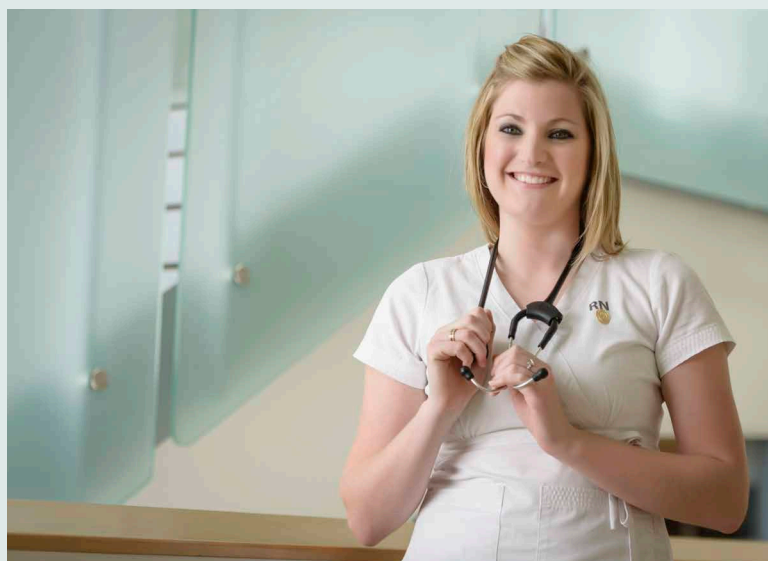
We hope the children who received gifts from the NSNU on Christmas day enjoyed them just as much as we did. We look forward to doing it again next year.

Are You Paying the Correct Amount of Union Dues?

If you work at more than one NSNU Facility and pay union dues more than once in a pay period, you may be eligible for a refund from the Provincial Office. Members who have been paid for **less than 7.5 hours** in Acute Care and **less than 8 hours** in Long Term Care in one bi-weekly pay period may also be eligible for a refund from the Provincial Office.

The Provincial portion of NSNU union dues (\$29.24 for RN's and \$21.48 for LPN's) will be refunded by cheque on a quarterly basis. Your rebate will only be retroactive for a period of up to 12 months prior to contact with the NSNU.

If either situation applies to you, please contact the NSNU Provincial Office (Verna Harrie at 902-468-6748 or verna.harrie@nsnu.ca).



Belmac Discount

Belmac, an online and site-visit supplier of standardized uniforms for nurses and other health care workers across the Maritimes, provides a 20% discount on white and black uniform purchases.

They offer a wide array of stylish, yet practical looks to meet your needs.

To view their selection, visit www.belmacuniforms.com. To obtain a union discount code contact Belmac at 888-539-6006.

Remembering a Friend and a Mentor “A True Nursing Legend”



Anne and Dennis Felix with their granddaughters Leigha and Laleah at their graduation from NSCC's LPN program

From time to time the Nurses' Union hears from a member or a group of members who, as part of their own grieving process, wish to share their memories and deep admiration for a co-worker who has passed away.

Recently, the nurses at Strait Richmond Hospital lost a great mentor and friend.

Anne Felix, fondly known as Nanny Anne, passed away on January 27th of this year at the age of 73.

She was a wife, mother, grandmother, sister, a Nurse.

Born into a family of seven children, she was only daughter to the late John James Sr. and Vida Morgan. She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Dennis Felix, two sons and three daughters, and many cherished grandchildren.

According to her lovingly written obituary, Anne, a registered nurse, graduated in 1964 from St. Rita's School of Nursing in Sydney. She had a long and distinguished 52 year career. From 1964-72 she worked at the Halifax Infirmary. After moving back to Cape Breton in 1972, she worked at the Gulf Oil Refinery Infirmary in Point Tupper from 1972-80. Her last 35 years of service were spent at Strait Richmond Hospital from 1980-2016. She loved nursing and was most happy when caring for her patients.

Anne inspired many over the course of her career, including two of her granddaughters, twins Leigha and

Laleah; graduates from the LPN program at the NSCC Marconi Campus in Sydney. Anne helped raise the girls, instilling in them the nurturing, compassionate and wise characteristics that make a great nurse.

The NSNU extends sincere condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of Anne Felix. She will be remembered by all for her caring nature and unending dedication as a nurse.

Caramen Landry, a licensed practical nurse who worked with Anne at Strait Richmond, has this to say about her dear friend and inspiration:

“I've spent my whole nursing career working with this lady! She has taught me and made me laugh. She has supported me and so many others. She was an amazing nurse and person; always caring about everyone else. She passed these qualities onto her granddaughters who I have also had the privilege to work with. She will be greatly missed by everyone at work and pretty much everyone who has had the privilege of meeting her. It will certainly be a completely different work environment without her around. I will miss her greatly and can't express enough how deeply sorry I am to her family! We've spent these last few days at work telling stories about Anne - laughing and crying and missing her. Anne was not only a True Nursing Legend but also a truly caring friend to everyone she met. Forever missed and loved Nanny Anne! “



An honour guard of Anne's colleagues attended her funeral in black and white, remembering their friend and mentor

Thank You from a Family Member

It takes a great deal of emotional fortitude and compassion to care for people at the end of their lives. During the holidays, some of our members received this beautiful poem from Peggy Kell, whose sister they had cared for in her final days at R.K. MacDonald Nursing Home in Antigonish. Peggy was kind enough to allow us to publish it for all of our members to read.

Thank you, Peggy, for this beautiful ode to palliative care nurses.

To the ones who work at the end of the road

Your job is hard, incredibly so.
 The hours are long, the breaks interrupted, and the physical demands high.
 The mental demands a mountain-range higher still.
 Your charges are never going home.
 And you are healers.
 Yet you all possess the will come back the next day.
 And the next and the next.
 You conduct yourselves with practiced and conscientious skill.
 You honour your professions.
 But surrounded by the end of life,
 the profession gives way to the person.
 I have seen your compassion.
 I have seen your friendship.
 I have seen your love.
 I have seen you be your best.
 There are not enough thank yous, nor outpouring of gratitude for what you do.
 You cannot capture a lifetime's worth of esteem that way.
 Know that it exists.



Share Your Stories

The NSNU is looking for stories from members that you would like to see published in future issues of *What's Nu?*. Our newsletter is delivered to nearly 7,000 homes, and reaches countless others on the NSNU website at www.nsnu.ca/newsletters.

Members can submit an article for consideration, or put in a request that the NSNU write about a particular topic. Story suggestions can be related to personal experiences, an event or educational opportunity, or other news and information relevant to nurses. If you have a story that you would like to share with us, please contact Coleen.Logan@nsnu.ca.

Participating in NSNU Promotional Materials

The NSNU develops new promotional materials every year. In order to do that we conduct photo and video shoots that are used for specific projects, and for general use. Most of our promotional materials feature members of our union – your fellow nurses, who work in Acute, Long-Term and Community Care around the province.

We are always looking for more members to feature in our promotional campaigns. We aim to represent RNs,

LPNs and NP's from all areas of practice, backgrounds, and regions so we can celebrate the diversity of Nova Scotia's nurses. All members are welcome.

If you wish to be a part of upcoming promotional campaigns, please contact Coleen.Logan@nsnu.ca to signal your interest. You will be contacted when an opportunity arises for you to participate in a new project.



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In the Next Issue of What's **NU**?

Bargaining Update
Gearing Up for the 2017 AGM
CFNU Check-In



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