

What's **NU**?

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



Raise Your Hands if You're Getting Ready to Retire!

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President's Notebook

By Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA



VIOLENCE It's Not Part of the Job

According to the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, though no business or organization in Nova Scotia is immune to the human and economic impact of workplace injuries, health and social sectors have some of the highest rates of injuries.

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On the cover: attendees of the NSNU pre-retirement course, held at the Union office on March 31st

Statistics reveal an alarming account of injuries across the board in Nova Scotia's workplaces, but the highest are in our health care facilities.

The WCB and AWARE-NS are spearheading efforts towards developing a new targeted five-year action plan to reduce injuries, particularly in the health and social services sectors. Unfortunately, the injury rate is growing in these areas.

I have been asked to sit on the Advisory Committee for this project and I am eager to voice my concerns, and those of our membership, to anyone who will listen.

There are also five subcommittees to examine different key issues including slips, trips and falls, return-to-work, and musculoskeletal injuries, to name a few.

Given the degree of education and information available to workers, employers and policy makers, our attitudes and actions regarding occupational health and safety should be evolving and thus the number of incidents should be declining. However, the numbers tell a different story. Going forward, our goal will be to examine why problems persist and how we can all play a vital role in promoting a culture of workplace health and safety.

Along with Jason Shannon from Shannex, I will co-chair the Violence Committee. This topic is particularly relevant right now given the frequency and brutality of incidents of violence perpetrated against health care workers.

Workers in hospitals, nursing



homes, and other healthcare settings face significant risks of workplace violence. Many factors contribute to this risk, including working directly with people who have a history of violence or who may be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or medications. The rates of serious workplace violence incidents (those requiring days off for an injured worker to recuperate) are often many times greater in health care than in the private sector. In fact, health care accounts for nearly as many serious violent injuries as all other industries combined, and many more assaults or threats go unreported.

Workplace violence comes at a high cost all around; however, it can be prevented. The Committee wants to establish resources to help build and implement a comprehensive

workplace violence program in your healthcare facility.

The committees that are tasked with studying all aspects of workplace violence and injuries will feed information back to the steering committee and the five-year plan.

I look forward to working on this Committee and sharing our findings with you as the work gets underway.

Contained on page eight of this newsletter, you will see what fellow nurse unions across Canada are doing to help combat violence in the workplace. It is disconcerting to see that the unions across the country must remain vigilant in keeping this conversation in play – a conversation about a problem that continues to escalate.



Speakers for the pre-retirement course included (left to right) Larry Wark, Nova Scotia Federation of Union Retirees, Calvin Jordan, Nova Scotia Health Employees' Pension Plan and Tina Snair, Health Association of Nova Scotia

NSNU Pre-Retirement Course

On Friday, March 31, the NSNU hosted a “raucous” pre-retirement course designed specifically by the Nurses’ Union for nurses who are approaching retirement. Members who attended in person, about 70 in total, spent the day learning the ins and outs of preparing for their financial future. Another 45 or so took part in the online webinar.

The course consisted of three sessions. Calvin Jordan from the Nova Scotia Health Employees’ Pension Plan, a soon-to-be retiree himself, led the day with a spirited

and informative overview for those in the NSHEPP pension plan - all acute care nurses and most long-term care nurses. Calvin has been a long-time friend of the NSNU and a highly valued pension resource to our members.

The NSNU was happy to have Calvin join us at what is likely his last educational event with our members. Janet Hazelton presented him with a small token of our appreciation for his many, many years of service to nurses.

The second presenter of the day was Tina Snair from the Health Association of Nova Scotia who spoke about Health Related Benefits in Retirement. NSNU members with benefit coverage by HANS listened intently as Tina shared her knowledge and sound advice.

The final speaker, Larry Wark, former President of CAW (Unifor) and the current representative for the Nova Scotia Federation of Union Retirees had plenty to say about life as a happy retiree. The



A screenshot shows how webinar participants viewed the course

retired, but still active Wark is the father of our very own Shannon Wark, former IWK member turned Labour Relations Representative.

Larry's presentation was filled with insightful and practical pearls of wisdom, all greatly appreciated by the men and women in attendance.

For those who were unable to participate in person or view the live webinar, a video recording of the sessions is posted online at www.nsnuc.ca.

The NSNU would like to thank the IWK for cost-sharing some of the day's expenses, and thank you to all who joined in.



The NSNU conference room was packed with over 70 participants for the pre-retirement course on March 31st

Bargaining Update

Health Care Bargaining Council Only

In mid January, the Health Care Bargaining Council made a formal bargaining complaint with the Labour Board against the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the IWK.

Bargaining between the Nova Scotia Council of Health Care Unions and the NSHA and IWK stalled because the Employers refused to inform the Unions about what they are proposing for the new collective agreements.

That Council asked repeatedly for the NSHA and IWK to table their full proposals. The Employers refused. At issue were three key proposals: sick leave; health and life benefits plans; and pay plan maintenance (the process that evaluates whether people are properly paid for the work they do).

Since January, the Council and the Employers have now scheduled 26 days on which they intend to meet and engage in collective bargaining. Those days are:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| April 10, 11, 25, 26 | August 16, 17, 30, 31 |
| May 24, 25 | September 13, 14, 27, 28 |
| June 22, 23 | October 11, 12 |
| July 13, 14, 20, 21 | November 9, 10, 15, 16 |

The Council and the Employers will resume bargaining by discussing the items previously proposed for discussion. The Council and the Employers will determine the next items to be discussed, in the normal course of bargaining.

The two failure-to-bargain complaints involving the Council and the Employers, currently before the Nova Scotia Labour Board, will be withdrawn.

The Council of Unions bargaining committee is made up of six members from NSGEU, three from CUPE and one from Unifor. The NSNU has representation at the table for information purposes because there are fewer than a dozen members in this bargaining unit.

There is no new information to report about the Nurses' Bargaining Unit Council. The Nurses' Council will not commence bargaining anytime soon.

MIND YOUR HEALTH

NSNU Education Day



The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is pleased to present a very full agenda of interesting and relatable information at our annual Education Day, MIND YOUR HEALTH, April 27 in Truro; presentations will better inform us about mental health issues on the job and how we can help lift barriers and combat the stigma in order to normalize care for those in need.

On November 9, 2016, NSNU President, Janet Hazelton had the opportunity to attend the first annual Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter Annual Conference. The theme of the conference was, Mental Health in the Workplace: Employee Mental Health – a Made in Canada Solution Hard at Work in Nova Scotia. At that event she joined over 30 other Nova Scotia leaders when she signed the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter. These leaders and organizations are committed to advancing health and safety in our workplaces.

Louise Bradley, President and CEO of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, who is also a registered nurse, presented the keynote address on November 9th. She spoke about mental health in the workplace and what is being done to engage employers and workers alike. Sadly, health-care worksites have been identified as some of the most toxic, requiring a more unique, and perhaps more aggressive strategy than most other workplaces. The NSNU is very pleased to have Louise on our



Louise Bradley

program this April 27 when the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union has this important conversation with our members.

We will also hear from Tim Tokarz, a registered nurse from Ontario and a member of the Ontario Nurses' Association who is living with PTSD. Tim speaks eloquently about this difficult subject. He has written a song about his deeply personal journey and the loss of his brother-in-law to PTSD, who was also a nurse.

Louise, Tim and NSNU's own Lilo Wessels, Labour Relations Representative, Mental Health and Addictions Consultant will conduct a panel discussion before lunch to address participant questions and comments. We will also have therapy dogs on site midday, complete with a briefing on how our canine friends have become a useful form of treatment for those suffering with mental health issues.

Our final speaker of the day is Tyler Hayden, a team builder and author with over 16 books to his writing credit. Tyler, a motivational speaker who hails from Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, will share his advice on creating a balanced lifestyle in both our personal and professional lives.

His presentation is about developing long-term life satisfaction by living "every single moment of every single day." In doing so, we effectively and efficiently balance the rigours that work and life throw our way. His speeches are energetic, comedic, participatory, educational and highly energizing! His inspirational ideas are as fresh as they are relevant to today's challenges. Tyler's contribution to our education event will be a great way to end the day.

We thank all of those who have signed up to attend the Education Day. This year's event promises to be one of the best. We look forward to seeing you there.



Tyler Hayden

The Healing Calm of Canine Companionship



Maiya

More exciting news about our upcoming April 27 Education Day! In addition to the scheduled guest speakers, this year's Education Day will feature a quartet of four-legged therapists. Sophie, Charlie, Maiya and Sidney will be joining us in Truro courtesy of Therapeutic Paws of Canada.

Therapeutic Paws is a non-profit organization of volunteers that provide pet therapy in a variety of settings including hospitals, long-term care facilities, libraries, and universities.

Many of our members are no doubt familiar with the services that therapy dogs provide in a clinical setting, but therapy dogs have the benefit of stress relief anywhere they go! After hearing of the success of Paws Rooms during exams on university



TPOC Child Certified Halifax Teams

campuses, we decided to incorporate a Paws Room into Education Day to try and lighten the mood after discussing some very heavy topics.

During the panel discussion, members will have the opportunity to visit the dogs in the Paws Room, cycling through in small groups. The Paws Room will be set up outside of the main presentation room in MacLeod BC at the Best Western Glengarry Hotel so those with allergies or other conditions who don't wish to interact with the dogs can remain at the panel discussion.

Joining us will be Sophie - a Golden Retriever (who of course loves people!), Charlie - a Fox Hound Beagle, Maiya - a Labradoodle, and Sidney - another Golden Retriever. The lovely dogs will also be accompanied by their handlers who will be more than willing to answer any questions people may have about the dogs or the therapy dog program.



Sophie

An Epidemic of Violence: A Call to Action

Nurses are among the most at risk for becoming victims of violence on the job. It's a simple, but troubling fact.

As members know, the NSNU has been a vocal advocate for nurse safety, building workplace safety and safe staffing language into contracts, and lobbying the government to introduce

legislation that will protect health care workers. Just recently the NSNU was successful in partnering with the government and various stakeholders to develop a plan to improve safety in community emergency rooms in Nova Scotia.

Across Canada nurses' unions have been speaking out on behalf of their members. Being punched,

kicked, spit on, slapped, pinched, and verbally assaulted is not part of the job, but these are common occurrences in all areas of health care, in all provinces and territories.

These are a few of the things that our fellow nurse unions have been saying, and projects they are undertaking to address violence against nurses.

New Brunswick Nurses Union: Will it Take a Fatality?

On March 16th Paula Doucet, president of the New Brunswick Nurses Union published an article in the Telegraph Journal addressing the issue of violence against nurses in her province. The article came on the heels of two polls completed by the union measuring the prevalence of violence against their nurse members.

The first poll of 400 randomly selected members found that 54% had experienced abuse over the past year. The second poll of the full membership garnered 779 responses, and showed an even more serious problem, as 66% responded that they had been subject to verbal or physical abuse in the same time frame.

NBNU has partnered with health care employers to implement prevention measures to reduce incidents of violence, but government support is sorely needed. As Paula explained in the article, "New Brunswick remains the lone province where workplace violence is not recognized as a workplace hazard under occupation health and safety type legislation."

"Will it take a fatality for this government to do the right thing to protect all workers in New Brunswick?" she questioned.

NBNU is calling for risk assessments to be completed in all health care workplaces, and further measures to be put in place to protect health care workers.

British Columbia Nurses Union: Not Part of the Job

The British Columbia Nurses Union has launched graphic television commercials to draw attention to the severity of workplace violence in BC health care facilities. The ads feature long, sweeping shots of medical-facilities-turned-crime-scenes, as a stirring voiceover of a 911 call plays for the duration of each thirty-second spot.

The ads were released shortly after a study that showed an average 26 nurses suffered from violence-related injuries per month. According to Worksafe BC, the incidents of violence against nurses in that province have gone up by 50% since 2006, a deeply troubling statistic.

According to BCNU, "LPNs, RNs and RPNs alone account for 31% of injuries from acts of violence in BC."

The ads serve as a reminder to nurses that violence is not part of the job, a message that unions across the country have been repeating for years. Each commercial directs viewers to the website www.bcnu.org/takeaction where they can write a letter to the presidents and CEOs of BC's health authorities detailing their personal stories of violence at work, or simply call on them to take action.

The commercials can be viewed on the BC Nurses Union YouTube channel.

Manitoba Nurses Union: Purple Rings

The Manitoba Nurses Union has introduced a new symbol into Winnipeg health care facilities in an attempt to reduce violence. An image of two interlocking purple rings will be posted on the doors of patients who have a history of violent behaviour. The intention is to give adequate notice to workers who are attending to that patient so they can be prepared.

In Manitoba 30% of nurses have been assaulted and 50% have been intimidated by patients on the job.

The rings are being launched in coordination with four mandatory learning modules that discuss strategies for diffusing difficult behaviour, dealing with conflict and seeking assistance when needed.

The new measure is not without its detractors, in particular those who are concerned that the rings could stigmatize patients with dementia who react violently out of fear or confusion.

Despite a few concerns, MNU has received mostly positive feedback at this early stage, and they are confident that the purple rings will not negatively impact care for those who do have a history of violence. With an eye toward prevention, MNU is eager to see if this measure will be successful in reducing incidents of violence going forward.

Ontario Nurses Association: Telling Nurses' Stories

Ontario has been suffering from a rash of aggressive and violent incidents in their health care facilities, including some with grievous injuries for nurses and other employees. In 2014, 680 nurses missed work due to injuries sustained on the job, and health care workers had more lost-time injuries due to violence than manufacturing, construction and mining combined.

In response to these troubling numbers, the Ontario Nurses Association launched a website where members can submit their own stories and access resources that identify their rights and responsibilities regarding workplace violence prevention.

The stories on ONA's website vary from threats and intimidation to full-scale assault, and everything in between. Nurses are using the site to shine a light on the extreme prevalence of violence in Ontario health care facilities, which often goes unreported.

Learn more about ONA's workplace violence prevention campaign at <http://violence.ona.org>.

The Student Nurse Perspective

Sadly, violence against nurses has had an impact on nursing students. During the 2016 NSNU AGM attendees were asked to raise their hands if they had experienced some form of violence in the workplace. It was concerning when most of the nursing students in attendance raised their hands.

On March 21st the student newspaper for Ryerson University published an article about the fears student nurses have about entering the workplace due to the threat of violence. In the article they cited stories from their own peers that had been threatened or abused during work-terms, making them nervous to be alone with patients.

The article focused on the lack of education around violence in the nursing program. With such a heavy focus on patient care, there is little time given to the realities of dealing with difficult patients, leaving

students unprepared when they're faced with an aggressive patient or family member on the job.

As the Ryerson story clearly shows, student nurses are facing more than the stress of a new job and new responsibilities when they graduate and enter the workforce. They're encountering violence on a scale they never could have anticipated, often without the tools to deal with it. We need more support for students, just as we do for seasoned nurses who are in danger of becoming victimized at work.

It is time for the government and employers to prioritize the safety of health care workers. Nurses are encouraged to report any incidents of violence in their workplace, no matter the severity. Violence is never acceptable, and it's time for nurses to finally accept that it is not part of the job.

It's Black and White

Reviewing Standardized Uniforms for Nurses



It has been six years since the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union built standardized white and black uniforms into acute care contracts. Since the initiative was first introduced in 2011, several nursing homes around the province have signed on as well, understanding and appreciating the inherent value of making nurses more easily distinguishable and accessible from other health care workers in their facilities.

Not just in Nova Scotia, the trend has made its way to several other provinces. Nurses in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland all proudly sport or plan to implement a predominately white and black uniform, making a statement about the importance of the professional image of nurses in this country.

Members may recall that the decision to move to a standardized uniform did not happen overnight. It was the result of many months of consultations, polls and debate. Although the policy was not universally embraced in the beginning, the majority of our members respected the need for nurses to be identifiable in their workplaces.

In January 2012, the NSNU commissioned a study to determine public opinion on nurse visibility. In these surveys,

respondents said the new standardized uniforms made it easier to spot nurses among other health care workers in scrubs. According to that study, 75% of respondents felt it was important for nurses to be easily identified, and 68% were in favour of standardized uniforms, believing that it would help re-establish a professional image for nurses.

But beyond simple visibility, bringing standardized uniforms into Nova Scotian health care facilities has helped shine a light on another more serious problem: chronic understaffing. In a sea of scrubs, nurses in white and black stand out, whereas a lack of black and white is a bigger statement of systemic safe-staffing concerns. The standard look has helped make a very serious problem more visible (almost tangible), putting more pressure on the government and employers to hire more nurses.

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is very proud of the initiative that brought a standardized uniform to our province and across the country. Our leadership strongly believe in the value of this policy, and it was gratifying to see such strong membership support for the change. Today, patients can walk into most health care facilities in the province and immediately know who the nurses are. This is a true success story, and one the NSNU is pleased to have pioneered.



Ontario Registered Nurses to be Canada's First to Prescribe Medication

*Over the past few years the idea of RN prescribing has been gaining traction. Although this is not presently being considered in Nova Scotia, it is set to go into effect in Ontario. The following article published by **Inside Toronto** on March 5th addresses changes to the scope of practice for Ontario RNs and NPs.*

The Ontario government will soon expand the professional scope of registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) across the province.

Ontario Health Minister Eric Hoskins recently announced the government plans to amend the *Nursing Act* in Ontario this spring to authorize RNs to prescribe medications independently and communicate diagnoses. Regulatory changes to allow NPs to prescribe controlled substances will follow soon.

Expanding the scope of practice for RNs and NPs is a “longtime priority” for the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) — the professional association representing registered nurses, nurse practitioners and nursing students in the province.

RNAO officials greeted the news with enthusiasm at its 17th annual Queen’s Park Day.

“By taking this tremendous step, we’re making history,” RNAO CEO Doris Grinspun said in a statement. “RNs and NPs have the expertise to increase access to care in all corners of our province, and we are delighted this will soon become a reality.”

Grinspun was among more than 110 RNs, NPs and nursing students visiting Queen’s Park recently as part of the event.

Once enacted, Ontario will become the first province or territory in Canada where RNs independently prescribe and communicate diagnoses, RNAO said.



Nurse union leaders attending to business during the 2017 Atlantic Caucus in St. John's

Atlantic Caucus

Once a year leaders from the Atlantic nurse unions come together to discuss issues that affect nurses in our region. On March 7th the Registered Nurses Union of Newfoundland and Labrador hosted the Atlantic Caucus for 2017. NSNU president, Janet Hazelton and executive director, Jean Candy joined NBNU president, Paula Doucet, PEINU president, Mona O'Shea, RNUNL president, Debbie Forward and senior staff from their

organizations in St. John's for the event.

During the meeting the group discussed major issues affecting labour and nursing in each province, bargaining challenges, the NCLEX-RN exam, violence in the workplace, 24-hour shifts, Eastern Labour School and more.

Nurses across Canada have many things in common, but our brothers and sisters in the Atlantic

region share a particularly close bond. The NSNU appreciates the opportunity to meet with the leadership from our fellow Atlantic nurse unions and share stories, brainstorm ideas, and make use of the many years of nursing and labour expertise represented at that table. Thank you to RNUNL for hosting this year's caucus.

NSNU Hosts VON Halifax Local Meeting

On March 2nd VON Halifax held a meeting of their local at the NSNU office in Burnside. It was one of the first events held in the new office for a union local. NSNU Labour Relations Representative, Chris Albrecht hosted the meeting, and refreshments were provided by the Union.

On the docket were conversations around the VON pension plan, scope of practice, appropriate use of social media and bargaining updates, among other things.

Thanks to VON Halifax for holding your meeting at the NSNU office. We look forward to welcoming more members come through the new building for meetings and events going forward.



VON Halifax members met in the NSNU conference room on March 2nd



Members of the NSFL Executive Council gather at the NSNU office on March 10th

NSNU Hosts NSFL Executive Meetings

In March the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour held three days of meetings at the NSNU office in Burnside. Officers and Executive Council members joined together to discuss issues and initiatives related to labour in Nova Scotia. In the current political climate and with so much labour strife in our province, there was no shortage of topics to discuss or work to be done. Some items on the schedule included the upcoming provincial election, collective bargaining, federal and provincial issues, the 25th anniversary of the Westray Mine explosion, and the NSFL Convention coming up in November.

Following the meetings, members of the Executive Council made their way to join striking members



Members of the Executive Council on the picket line supporting the Halifax Typographical Union



The Executive Council convenes in the NSNU conference room on March 8th

of the Halifax Typographical Union on the picket line in Halifax. HTU members have been on strike since January, 2016 after talks fell through with their employer, the Chronicle Herald.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour provides a voice for 70,000 workers and 400 union locals around the province, fighting for fair collective bargaining and respect for workers. NSNU President, Janet Hazelton is a Vice President-at-Large and NSNU Board members Chris Van Zoost and Jennifer Chapman serve as General Vice Presidents on the NSFL Executive Council.

#BeBoldForChange

Celebrating International Women's Day

March 8th was International Women's Day, which provided an opportunity to celebrate the great achievements of women, and focus on the work that still needs to be done to achieve true gender equality. This year's theme was #BeBoldForChange.

Being bold is all about people stepping up and taking action to further gender equality in their workplaces, communities and around the world. Women have made tremendous strides, but there is still so much work left to do. It takes the commitment and bravery of all of us to affect change.



Janet Hazelton joins other labour leaders during the NSFL IWD Breakfast on March 8th

NSFL IWD Breakfast

For the second year in a row, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Women's Committee hosted a now annual breakfast in honour of IWD. This year's event attracted over 100 women and men who support initiatives that empower women.

Becky Kent, Provincial Coordinator of Transition House Association of Nova Scotia gave an inspiring keynote address around the importance of involving boys and men in the fight for gender equality. Becky explained that men can help change the gender narrative and become allies, walking beside women and demonstrating how they value the contributions of women in their lives and communities. She called on men to change the dialogue in locker rooms, around the water cooler and in the boardroom, the gym, and the rink to show other men that the denigration of women is harmful to all of us.

Thank you to the NSFL Women's Committee for hosting another wonderful IWD event and continuing a conversation that is so important in the world today.



Becky Kent speaks during the IWD breakfast



Janet Hazelton presents a sponsorship cheque to event organizer Dawn Ferris

"Miss Representation"

The NSNU was pleased to help sponsor an IWD screening of "Miss Representation", a documentary that focuses on media, culture and the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence. The screening was organized by Women's March - Halifax.

On March 2nd event organizer Dawn Ferris visited the NSNU office in Burnside to accept the sponsorship cheque from NSNU president, Janet Hazelton on behalf of our membership. More information about the documentary can be found at missrepresentation.org.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March 21st was the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The United Nations' theme for this year's event is "Racial profiling and incitement to hatred, including in the context of migration". The theme offered an important and timely message, with an ongoing migrant crisis out of Syria, attempts to ban immigration from Muslim-majority countries on the part of American leadership, and the prevalence of anti-migrant and anti-refugee sentiments in many places around the world.

To recognize the day the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour held a solidarity luncheon for members of the labour movement to gather together and learn more about the lived experiences of racial minorities within the labour movement. Speakers included Dave Ladoucer, an active trade unionist and representative of the Ojibwa First Nation, and Neville David, Director for Racially Visible Members at PSAC-Atlantic, and an immigrant from Sri Lanka.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton was pleased to be able to attend the event and hear from these inspiring speakers. As a labour organization, the NSNU represents nurses of all creeds, including many who immigrated to Canada in search of a better life for their families. We are a better and stronger province and country for our migrants and refugees, all of whom lend to the beautiful diversity that defines what it is to be Canadian.



Members of the NSFL Anti-Racism and Human Rights Committee

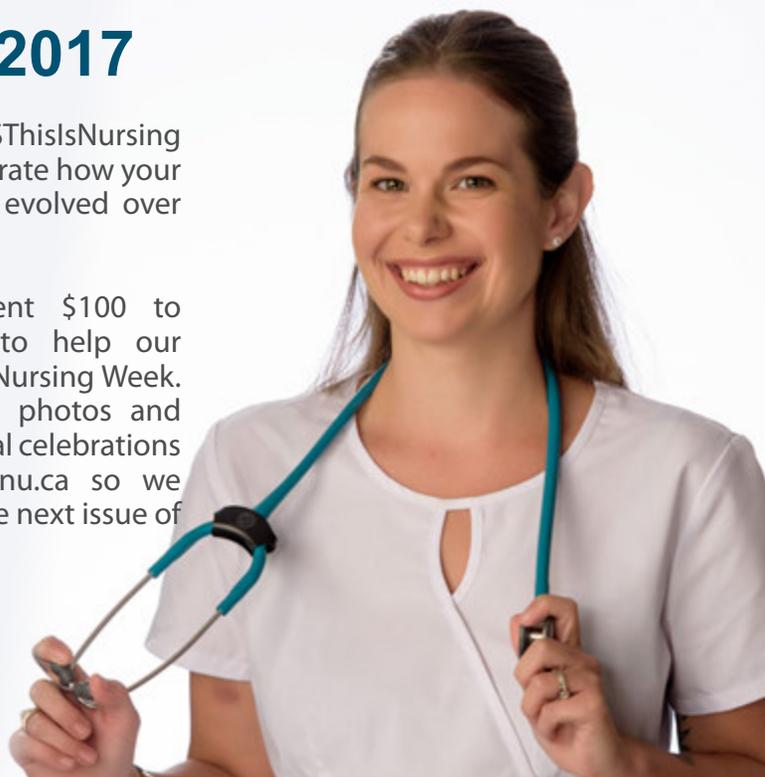
National Nursing Week 2017

National Nursing Week is coming up fast. From May 8-14 we recognize all of the wonderful things nurses do: your hard work, your incredible dedication to patient care, and the many tasks you take on to help make your workplaces run smoothly.

This year's Nursing Week theme is #YESThisIsNursing, which encourages nurses to speak about the real work that you do on a daily basis – both expected and unexpected. We know that nurses routinely go above and beyond for patients and their families. Join the conversation on social media and

send us your #YESThisIsNursing stories that demonstrate how your role as a nurse has evolved over time.

The NSNU has sent \$100 to each union local to help our members celebrate Nursing Week. Remember to send photos and stories from your local celebrations to coleen.logan@nsnu.ca so we can share them in the next issue of *What's Nu?*.



A Frontline Nurse's Perspective on Pharmacare

As mentioned in the last edition of What's NU?, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) hosted the annual parliamentary breakfast for Senators, Members of Parliament and health care stakeholders from across Canada on February 7th.

The breakfast was a huge success, and Canada's nurses were pleased to welcome a full house to the Parliamentary Restaurant, including provincial nurses unions' presidents, Janet Hazelton included, and many members of the Standing Committee on Health (HESA).

The CFNU presented research from their latest 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.

Amongst the prestigious presenters was NSNU's own Edson Castilho, a registered nurse in the Allergy Clinic in the IWK Health Centre. Every day, he sees the frontline impacts resulting from Canada's lack of coverage of prescription drug costs as part of Medicare and how this directly affects our children's health and quality of life. Because of the lack of paediatric allergists in the Maritimes, parents of children with allergies travel long distances to access the IWK Allergy Clinic.

Edson shared the story of a child he saw in the clinic, whose single mother couldn't afford a regular prescribed puffer which costs \$72.00 and would last approximately four months. Although he had provided her with two samples, once these ran out, the mother could not afford to renew the prescription; nor was the pair able to return for the scheduled appointment. Edson was concerned, he followed-up, and learned the child had been admitted to hospital because of the lack of medication. This resulted in a two-day hospital stay. Data from the Canadian Institute for Health Information puts the average cost of a hospital stay for asthma at \$2,420. That works out to 33 puffers – enough to treat this child for 134 months or 11 years.

"Because governments chose to keep the cost of this medication off their books, transferring costs to a single mother with very limited resources, this child suffered in hospital and missed school days; a mother missed work and wasn't paid. If we had a national pharmacare plan, patients, their families and the health care system would reap huge benefits, not only in dollars and cents but also in improvements in health outcomes," said Castilho.

As a frontline nurse working with children and families from many different backgrounds, Edson says the evidence on-the-ground suggests Canada should invest in pharmacare as part of our publicly funded health care system. And in so doing, Canada could prevent the needless suffering of many children and their families.

The economic, public and frontline perspective all point to a clear consensus: it is time Canada implemented a national pharmacare plan. This is not the time for more studies on this issue or even more resolutions. The issue has been sufficiently studied and debated. The time for action is now.

To read *Down the Drain: How Canada Has Wasted \$62 Billion Health Care Dollars without Pharmacare*, or the full summary from the Parliamentary Breakfast visit cfnu.ca



Janet Hazelton, Edson Castilho and CFNU president, Linda Silas at the MP Breakfast - February 7, 2017



The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) has successfully launched an action and activism app called *CFNU Speak Up*.

Speak Up unifies and empowers nurses' voices from coast to coast to coast, enabling you to speak directly to the federal Liberal government, provincial premiers, ministers and policymakers in the House of Commons.

1 DOWNLOAD THE APP

On your Apple or Android device, search for the **CFNU Speak Up** app in the app store and download it for free today!

2 WATCH FOR ISSUE ALERTS

Enable push notifications to be sent to your device in order to stay informed on the latest Issue Alerts requiring the action of Canada's nurses.

3 TAKE ACTION

Make your voice heard by speaking up and telling the politicians what you think - with strategic pre-written key messages right at your finger tips:

- Share information on Facebook
- Tweet directly at the politicians
- Send emails to decision makers

4 HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

Tell your friends and colleagues to download the app and help all of Canada's nurses **Speak Up** on the issues that matter.

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Polling and Surveys

We Ask Because Nurses Have the Answers

Over the next several months the NSNU, and possibly the CFNU, will be asking nurses to pause and think about issues that affect them and their patients.

Your opinions matter. At the frontline of health care, you see it all and are able to articulate what the system is lacking and what changes need to be put in place to keep our work sites safe, healthy, fair, productive and patient-centred.

You may be asked to participate in any number of polls or surveys including online surveys, telephone polls, occasional "Question of the Day" posts in the new App, bargaining surveys and more.

We urge you to take part. It will be time well spent as your feedback assists organizations like NSNU and CFNU to fully understand nursing realities, frame policy, determine priorities for collective bargaining, and enable us to speak to a larger audience on your behalf.

Please watch your email inbox for updates on future surveys and polls. We hope that you will speak up so that your concerns are addressed.

Photos and Video Recording by Patients and Visitors: *What are your Rights?*

Provided By Pink Larkin



The NSNU has learned that nurses have been faced with patients or other members of the public taking photos or video of them without their consent, and sometimes without their knowledge.

The protection of your safety and well-being in the workplace is a foremost priority of the NSNU. The protection of your privacy and use of your image is a particular concern now that others can broadly share this material through social media.

Members of the public do not have an unrestrained right to photograph or record video of a nurse. The fact that you work with the public does not mean that you give up any expectation of privacy in the workplace. There is an important difference between being observed by members of the public in the course of your duties, and the risk that members of the public will permanently record you in those activities.

Your employer has a duty to

protect you from the unreasonable intrusion of your privacy in the workplace. Allowing someone to take photos or video of you may breach the employer's duty to protect your safety and well being in the performance of your duties and its duty to reasonably exercise its management rights.

In some cases, taking a recording or threatening to record a nurse may also be a form of abuse. This is especially so if someone intends to use a recording to publicly embarrass you or to pressure or manipulate you. Your employer has a duty to address such abuse. The Acute Care Collective Agreement, for example, says that "No form of abuse of a Nurse will be condoned. Every reasonable effort will be made to rectify an abusive situation" (Article 16.06 (a)).

Photos or video recording may also interfere with the performance of your duties. If a patient or visitor distracts you or otherwise interferes with

providing safe patient care, you have a professional duty to ensure it is addressed.

Allowing patients or visitors to take photos or video may also impact other patients. There is a risk, for example, that another patient's information could be captured and disclosed, contrary to the Personal Health Information Act.

There may be circumstances where it is reasonable for a patient or visitor to take a recording that captures a nurse's image. It would depend on who is taking the recording, for what purpose, and whether the recording will be shared and with whom.

If you are concerned about someone recording or taking photos of you or your patients, you should not hesitate to raise the issue with your manager or contact the Union for advice.

What is FOIPOP

and Why Should Nurses Care?

FOIPOP is the acronym for the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPOP) which provides access to most records under the control of the provincial government.

The *Act* strives for balance between an individual's right to know and an individual's right to privacy. The *Act* supports the belief that every document, record or file held by the government, regardless of format, is subject to release to the general public.

Why should nurses care about being FOIPOPped? Yes, this acronym is used as a verb.

Well, provided a request is made in writing, the request is specific and the fees are paid, any form of correspondence with a public representative (elected official or bureaucrat) is subject to review by any citizen or organization.

Often, we ask our labour activists to mobilize for a cause which could include contacting your member of the legislative assembly, a cabinet minister or even the premier. This is a valuable tactic in calling

attention to an important issue or concern, but it comes with a cautionary note.

At times, we may feel a matter is best conveyed by using real life illustrations or examples of the situations nurses face in the workplace. However, we must always be mindful maintain confidentiality. It is our professional obligation to uphold this standard regardless of the audience or the importance of the cause.

The NSNU cautions that your interactions with government must not violate the privacy and confidence of those we care for even if we feel the situation is grave and warrants full disclosure - the cause justifies the means.

Patients need to trust their health care providers, and nurses have long been listed as one of the most trusted among all professions. To maintain that status, nurses must uphold confidentiality policies.

Please remember that the Nurses' Union is here to help at all times if you have a question or a concern about communications, your rights and how to balance the two.



Doing Our Part NSNU Staff Give Blood

On March 14th several NSNU staff members made their way to Halifax to give blood. A few first timers and a few seasoned veterans filled the Life Bus sent to transport the group, Courtesy of Canadian Blood Services.

Donating blood is one of the simplest ways we as Canadians can give back. Our blood is used to help victims of car accidents, heart

patients, cancer patients and so many others.

NSNU is proud to represent nurses with Canadian Blood Services. Thanks to those who worked with our staff for providing wonderful care and service, and to NSNU Labour Relations Representative Shannon Wark for arranging the outing.

Visit
www.blood.ca
to learn more
about how to
give blood
and how
donations are
used.



Legal Assistant, Carol Crane was all smiles during her blood donation



Executive assistant, Lorna Myers was a first time blood donor



Christie Blotnicky, Cindy Wagner, Nancy MacDonald, Chris Albrecht, Cindy Herbert, Shannon Wark and Jean Candy



Janet Hazelton presents cheque to THANS Provincial Coordinator, Becky Kent on March 1st

NSNU Proud to Support Transition House

On March 1st NSNU president, Janet Hazelton was pleased to present Becky Kent, Provincial Coordinator of Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (THANS) with a donation on behalf of our membership.

NSNU has been supporting THANS for many years, an organization that provides housing and resources for women and children leaving abusive situations. As our membership is a women majority, and nursing is one of the oldest professions to embrace women as professionals, organizations that provide assistance to women in need align closely with our goals.

THANS offers support for women who have made the bold decision to leave an abusive partner to protect their own safety and that of their children. As nurses know, this decision is not one that women make lightly, nor is it easily accomplished. THANS serves thirteen communities between Yarmouth and Sydney, and works collaboratively with governments and other women's organizations toward the elimination of violence against women in Nova Scotia. NSNU is proud to be able to continue supporting such a worthwhile cause.

Funds received through partnerships with various service providers enables the NSNU to support worthy organizations like THANS in our province.

Surgical Mission Brings Cape Breton Heart to Guatemala

The Cape Breton International Surgical Volunteer Team — “Cape Breton Surgeons on a Mission”— was established in 2013 for the purpose of travelling to Guatemala to provide life-changing medical treatments for impoverished people. Since that time, they've completed four successful missions and hundreds of surgeries. The most recent mission took place in February 2017, and included several NSNU members.

During the 2017 mission, the team went in with the goal of providing between 60 and 70 surgeries. While there, they hit their target, and helped treat 65 people suffering from hernias, masses, gallstones and more. Most patients had been living in pain for years awaiting medical treatment.

Prior to their journey, the team reached out to the Nurses' Union, and we were more than happy to provide them with some NSNU swag to take with them, to be used personally, and others to be given away. It was the least we could do for our incredible members who were preparing to perform between 13-17 surgeries per day to help people in need.

Congratulations to Cape Breton Surgeons on a Mission for another successful trip. We look forward to hearing about your plans for future missions.



The team involved in the 2017 mission

THE
COUNCIL
OF CANADIANS

ACTING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



LE
CONSEIL
DES CANADIENS

AGIR POUR LA JUSTICE SOCIALE

Founded in 1985, the Council of Canadians (COC) is Canada's leading social action organization, mobilizing a network of 60 chapters across the country.

Through campaigns they advocate for clean water, fair trade, green energy, public health care, and a vibrant democracy. They educate and empower people to hold our governments and corporations accountable.

The Nurses' Union encourages members to be part of a global movement working for social and environmental justice. The COC believes a better Canada and a fairer world are possible. Together, with your help and support, let's turn that belief into action.

The Council of Canadians is a registered non-profit organization and does not accept money from corporations or governments. Their work is sustained by the volunteer energy and generous donations.

That NSNU and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions are happy to support the Council and the work they are doing on our behalf.

To learn more visit Canadians.org.

Nurses' Planner
& Purchasing Guide
2017

Nova Scotia
Nurses Union

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Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

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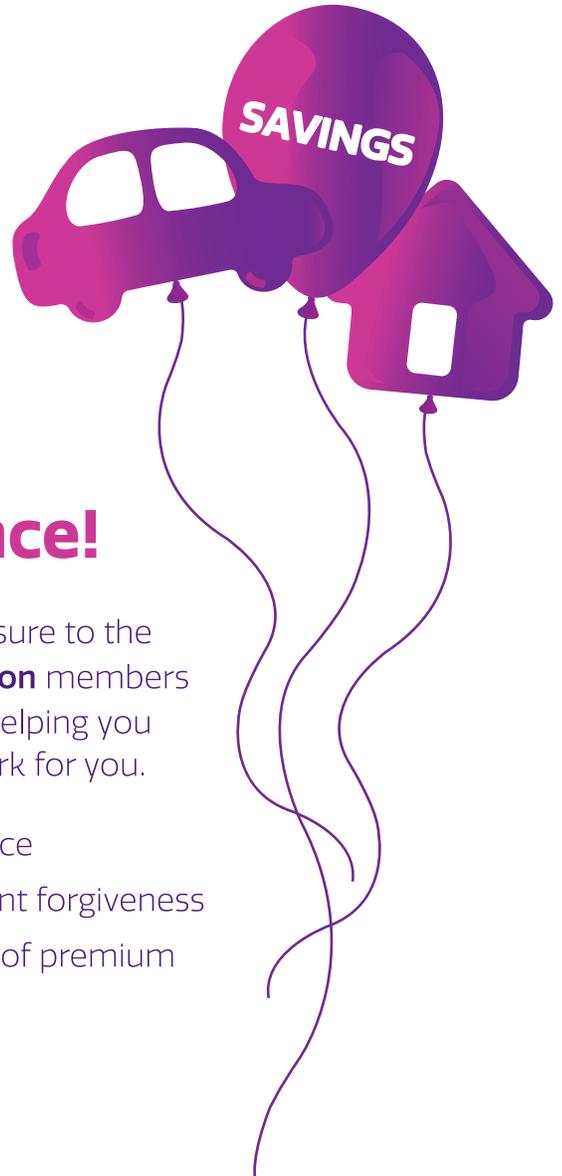
The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union will once again be publishing the official NSNU pocket calendar and purchasing guide with the assistance of Efficom Inc., the production company and their sales team that oversee this project.

The Planner, as we fondly refer to it, is a very useful and popular scheduling tool. So popular in fact that we receive requests for copies from retired members, out of province friends, doctors and other health care workers.

It is eye-catching, prestigious and professional – fits nicely in your pocket and it doesn't need to be charged!

Notably, the Planners are free of charge to the Union and proceeds earned by way of advertising enable us to support Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, a charity that has long been a beneficiary of the Nurses' Union. The NSNU makes no money resulting from this initiative.

In 2016, the delivery of the Planners hit a snag. They arrived unusually late in the year, making it difficult for members to record their schedules. We have been reassured by Efficom that this matter has been resolved. Both the NSNU and Efficom will do everything in our power to ensure an early delivery date in 2017.



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

2017 Annual General Meeting
April 24-27

National Nursing Week Recap

Special Feature



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