

# What's **NU**?

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



## TAKING ON WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Government, NSNU and other health care stakeholders form a working group on workplace violence
- AGM 2017 - Deadlines and Submissions
- NSNU VP Chairs and Committee Composition Announced



# President's Notebook

By Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA

## Nova Scotia Nurses' Union Calls on Government to Take the Threat of Violence in the Workplace More Seriously

On October 11th, I publicly responded to an incident that occurred in a Middleton hospital. Feeling it should have been given more consideration in light of the serious nature of the threat and the escalating frequency of violent behaviour in health care facilities across the province, I issued a media release. Like so many other health care advocates, the Nurses' Union is very concerned about this issue, prompting our urgent call to government to make workplace violence a priority.

The incident in question involved a Kings County man, once charged with plotting to kill police officers in Newfoundland. He has since been charged with firearm-related offences following the disturbance at Soldiers Memorial Hospital in Middleton. Nurses on staff that evening were not able to speak about the matter; the NSNU was only formally informed about the incident on October 11th.

Police responded to a call from the hospital about a man acting erratically. When they arrived, they found and arrested 60-year-old man. He has been charged with possession of a firearm while prohibited, unauthorized possession of a firearm and careless use of a firearm.

Violence, or the threat of violence, is not a new concern by any means. The Nurses' Union has been in talks with various health care stakeholders for several months, since the NSNU released a study, *Broken Homes*, in January 2016 identifying violence in the workplace among 15 significant problems plaguing our health care system.

On a near daily bases across the country, we continue to witness daily violence against nurses and other health care workers, which is unacceptable. Thankfully, a catastrophic situation was averted in

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Janet Hazelton speaks during the press conference about the experiences of violence that many nurses have endured from patients, families and coworkers, and the urgent need to end violence in the workplace

Middleton due to the quick thinking of the nurses on duty. However, we must do more to prevent future threats to patients, family members, workers and other innocent bystanders.

On October 21 Premier McNeil called a news conference to announce the creation of a working group to address this issue. On October 28, the Minister of Health and Wellness, Leo Glavine invited health care stakeholders, including the NSNU, to participate in a short-term working group to examine safety protocols in Nova Scotia's community hospital emergency departments. Minister Glavine stated in the letter that the incident at Soldiers Memorial Hospital highlighted the need to ensure patients, staff and visitors are safe.

Numerous organizations have been identified as a key contributor to this work. The Premier requested our participation in this time-limited working group with the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the Department of Health and Wellness. We are being asked to provide advice on evidence, best practices and possible solutions to the problem of violence in the workplace. These will form the basis of formal written recommendations, which must be completed by December 30 of this year.

I am co-chairing the group along with Carmelle d'Entremont, Vice-President of People and Organizational Development, Nova Scotia Health Authority. We meet every Monday from 8:30am -10:00am.

The Nurses' Union takes the issue of workplace safety very seriously. Hopefully this work will lead to the development of a provincial workplace safety action plan for the health and community services sectors with the Workers' Compensation Board, AWARE-NS, employers, and unions.

I look forward to updating you in the New Year with regard to this matter.

At this time, I'd like to wish you all a very happy, healthy and safe holiday season and all the best in 2017!



Janet Hazelton joins Tom Murphy as CBC's Newsmaker on October 21 as a result of her work on violence



# AGM 2017

## Dates and Deadlines



NSNU is preparing to host our 2017 Annual General Meeting. It will be another exciting event as we gather to conduct business on behalf of the organization, develop strategies, make important decisions for the coming year, and inform members of previous and future activities.

The 2017 AGM is scheduled for four days, Monday April 24 – Thursday April 27, 2017 at the Best Western Glengarry Hotel in Truro. Noted below is the **tentative** structure for the week:

<b>Monday April 24</b>	Opening session, Regional and Component Meetings
<b>Tuesday April 25</b>	Business Day 1 and Hospitality Event
<b>Wednesday April 26</b>	Business Day 2 and Banquet
<b>Thursday April 27</b>	Education Day

The following are important AGM related submission deadlines which must be adhered to:

### Resolutions

Locals are encouraged to submit resolutions to assist the Board and leaders within the organization in making informed decisions on behalf of the membership. For guidance on how to prepare your submission, please see **How To Write A Resolution**, contained in this newsletter on page 6. Submissions are due 90 days prior to the commencement of the AGM, which is Wednesday, January 25.

### Honorary Members Submissions

As per NSNU Policy, honorary member submissions must also be submitted to the NSNU Office 90 days in advance of the Annual Meeting, again on January 25. If you wish to nominate a nurse to become an honorary member, the criteria and the 'Honorary Member Nomination Form' can be found at MyNSNU.ca.

### Sponsorship of Under 35 Members & New Members

Intended to encourage grassroots participation, these attendees are fully funded by the NSNU. This is an opportunity for our younger members, as well as others who are new to the labour movement, to learn about their union and network with fellow members.

NSNU will sponsor 5 members under the age of 35 as well as 7 members who have never attended the AGM. Interested members who meet the criteria are encouraged to submit an Expression of Interest Form by January 13, 2017. Only those selected will be contacted on that date. Forms can be found and submitted online at MyNSNU.ca.

### AGM / Education / Component Meeting Registration

More information will be distributed to Locals in February; however, *please note the deadline to register for the AGM, Education Day and Component Meetings is Thursday, March 23, 2017. Registration will be live online starting Wednesday, February 22.*



Members from the IWK local discuss a resolution before voting during the 2016 AGM

# Standing Committee Representation



Members participate in Education Day workshops

## Small Local Observer's Draw

As in previous years, NSNU will host a draw for Locals with 100 members or less to have a delegate attend the AGM. More details pertaining to this draw will be distributed to Locals in early April once we are aware how many potential spots may be available. Please be sure to register online by March 23 in order to be eligible for this draw.

## Scholarship Applications

NSNU offers various union scholarship options. Annual \$1,500 scholarships available are the 'Dolores Chase Scholarship', 'Nursing Degree or Diploma Scholarship', 'Certificate Program Scholarship' as well as the \$1,000 'Elizabeth and Brittany MacPherson Scholarship'. For family members of NSNU members there are also two (2) 'NSNU Family Scholarships' for \$500. Scholarship Applications can be found on the NSNU website at nsnu.ca. The deadline for submissions is Thursday, April 6, 2017.

All forms can be found on the MyNSNU.ca. If you have difficulty with your login credentials please contact **Lorna Myers** at [lorna.myers@nsnu.ca](mailto:lorna.myers@nsnu.ca) or **Christie Blotnicky** at [christie.blotnicky@nsnu.ca](mailto:christie.blotnicky@nsnu.ca) before the deadlines indicated.

The AGM Operations and Nominations Committee convened on October 14 to select the Standing Committees of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union. All identifying information on each Expression of Interest application was redacted enabling the Committee to make selections without bias.

We thank all members who sent in Expression of Interest forms. If you were not selected for a committee this year, we encourage you to put your name forward again for consideration in 2018.

## Constitution/Resolutions

**Chair:** Jayne Friday

**Members at Large:** Tracy Mundle (VON Cumberland) and Judith Jowett (St. Martha's)

**Alternates:** Dawn McKenna (St. Martha's) and Lori Quinn (South Cumberland)

## Finance

**Chair:** Lillian Fynes

**Members at Large:** C. Denise Elms (Aberdeen) and Rhonda Church (Windsor Elms)

**Alternates:** Nadine MacDonald (Cumberland) and Cindy O'Halloran (Guysborough)

## Education

**Chair:** Ann Marie Murdock

**Members at Large:** Jamie Stewart (Queen's) and Stephanie Roberts (CEHHC)

**Alternates:** Deborah Doyle (VON) and Jayne Greene (Aberdeen)

## AGM/Operations

**Chair:** Jen Thiele

**Members at Large:** Amanda Figuary (Glace Bay Hospital) and Vicki Royles, Aberdeen Hospital

**Alternates:** Barbara Gurney (St. Martha's Hospital) and Jennifer Greencorn (St. Martha's Hospital)



# How to Write a Resolution



## PROPOSING A RESOLUTION

A resolution is a proposed action or an amendment to an existing article within the Constitution that NSNU members would like the Union to implement. There are two types of resolutions: Action Resolutions and Constitutional Resolutions.

### ACTION RESOLUTIONS

An Action Resolution is a request in writing to the NSNU seeking an action to be taken by the Union that is not related to the Constitution.

### CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTIONS

The Constitution of any organization provides the foundation and governing principles that direct and inform decision making. Amendments to the Constitution are required in order to accurately reflect the evolving goals and needs of the membership as well as the organization.

The process of amending the Constitution starts with the submission of a Resolution. Resolutions are required to amend existing Articles contained within the Constitution or to propose new language.

## PASSING A RESOLUTION

Any member of the union can submit a resolution for debate during an Annual General Meeting, at which time it will be decided whether the resolution will be carried or rejected by voting delegates in attendance. For Constitutional Amendments two-thirds (2/3) of voting delegates must vote in favour for the resolution to be carried. For Action Resolutions, a simple majority is needed to pass the motion (50% +1).

The following guideline will assist you and your Local representation in preparing a Constitutional or Action Resolution:

## GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING RESOLUTIONS

### 1. CALL TO ACTION

The purpose of the resolution is stated in the "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT" section. This is supported by the "WHEREAS" and "AND WHEREAS" clauses which outline the reasons for the action. There may be several "AND WHEREAS" statements to support your resolution.

### 2. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

If you use statistical information be sure to provide adequate referencing at the end of the resolution so that the figures quoted can be checked.

### 3. DEADLINE

According to the NSNU Policy Manual, "Members of the Nurses' Union may submit resolutions which have been moved and seconded to the Executive Director of the Nurses' Union at least ninety (90) days prior to an Annual General Meeting". Resolutions for the 2017 AGM must be submitted by DATE, 2017.

### 4. SUBMITTING RESOLUTIONS

Members who move and second the resolution should put their names on the document prior to submitting it. Resolutions can be submitted via mail to the NSNU office or via email to [lorna.myers@nsnu.ca](mailto:lorna.myers@nsnu.ca).

## HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS:** state the subject or issue that the resolution pertains to;

**AND WHEREAS:** state supporting information or evidence;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:** state the desired outcome or action to be taken to sufficiently fulfill the resolution.

### NAMES OF MOVER AND SECONDER

X \_\_\_\_\_

Mover's Name  
Local (e.g. Dartmouth General)

X \_\_\_\_\_

Secunder's Name



## SAMPLE RESOLUTION

*The following resolution was passed during the 2005 Annual General Meeting.*

Action Resolution - No Constitutional Amendment Required –Simple Majority

**WHEREAS:** the Romanow Commission on the future of health care heard from thousands of Canadians concerned about the state of health care in Canada;

**AND WHEREAS:** the final report provides a detailed plan for protecting and strengthening Medicare and was widely endorsed by Canadians;

**AND WHEREAS:** federal and provincial governments have yet to publicly commit to fully implement this report;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:** the Nurses' Union actively support and work for the full implementation of the Romanow Report on an ongoing basis.

*Financial Implications*

*There are no financial Implications*



# MOVING DAY

If there is one universal truth, it's this: moving is a *lot* of work.

Be that as it may, moving can also be a refreshing change of pace – a fresh start in a new place that meets all of your needs.

Finally, after many months of anticipation, that's just what NSNU did on the weekend leading up to Halloween.

Beginning on October 28th, the old NSNU office on Frazee Avenue was emptied out after weeks of packing and purging by staff. Movers were out in full force on Friday and Saturday, transporting the office just a few streets over to our new home at 150 Garland Avenue.

On October 31st, staff arrived bright and early to begin the process of unpacking, organizing and personalizing the new space, custom designed to better meet the needs of our members.

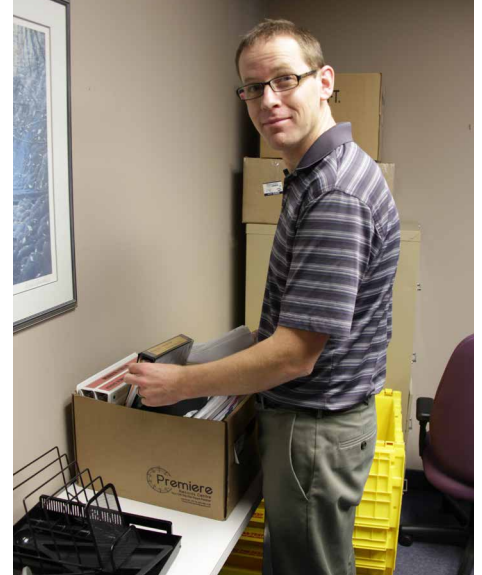
We thank Lindsay Construction for their phenomenal work in building a beautiful and functional office for NSNU to call home, and we thank Premiere Van Lines for facilitating the move and making it a smooth transition for all involved. We hope members enjoy the new building as much as we do.







# Boxed Up and Ready to Go



NSNU staff pack up their offices in preparation for the move



Overcrowded offices filled with boxes, and storage rooms bursting at the seams demonstrate the lack of adequate storage in the old NSNU building



Packed boxes fill every room and hallway, awaiting movers



An overflowing parking lot and chronic double-parking are just some of the problems solved by a new building



Movers hard at work on October 29th



A sea of bins is all that remain of the old NSNU office, awaiting movers

# ARE YOU MYTH-INFORMED ABOUT THE FLU VACCINE?

Have you heard this one before? "The flu shot can give you the flu."

How about this one? "The flu isn't that serious. There's no need to worry."

We've all heard things about the flu that just aren't true. Every year when flu season begins, social media feeds and casual conversations are filled with misinformation that may stop people from getting the shot.

This year the province, NSNU and our fellow advocates for immunization are hoping to debunk a few of those false claims about the flu. You may have seen some visuals on our website and social media feeds showcasing a few unique characters that tackle some of the more popular flu myths. Although the characters are whimsical, the flu is no laughing matter. Complications from influenza are responsible for thousands of hospitalizations and hundreds of deaths each year in Canada.

This year, as always, it is important to **#GettheshotNS**. The flu shot is available at your doctor's office, most pharmacies, and clinics around the province. The vaccine is free of charge – just arrive with your health card in hand, and roll up your sleeve.

Visit [www.nsnu.ca/flu2016](http://www.nsnu.ca/flu2016) for more information and helpful links about the shot and where you can get it.



ARE YOU  
**MYTH-INFORMED**  
ABOUT THE FLU VACCINE?

**MYTH**  
YOU DON'T NEED THE  
FLU SHOT IF YOU NEVER  
GET SICK.

**FACT**  
Each year, up to 1 in 4  
Canadians are infected with the  
flu. Even though you may be  
healthy, you could be carrying  
the flu virus in your body, which  
means you can spread it to  
others. By getting the flu shot,  
you are helping to protect not  
only your own health, but the  
health of family members,  
friends, and coworkers too.

[www.nsnu.ca/flu2016](http://www.nsnu.ca/flu2016)  
#GettheshotNS

## Flu Shot Facts for Nurses

Nova Scotia will continue to offer inactivated quadrivalent influenza vaccines for 2016-17. The components of the vaccine include:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
- A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2)-like virus
- B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus
- B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus

The products used this year will include:

- Fluzone® Quadrivalent (Sanofi)
- Flulaval® Tetra (Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK)): GSK advises the use of imprecise equipment can lead to the problem that the 10 doses contained in the vial cannot be injected. For the Flulaval® Tetra product, the 1 mL syringe is recommended in the instruction sheet. The 3 mL syringe should be avoided since the injection volume is 0.5 mL.



## Janet Hazelton Addresses HANS Annual Conference

On November 2nd NSNU president, Janet Hazelton joined Health Association Nova Scotia (HANS) for their annual conference, where she presented on the nurse's role in Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD). In her presentation she discussed the responsibilities and expectations for nurses who assist with or personally provide this type of care, and touched on the prevalence of MAiD in Nova Scotia since the practice was legalized earlier this year. She

also discussed the importance of continued support for palliative care.

We thank HANS for inviting Janet to address more than 100 individuals working in the health sector regarding this important issue.



Janet Hazelton speaks on MAiD, Nov. 2

## Janet Hazelton Meets with NS Nursing Students

Meeting with nursing students is one of many highlights enjoyed by the President of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union. On October 19th, Janet Hazelton had the pleasure of visiting with students in not one, but two of Nova Scotia's illustrious nursing programs.

In the morning Janet made her way to Cape Breton University, where she talked with nursing students about the job post-graduation and the importance of union activism. A few of the items up for discussion included professional practice issues, the

role of the union, the structure of the Nurses' Union and the importance of getting involved in Union activities at the grassroots level upon graduation.

Later in the day, Janet attended an education day put on by the St. FX Nursing Society. There she touched on many of the same issues, and was able to have a great dialogue with future nurses about the industry from the perspective of not only a union leader, but a seasoned Registered Nurse.

We thank Cape Breton University and St. FX for inviting Janet to come chat with their nursing classes. We look forward welcoming many of these students to the Nurses' Union in the near future.



Janet Hazelton with students at CBU



## CNSA Invites Janet Hazelton to Speak at Conference

On the morning of October 21st NSNU president, Janet Hazelton, brought greetings to the Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) conference in Halifax.

Approximately 100 nursing students from across Atlantic Canada gathered together to hear numerous speaker presentations, learn useful and relevant ways to interact with diverse populations through innovative workshops and lab experiences, and share their personal experiences. The conference, titled "Nurses Embracing Diversity: Welcoming The Many Faces Of Healthcare", also offered hands-on learning in state-of-the-art simulation clinics.

Janet introduced the attendees to "union engagement". She shared sage advice and talked about the need for measures to help prevent violence in the workplace.

The NSNU was pleased to help sponsor this event that brought future nurses together for professional development, networking and inspiration. We wish them much success in their careers.

# Mental Health in the Workplace

## *Employee Mental Health – a Made in Canada Solution Hard at Work in Nova Scotia*

In October of 2015, some 30 Nova Scotia leaders signed a new commitment to health and safety leadership in our province – the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter.

On November 9, 2016, NSNU president, Janet Hazelton had the opportunity to join a group of 200-plus so she too could sign the Charter on behalf of the Nurses' Union at 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*.

This event drew corporate, government and organizational leaders who are committed to advancing health and safety in their workplaces; senior leaders who have already made a commitment by becoming signatories of the Health and Safety Leadership Charter. The conference program also allowed these leaders to participate in breakout sessions: "Leadership Required for Mental Health in the Workplace" or "Best Practices and Networks to support Health and Safety Mentors."

Held at the historic Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, Louise Bradley, President and CEO of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, who is also a registered nurse, presented the keynote address. She spoke about mental health in the workplace – an issue important to all of us – and what is being done to engage employers and workers alike.

Ms. Bradley cited staggering statistics – currently 1 in 5 Canadians struggle with mental health issues. By 2042, the number will be 1 in 3. And health-care worksites have been identified as some of the most toxic, requiring a more unique strategy to address this issue than most other workplaces.

The emphasis going forward is to make mental health a priority across the country, both in our schools and workplaces, fostering an environment of wellness and acceptance. A goal is to lift barriers and combat the stigma in order to normalize care for those in need.

By supporting the Charter, leaders commit to share best practices, exchange ideas, and share experiences to help ensure that by 2042 the outlook is more promising.

For more information on the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter visit [nshealthandsafetycharter.ca](http://nshealthandsafetycharter.ca).



Janet Hazelton signs the NS Health and Safety Leadership Charter



## Colchester Security Update

September's issue of *What's Nu?* featured a story about security initiatives at Colchester Regional Hospital.

Following the Annual General Meeting in April, Colchester local co-president, Stephanie Roberts, shared an education day presentation with her nurse manager regarding hospital security best practices.

NSNU is encouraged to learn that senior leadership at Colchester has decided to work toward strengthening security measures in their facility. Shortly after the last newsletter was published, Stephanie was asked to join a committee to develop a strategic organizational plan to address workplace violence and safety at the hospital – a great first step to improving security at Colchester, and a positive example for all health facilities in the province.

Thanks to Stephanie and all members who champion safety in your workplaces. Nurses should never be the first line of defense, but your influence can make a difference.





## Fifth International Conference on Violence in the Health Sector

Union researcher Paul Curry recently had the opportunity to present on the NSNU's *Broken Homes* report ([nsnu.ca/brokenhomes](http://nsnu.ca/brokenhomes)) at the Fifth International Conference on Violence in the Health Sector held in Dublin from October 25th-28th. The biennial conference brings together expert participants from every continent and from a variety of professions, including nurses, doctors, clinical and forensic psychologists, academic researchers and safety association professionals.

The NSNU presentation centered on the high rates of violence experienced by our nurses in long-term care, and how we are working to improve this by shining a light on the problem and by collaborating with our partners in the sector. The Nurses' Union's goal, as outlined in the book, is to improve working conditions for nurses, and living conditions for long-term care residents, by making the workplace safer and by improving long-term care staffing.



Paul Curry presents in Dublin

There was strong representation from Canadian nurse unions at the conference, including a member from the British Columbia Nurses' Union member who presented on strategies used in that province to reduce workplace violence; Manitoba Nurses Union President, Sandi Mowat, who presented on their publication and lobby work on nursing and PTSD; and Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions Secretary Treasurer, Pauline Worsfold, who spoke on the impact of domestic violence as it relates to nurses' work life.



The *Broken Homes* report has helped to bring international attention to the crisis in long-term care

The conference presented an important opportunity to network with experts and policy makers, and to learn about best practices as they exist across the globe. It was extremely beneficial to hear from other conference participants who shared successful strategies used in their jurisdictions to address workplace violence. This information is extremely timely as the NSNU has recently begun working with employers, government, unions and other stakeholders on the problem of violence and safety in rural emergency departments.



# 2017 CFNU Biennial Convention

It seems like just yesterday we were saying farewell to our nursing colleagues from across the country as the 2015 CFNU Biennial Convention in Halifax came to a close.

Next year we're looking forward to doing it all again, this time in Calgary from June 5-9. Our friends at United Nurses of Alberta are hosting, and the 2017 Biennial Convention promises to be one of the best.

The Biennium features knowledgeable keynote speakers and interactive workshops and plenary sessions designed specifically for nurses working in today's unique health care environment. Delegates also take part in determining issues that the CFNU and its member organizations, including the NSNU, will take on in the coming years.

Another highlight of the Biennium is the traditional Fun Night, which shows off our beautiful Canadian cities, and the creativity of the host union. In 2015 we hosted a Ceilidh on the Hill in Halifax, showcasing one of our most treasured landmarks, Citadel Hill. We can't wait to see what surprises UNA has in store for nurses in June - we're betting cowboy hats will be involved.

Members who plan to attend the Biennium should book their time off soon, and please remember to factor in travel time to and from Alberta. Some members have already started fundraising to cover the cost of their trip, a great idea to help make the trip more affordable.

Biennium registration opened on December 7th. Members will be notified via email and social media as to where you can go to learn more about the event and sign up to attend. Remember to register early to secure your spot. The theme for this year's event is "Speak Up!"

## Workshops

One of the most attractive things about the Biennium is the informative workshops tailored for nurses. This year's slate of courses will be a mixture of new content and existing workshops brought back by popular demand.

Here are some of the workshops being considered for this year's event:

- Addictions and Mental Health – Tough on the Problem, Easy on the People
- Cultural Awareness
- Domestic Violence
- Global Café on the Social Factors Impacting Health
- Looking Back and Moving Forward: Celebrating Nurses in the Labour Movement
- Medicare: Threats and Promise
- Nursing and Technology Impact
- Preserving Your Lifestyle: A Practical Guide for Nurses Planning to Retire
- PTSD – and Nurses Too?
- Sexual Minorities - Providing Respectful Nursing Care
- The Social Determinants of Health Tour
- The Union Toolkit for Building Better Workplaces



# Canada's nurses agree: education should be a fundamental right

Via Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions



CFNU president, Linda Silas calls for universal access to education during the rally on November 2nd

On Wednesday November 2, 2016, Canada's nurses and labour leaders joined thousands of students from over 50 campuses in 36 cities across Canada for All Out November 2nd Day of Action demanding universal access to education, education justice and public education for the public good.

In a show of solidarity, CFNU President Linda Silas joined hundreds of students in Ottawa, who rallied to fight the fees on Parliament Hill, and addressed the crowd with a message that education and health care should be for everyone – not just those who can afford it.

"Many respected leaders have argued that, 'Education [and health care] should be a right, not a privilege. 'This is a statement that I believe in whole-heartedly,' said CFNU president Linda Silas. "The price tag attached to post-secondary education in this country is a barrier for far too many Canadians, and with the average education-related debt sitting at approximately \$28,000, or estimations of as high as \$40,000 for nursing students – this leads to a life of struggles, stress and sacrifice."

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) is calling for universal access to education, meaning that regardless of who you are, where you are born, your age or background – you should have the right to access higher education without the barrier of cost or fear of incurring debt. They are also calling for education justice for students being pushed out of the current model of colleges and universities today, who are disproportionately Indigenous, racialized,

LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, people raised in single-parent homes and people from low-income families. Lastly, CFS takes the position that public education is a public good that society benefits from as a whole, and it must be funded as such; colleges and universities must be not-for-profit and not tailored to private interests.

"We must stand together on these issues and recognize the socioeconomic and financial barriers that directly impact access to essential health services like pharmacare and education in this country, among other challenges," said Silas. "We must work towards building a more inclusive, healthy, educated and empowered Canada."

Another issue that the CFNU's national executive board has been tackling is the Canadian nursing licensing exam change last year to the U.S.-import NCLEX-RN exam. This change in the nursing licensing process to the NCLEX has had many impacts on nursing students, resulting in higher failure rates, increased costs and undue stress for students.

"We know that our Canadian nursing students are some of the most highly educated nurses in the world, yet due to issues with the exam students are spending thousands of dollars on top of already sky high tuition fees to pay for additional prep courses and multiple re writes," said Silas.

The CFNU continues to stand in solidarity with our affiliates at the Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) who represent nearly 30,000 nursing students across Canada on this issue.

"Nursing students already have extreme debt, approaching \$40,000 after completion of their degree," said CNSA President Bryce Boynton. "With our new licensing exam (NCLEX-RN) and the issues surrounding it, our debts continue to skyrocket. It is costing our new graduates thousands extra, furthering the financial burden of seeking a higher education in order to provide competent care for Canadians."

Canada's nurses are proud to stand in solidarity with students across this country, who passionately believe that at the core of a just, equitable and fair society is a system of public post-secondary education that is accessible to everyone. A key part of this vision is for the government of Canada to act on the internationally recognized right of all people to education.





## Global Nurses United Convenes in Dublin

During the week of September 19th NSNU president, Janet Hazelton, and the Board of Directors joined the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions National Executive Board in Dublin, Ireland for the Global Nurses United Congress.

Global Nurses United (GNU) is an international solidarity movement that brings together nursing leaders from around the world. Each year, GNU meets in one of the member countries to discuss issues that affect nurses and the delivery of health care. The CFNU is a long-time member of GNU, and is an important voice in the global conversation around nursing.

Some of the agenda items from the meeting included:

- modern day nursing in conflict zones;
- safe staffing struggles;
- discussions around problematic trade agreements, like the Trans-Pacific Partnership; and
- infectious diseases and climate change.

Delegates also heard from many inspiring speakers, and discussed issues that continue to plague nurses worldwide. Together, they developed strategies that could be taken home and implemented to work toward resolutions.

While in Dublin, the NSNU Board of Directors also took a few moments out of their busy schedules to stand in solidarity with striking bus drivers. We wish them well as they continue their fight for a fair deal. The NSNU is proud to be a member of the global labour movement.



CFNU president, Linda Silas addresses international nursing leaders



Janet Hazelton meets the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Brendon Carr



Striking bus drivers show off the NSNU flag during a rally in Dublin



NSNU Board members join a room full of nursing leaders at GNU



# Nursing News from Around the World



## United States

After a long strike and challenging negotiations, members of the Minnesota Nurses Association are back to work. Approximately 4,000 nurses who work for Allina Health in Minneapolis were on strike for nearly two months, fighting for safe staffing language, fair compensation, health benefits and other contentious contract issues.

After three rejected tentative agreements, nurses were finally presented an offer in October that they were willing to ratify.

Although nurses are happy to be back to work, they vow to continue fighting for further improvements.

## Malta

Nurses have launched industrial action at the Mater Dei Hospital in Malta, citing an insufficient number of senior nurses in the emergency department. According to the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses, the department is short several senior nurses, a problem that is compounded by sick leave. This leaves junior nurses who are not fully trained and are not certified to work alone providing patient care without adequate supervision.

The directive from the union calls on nurses to opt out of certain nonessential duties, which will provide more time for senior nurses to focus on their other work and to train junior nurses.

## Ireland

In October, oncology and radiology nurses at Ireland's Cork University Hospital took action to combat dangerously low staffing levels. As a result, 26 nurses have withdrawn from "clerical and administrative duties in order to focus on patient care." Nurses are refusing to return to those tasks until a resolution can be negotiated.

This dispute has been ongoing for more than a year, during which time nurses have been unable to provide the level of care required by patients, and have been suffering from what the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation describes as "intolerable stress levels".

## Philippines

The Alliance of Health Workers (AHW) in the Philippines is calling on the Department of Health to restore \$1.5 billion in funding that was slashed from the health budget. The massive cuts are being called unsustainable, and AHW says the money lost will result in higher user fees and limitations on free services and medicines traditionally provided to patients. There are concerns that these cuts will impede access to health services for lower-income Filipinos.

According to AHW, 66 hospitals will have a lower operating budget in 2017 as a result of the cuts.

## Australia

Unions representing nurses and security staff at Kyogle Memorial Hospital in Australia are protesting a controversial cost-saving measure put in place by their employer. The scheme uses security staff in place of assistant nurses, requiring them to feed and provide daily assistance for patients in the hospital's elderly care unit.

Both unions have said a strike is not off the table, unless the employer backs down and returns staff to their traditional roles.

## Kenya

Two nurses and two support staff members were arrested in 2015 after a patient was murdered by an intruder at Kenyatta National Hospital in Kenya.

On the night of the murder, there were 28 patients in the ward and only two nurses and two support staff on duty, making it impossible for them to watch all patients at all times. These conditions enabled an intruder to enter the hospital unnoticed and commit the crime. The Kenya National Union of Nurses has called the arrest unlawful and unfair, demanding that the nurses not be used as scapegoats for the hospital's lack of security and inadequate staffing levels.

The union is calling for the resignation of the hospital's CEO.





## Season's Greetings *from the* Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

Each year, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union celebrates the holidays by making a donation to a charity whose goals are consistent with those of our members. A commitment to caring and dedication to those in need is what connects NSNU nurses with the recipient chosen by our Board this year; The Marguerite Centre.

The Marguerite Centre supports women who are overcoming addictions, offering a long-term residential program that focuses on healing the mind, body and spirit. We are pleased to be able to give this donation to such a worthwhile cause helmed by a hard-working and inspiring staff.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the NSNU, we wish all of our members a safe and healthy holiday season and a Happy New Year.







## NSNU Office Holiday Closure

The Board of Directors has decided that the NSNU office will close for the holiday season on December 23rd and reopen on January 3rd. While technically the building will be closed to the public and members, some staff will be working on site while others will be using vacation or lieu time during the closure. That said, staff will be available via email should you have an urgent need to speak with your Labour Relations Representative or other members of the team. Emails for all staff can be found at [www.nsnu.ca/staff](http://www.nsnu.ca/staff).

As we near the holidays, members will receive an email indicating which LRR will be on call each day during this period.

Thank you and Happy Holidays.

## Union Dues Rebates

If you are working at more than one facility and paying union dues more than once in a pay period, you are eligible to receive a rebate of the additional dues you have paid over and above the regular bi-weekly rates. As per NSNU policy, your rebate is retroactive for only the 12 months prior to contacting the Nurses' Union.

If you are a casual member who has been paid "less than" 7.5 hours (applicable to acute care members) or 8 hours (applicable to long term care members) in a bi-weekly pay period you are eligible for a union dues rebate.

If either of the above applies to you, please contact Verna Harrie at 902-468-6748 or [verna.harrie@nsnu.ca](mailto:verna.harrie@nsnu.ca).



## NSNU wishes Marilyn Quinn, NBNU President, a Happy Retirement

More than 200 registered nurses gathered for the New Brunswick Nurses Union's 42nd Annual General Meeting from October 24-26. The meeting also marked the retirement of NBNU's longest standing president, Marilyn Quinn. NSNU President Janet Hazelton was on hand to wish Marilyn a happy retirement and participate in the New Brunswick AGM events.

Quinn was elected in 2004 and served six consecutive two-year terms. She brought 39 years of nursing experience. Under Quinn's leadership, NBNU developed and fostered many longstanding, positive working relationships within labour and healthcare, both provincially and federally. Provincially, Quinn led negotiating teams to achieve 16 collective agreements during her presidency. Quinn was instrumental in advancing the concerns of members about many serious issues, such as safe patient care, professional practice and workplace violence. She currently serves as chairperson of the Board of Trustees for both the Certain Bargaining Employees (CBE) and the New Brunswick Public Service (NBPS) pension plans.

In anticipation of Marilyn's retirement, NBNU announced prior to the AGM that Paula Doucet had been elected by acclamation as the new president, effective October 27, 2016. Most recently employed at the Chaleur Regional Hospital in Bathurst, Ms. Doucet brings with her 20 years of nursing experience.





# STAY CONNECTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

@NS\_Nurses

Nova Scotia Nurses Union

NSNursesUnion

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union communicates important news with our members through email, our website, *What's Nu?* and Union Calling. However, for day-to-day Union activities, the most current content is available on social media.

On Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, members can:

- keep up with initiatives by the Union and our partners in labour and health;
- learn about important items in the news;
- check out photos from recent events;
- hear about upcoming media interviews with NSNU president, Janet Hazelton;
- discover more opportunities for professional development;
- watch videos produced or shared by the NSNU;
- find more ways to get involved in union activities;
- and so much more.

NSNU social media content is broad and varied, designed to give our members access to the best union and practice information relevant to nurses working in Nova Scotia. It is also the best way for you to join the conversation with your fellow members, weigh in on the issues, and get quick answers from NSNU on your questions.

If you're not already following NSNU on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, find us at the addresses above and tap into the best resources for current information from your union.



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

NSNU Open House  
December 12

Bargaining Update

Events Calendar  
*What to Look For in 2017*



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