

what's nu?

NOVEMBER 2025

Nova Scotia
**Nurses
Union**



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NOVA SCOTIA NURSES' UNION



BLUESKY
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INSTAGRAM
NSNURSESU



YOUTUBE
NSNURSESUNION

Coming Up: *January 2026*

- AGM 2026
- RESOLUTIONS
- BARGAINING CONFERENCE AND MEET & GREET (NOV 18)

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union sits on and operates in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and unceded territories of the Mi'kmaq.

As settlers and visitors of Nova Scotia we acknowledge the importance of these lands, which we call home. We are all Treaty People.

We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility to improve relationships between nations, to work towards healing the wounds of colonialism and to improve our own understanding of local Indigenous Peoples and their cultures.

We honour and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent. We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

MEMBER PROFILES

To update contact information and union status, go to **nsnu.ca/MembersOnly** (login credentials required) and locate **Update Profile Info**. This includes changes of names, addresses, emails, phone numbers, place of employment, work status and designations.

New members to the NSNU will continue to complete an online form located at **nsnu.ca/education/orientation**.

Locals are encouraged to remind new grads and new members to complete the form so they will receive notices, promotions and other information.



[NSNU.CA/INDIGENOUS-RESOURCE-CENTRE](https://nsnu.ca/indigenous-resource-centre)

President's Notebook

Five Dynamic Decades

On behalf of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, I want to extend sincerest gratitude to all our members as we prepare to celebrate a milestone event. 2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the NSNU.

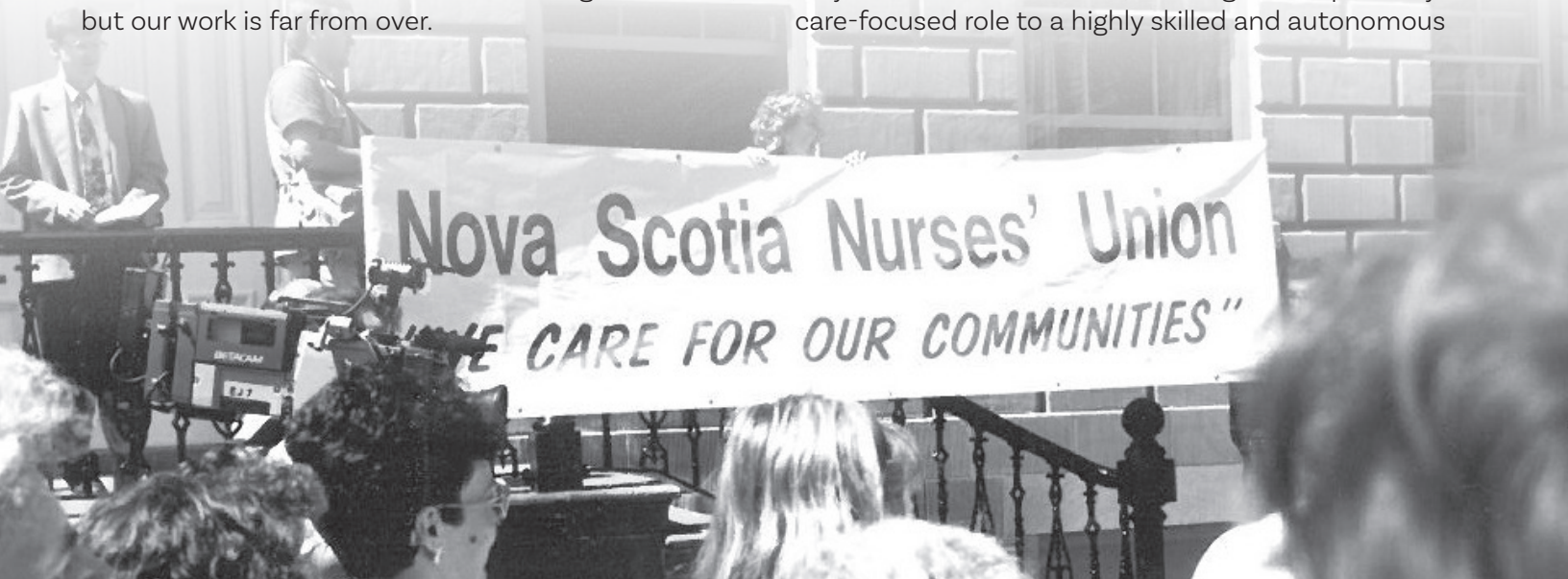
Founded in June 1976, the Union has championed nurses and patients for five dynamic decades. From humble beginnings, and shared office space with the former College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia now the Nova Scotia College of Nursing, the NSNU has become a respected and influential cog in the proverbial labour wheel.

When I first became president of the NSNU, the organization represented approximately 4000 nurses. Today, close to 9000 nurses can proudly call themselves NSNU members. To achieve this feat, the Union lobbied for more nursing seats in schools offering degree and diploma programs, more nurses in healthcare spaces, and more unionized facilities where nurses can feel supported. More nurses equal improved patient outcomes as well as better and safer working conditions, but our work is far from over.

The NSNU is very pleased to say our nursing workforce is now more diverse, with increases in the representation of racial and ethnic minorities, and a growing number of men joining the ranks. We embrace and stand firm with our 2SLGBTQI+ nursing community. And though care and compassion are forever engrained in our DNA, long gone are Nightingales in white shoes, white stockings, caps and knee-length dresses. Instead, our members are largely identified by their white and black scrubs, autonomy, outspokenness and expertise.

Stereotypes aside, the nursing voice and the weight of the collective union have positioned our profession as a leader and influencer in the development of healthcare policy and decision making. Nurses are a powerful lobby group due to our large numbers, our trusted professional status, and frontline experience with healthcare issues. We are at the table, not on the menu.

Our scope of practice continues to change and, like the shapeshifters we are, we have adapted. We are the very definition of resilience, evolving from a primarily care-focused role to a highly skilled and autonomous



Janet Hazelton
BScN RN, MPA, ICD.D



profession with expanded responsibilities and specialized areas of practice. Today's nurses are actively involved in advanced practice roles, evidence-based practice, and technological advancements, contributing to improved patient outcomes and healthcare delivery. Some of this paragraph was written by AI which is one more evolution of the nursing profession.

AI is a remarkable and baffling advancement in health care, making it difficult to predict what's in store for the nursing profession and how we will respond in the future. At present, we know our work is important and desperately in need of resuscitation. However, we will persevere and never give up on the ambitions and aspirations of the nurses of '76.

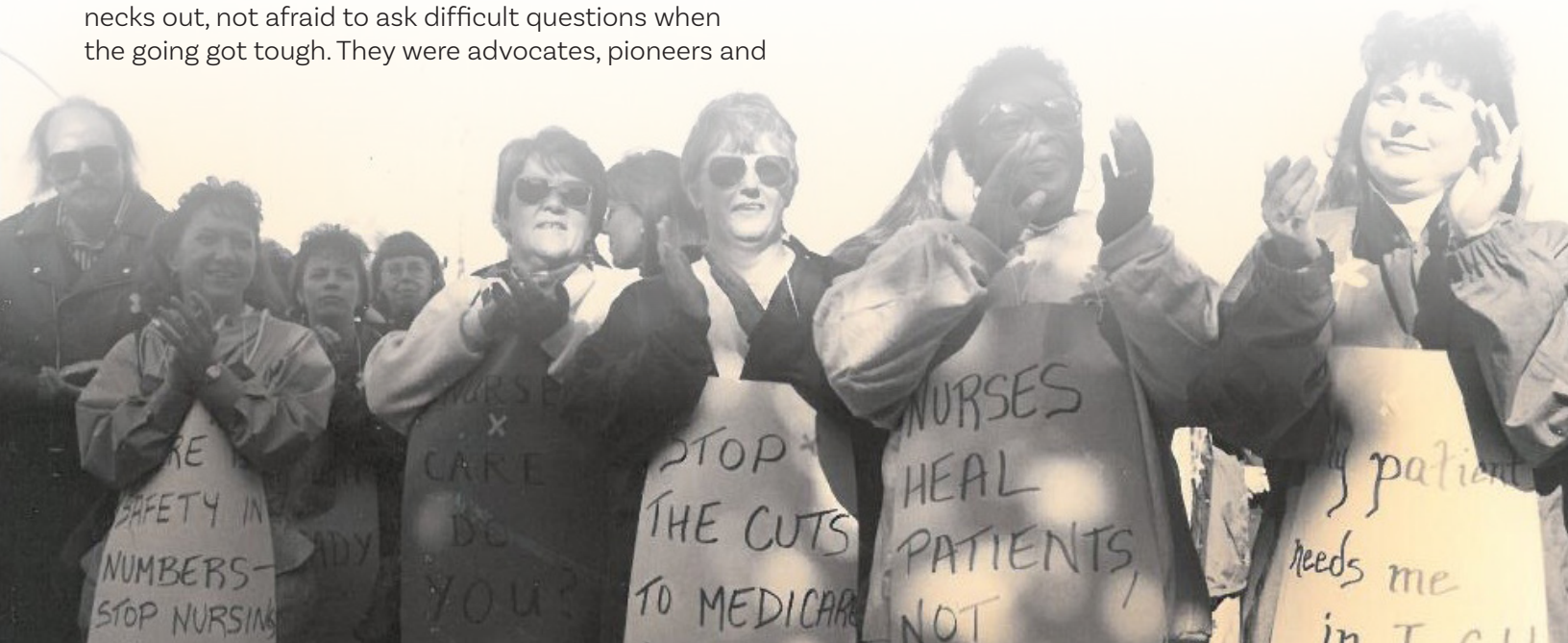
The NSNU was built on the shoulders of nurses, by nurses, to whom we are indebted. Our founding members were regular nurses like you and me who wanted more and deserved better. They stuck their necks out, not afraid to ask difficult questions when the going got tough. They were advocates, pioneers and

warriors. In their memory, we carry on and strengthen their legacy.

For fifty years, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union has maintained a solid reputation and a brand that's admired and easily recognizable. We are Nurses. We are the Union. We are the Heart of health care.

With great pride, we look forward to sharing our 50 years of retrospective images and stories. Please join our organization as we honour the innumerable accomplishments of our nursing professionals and our labour activists.

Janet Hazelton
BScN RN, MPA, ICD.D





CFNU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

On October 1st, the National Executive Board (NEB) of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) stood shoulder to shoulder with CUPW in their fight for Canada's national postal service. That day, the NEB, including NSNU President Janet Hazelton, 1st Vice-President Donna Gills and Executive Director Chris Albrecht, took a break from their meetings to join the rally with postal workers and allies on Parliament Hill.

The NEB is the governing body that leads the CFNU's affairs. The Board, which meets at least twice a year, plays a crucial role in advocating for nurses' rights, patient safety, information sharing and public healthcare through policy development, lobbying, and raising public awareness.

NEB member demonstrated their support and solidarity with CUPW, along with striking UNIFOR Blue Line taxi drivers and OPSEU college workers. When this newsletter went to print, CUPW was still in talks with Canada Post.



CFNU Forms the First National Council on Nurse-Patient Ratios

Amidst an ongoing crisis in health care and widespread staffing shortages, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) is leading the creation of a national council to implement nurse-patient ratios – a vital tool for the safety of both nurses and patients. The council will include government representatives, employers, academics and nurses' unions.

“All across the country, this is the number one ask from nurses, and there’s a good reason for it,” said CFNU President Linda Silas. “Strong nurse-patient ratios (NPR) respect the reality that nursing is a safety-critical industry, where decisions about staffing are made based on safety. That means that there are always enough nurses to give patients the best quality of care, just as there are always enough pilots to safely fly a plane.”

A wide body of academic literature over several decades has consistently found and continues to call for higher nurse staffing to improve nurse and patient safety.

British Columbia became the first jurisdiction in Canada to commit to establishing minimum nurse-patient ratios in April 2023. Lead by the NSNU, Nova Scotia followed suit only months later, committing to develop a safe staffing framework to determine the appropriate number of nurses for safe care in different settings.

The creation of a National Council was the top recommendation that emerged from the National NPR Summit held in the fall of 2024.

“This council will be focused on implementation of nurse-patient ratios with an eye on nurse retention and wellness. Safe staffing models have proven to do just that – retain nurses. They are being brought into effect in British Columbia and Nova Scotia, and we know strong implementation is critical to success and to bringing safe staffing across the country,” Silas said. “We don’t need more studies – we need a concrete framework to bring this life-saving policy into all health care settings across the country.”

On October 27th, the Ontario Nurses’ Association (ONA) formally announced it will sit on the national council on nurse-to-patient ratios.

“There is a reason that nurse-to-patient ratios were the top bargaining demand for Ontario’s 60,000 hospital nurses during contract negotiations – because ratios mean safer work for us and better care for our patients,” says ONA Provincial President Erin Ariss, RN. “If British Columbia and Nova Scotia can move ahead with ratios, there is no reason that Ontario, and every other jurisdiction in Canada, can’t.”

CFNU President Linda Silas:
“Strong nurse-patient ratios respect the reality that nursing is a safety-critical industry, where decisions about staffing are made based on safety.”

Hey HEALTH MINISTERS: *Violence is not part of the job*

Putting an end to violence against health care workers was the focus of discussions between Canada's health ministers and nurse union leaders at the October 17th policy breakfast meeting hosted by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU).

Ahead of federal-provincial-territorial Health Ministers' Meeting in Calgary, CFNU President Linda Silas and our National Executive Board (**including NSNU's 1st Vice-President Donna Gillis**) met with Canada's Minister of Health, the Honourable Marjorie Michel.



NSNU 1st VP **Donna Gillis**
NS Minister of Health & Wellness **Michelle Thompson**

"Preventing violence in health care workplaces is not only possible but also critically important to retaining the nurses and health care professionals we rely on," said CFNU President Linda Silas. "Violence against health care workers has dire consequences, both physical and psychological. The reality is that health workplaces with violence are unhealthy for both nurses and patients. Changing the culture of health care workplaces is necessary to ensure violence doesn't become normalized."

Health ministers from almost every province received CFNU's new **white paper** detailing eye-opening statistics that demonstrate just how prevalent

violence is in health workplaces, from growing workers' compensation claims to shocking survey findings.



That document can be found at:
nursesunions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/HMM25-WhitePaper_EN_Web.pdf (scan the QR code).

Silas was joined by health care policy expert Dr. Sioban Nelson for a presentation and Q&A session on why violence is under-reported in the health sector, and the consequences and impacts of work-place violence, including burnout and attrition. Dr. Nelson is a professor at the Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing at the University of Toronto, who researches workplace violence and professional issues in nursing.

As Silas emphasized, despite how pervasive violence is, accountability is rare. Investing in prevention and enforcement is critical.

The CFNU is calling on provincial and territorial governments to use every tool at their disposal to end violence against health care workers, including:

- » Investing in training and prevention programs for workers and designated in-house security personnel
- » Mandated minimum nurse-patient ratios to reduce risks of violence exacerbated by excessive work-loads
- » Enforcement of the Criminal Code and occupational health and safety legislation to punish and deter violence, including penalties for negligent employers
- » Installing violence prevention infrastructure, such as weapons detection systems, surveillance cameras and personal alarms for workers





Global Nurses United

Nurses from 29 countries took part in a march in San Francisco on Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2025, part of the Global Nurse Solidarity Assembly. The march highlighted the international resistance to agendas that deprive tens of millions of people across the world from access to health care, educational and employment opportunities, and safe environments to live and raise families.

“There were nurses from all over the world in San Francisco to meet and chart a course to improve access to care for all, not just the privileged,” said Janet Hazelton, president of NSNU, echoing the words for fellow attendees.

Nurses devote their lives to caring for our communities and the most vulnerable. Advocacy does not end at the bedside – a collective voice amplifies shared concerns, acting as a powerful tool for creating change.

Nurses from around the world, including NSNU president, Janet Hazelton and other nurse leaders within the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, were in San Francisco taking part in the Global Nurses Solidarity Assembly. Global Nurses United (GNU), a federation of international nurse unions representing more than 2.5 million nurses and other health care workers in 35 countries around the world, works to fight against austerity measures, privatization, and attacks on public health.

In May of 2025, GNU released a report entitled, *Global Crisis, Collective Solution: Addressing the Worldwide Nurse Staffing Crisis*, a groundbreaking report examining the nurse staffing crisis affecting health care systems across the planet. Visit nationalnursesunited.org to learn more.

NBNU Holds 51st AGM in Moncton

From October 20th to October 22 close to 200 nurses from across New Brunswick gathered to conduct union business at NBNU’s 51st Annual General Meeting (AGM).

“This year’s AGM was a powerful opportunity to reaffirm the strength and solidarity that every unionized nurse carries,” said Paula Doucet, NBNU President. “Nurses from every corner of the province came together with a shared purpose: focusing our vision for New Brunswick’s public healthcare system and taking ownership of our role in strengthening it.”

The AGM took place in Moncton over three days. It began with the launch of NBNU’s new brand identity, marking a new era of unionism for nurses across New Brunswick. Keynote speaker Martin Latulippe, social entrepreneur, speaker, author and philanthropist, closed out the meeting with inspiring words of hope for the members present.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton attended the event and spoke to the assembly about the Nova Scotia nursing experience. She congratulated them on their recently ratified agreement and offered words of encouragement and solidarity.

Union elections saw the acclamation of Catherine Little to the role of 1st Vice-President for a one-year term, while bidding a happy retirement to Maria Richard, NBNU’s former 1st Vice-President.



Annual General Meeting

April 2026

In 2026, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union Annual General Meeting will take place from **April 13-16** at the Best Western Glengarry Hotel in Truro. The theme for the 50th Anniversary event is **Still Fighting, Always Caring**. This AGM will commemorate the many accomplishments of the NSNU over the past 50 years and honour the legacy of those who built the organization from the ground up.

This upcoming event will include the recognition of

Honorary Members, debate on numerous resolutions and more. We will welcome special guest speakers, conduct union business, develop strategies, make important decisions for the coming year, and discuss past, present, and future activities.

All AGM-related documents, guides and forms will be available at **nsnu.ca/AGM2026** in the new year. You will require your login credentials to access the materials.

Highlights & Deadlines to Keep in Mind:

- 🕒 Nominations for Honorary Members will close on **January 14th**.
- 🕒 Resolutions must be submitted by **January 29th**.
- 🕒 Those applying for First Time or 35 & Under draws, and Small Local Observers must submit their forms by **January 29th**.
- 🕒 Resolutions and Financial Statements will be posted online at **nsnu.ca/MembersOnly** by **February 28th**.
- 👤 Online registration opens **February 2nd** and closes on **March 2nd**. One representative from each local is responsible for registering all participants (delegates and observers) who will be attending. Links to registration forms will be available on the Member's Only section of the NSNU website in the new year.
- 📅 The deadline to apply for most NSNU or affiliate scholarships is **March 13th**. Go to **nsnu.ca/resources/education/scholarships** for details. The successful recipients will be announced at the AGM.
- ♠️ The hospitality event will take place the evening of **Tuesday, April 14th** at the Glengarry Hotel. The Casino Royale Night, complete with games and live entertainment, will be the first of its kind for NSNU - exciting details to follow. Volunteers with game "shark" experience welcome! Contact **communications@nsnu.ca** to sign up to deal or assist.
- 👤 The NSNU will be selling an assortment of merchandise. NSNU accepts cash, credit, NSNU Local cheques and debit.
- 👤 NSNU will once again be collecting dignity items (menstrual hygiene products and incontinence briefs) for those in need in the Truro and surrounding areas.
- 👤 The NSNU Charity Draw continues. Each local is asked to donate an item to the fundraiser. All proceeds from the 50/50 tickets sales and the charity draw go to The Marguerite Centre in Halifax and Hope Project in Sydney.

The 50th Anniversary theme will be on full display at the **Wednesday, April 15th Banquet and Dance**. *All that glitters will be gold!* From the dazzling décor, accessories and attire, and the vibe - *all will be golden*.

More information will be featured in the January 2026

issue of **What's NU?**, emailed in Campaigner e-memos to members and Local executives, and posted online at **nsnu.ca/AGM2026** in the coming weeks and months.

Please note, no Education Day is scheduled during the 2026 Annual General Meeting.

The 50th Anniversary!

1976-2026

2026 AGM Tentative Schedule

Sunday, April 12th

Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, April 13th

Component & Regional Meetings

Tuesday, April 14th

8:30 am – 4:00 pm: AGM Business Day 1

6:30 pm – 10:00 pm: Hospitality Event

Wednesday, April 15th

8:30 am – 3:00 pm: AGM Business Day 2

6:30 pm – 12:00 am: Banquet & Dance

Thursday, April 16th

9:00 am – 3:00 pm: AGM Business Day 3

CFNU National Executive Board Panel



Memorabilia Room

During the AGM, the Nicholson Board Room in the Glengarry Hotel will be transformed into a mini-museum, an exhibit of **nursing memorabilia from 1976-2026**. Locals and members with old photos and posters, nursing uniforms and artifacts, old and new NSNU merchandise or documents, and other interesting collectables are kindly asked to loan items for this display. **Please help us tell the NSNU story.**

coming soon
nsnu.ca/AGM2026

SCHOLARSHIPS, BURSARIES & GRANTS

Each year, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions offer several scholarships, grants and bursaries to support the educational goals of NSNU members and their families.

Whether recipients are just beginning their studies, continuing their education, or supporting a family member's academic journey, these opportunities help to ease the financial burden of post-secondary studies and recognize an ongoing commitment to learning in nursing.

Winnie Kettleleson Eastern Labour School Scholarship

A \$1000 scholarship to be awarded over the next 20 years to members attending their first Eastern Labour School (ELS), participating in the General Labour Relations course

Winnie Kettleleson, a long-time member, former President and employee of the NSNU, always considered herself "first and foremost, a proud member of the nursing profession." Her NSNU nickname became "1-800-

Winnie" for the sound advice and support she gave. Continuing her commitment and pride in the nursing profession, it was Winnie's wish to establish a scholarship in her name.

Note: ELS 2026 takes place in NB from May 31st - June 2nd.



Kathleen Connors Rural & Remote Bursary

Annual \$1000 student scholarship to be awarded to a nursing student who is from and intend to work in a rural area of Nova Scotia

This bursary, provided by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, is offered to nurses at any stage of their career who are serving in rural communities. Named in

honour of Kathleen Connors, a key figure in the founding of the CFNU and a pioneer in nurse advocacy, the bursary intends to support ongoing professional development with the goal of strengthening healthcare in underserved, rural areas.



CFNU Indigenous Student Scholarship

Annual \$1000 student scholarship to be awarded to a nursing student who identifies as Indigenous

This scholarship, provided by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, is intended to assist Indigenous students in accredited nursing education programs

throughout Canada. It is hoped that students who choose to access this scholarship will show nursing leadership within their provincial nurses' unions.



Shirley Farrel Memorial Solidarity & Wellness Grant

A sum of \$2000 (all or part of) to be awarded annually to a Local(s) for an event(s) that promote Union activism

Shirley Farrell, a 1985 graduate of St. Martha's School of Nursing, was a devoted nurse and passionate advocate for her colleagues. Through her many roles with the NSNU - including Shop Steward and Local

President - she found joy, friendship, and purpose in representing others. Always a familiar face at Union events, Shirley will be honoured annually with the Shirley Farrel Memorial Solidarity & Wellness Grant.



For more information, requirements and applications, visit [NSNU.CA/RESOURCES/EDUCATION/SCHOLARSHIPS](https://nsnu.ca/resources/education/scholarships).

Eastern 2026 Labour School

SAVE THE DATE

Eastern Labour School will take place at the UNB campus in Fredericton, New Brunswick from **May 31-June 2**, hosted by NBNU. This biennial event is hosted by a nurse union in the Atlantic provinces on a rotational basis, providing nurse-union activists and fledgling activists the opportunity to fine tune their labour knowledge and skills.

NSNU sponsors one member per local to attend Eastern Labour School – that includes travel, accommodations, meals, and salary replacement.

Once NSNU receives details from the host Union, we will share information (including fees, draws, course options, scheduling, etc.), publish a webpage at nsnu.ca/ELS2026, and open registration.

Members are reminded that the Winnie Kettleson scholarship is to be awarded to a member of the NSNU attending Eastern Labour School (ELS) for the first time. Winnie was a long-time member, and former president and employee of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union. Before her passing, it was her wish to establish a scholarship in her name.

The **\$1000.00 scholarship** will be granted to a member participating in the General Labour Relations course at ELS.



2026
MAY 31 - JUNE 2



UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
FREDERICTON CAMPUS



VON MULTI-SITE LABOUR MANAGEMENT MEETING

On Monday, November 3, representatives from all twelve Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) Locals across the province, along with union staff (*Farrel Huculak, Labour Relations Representative, and Erin McInnis, LRR Assistant*), Board representatives, and the VON management team, participated in a VON/NSNU Multi-Site Labour Management Meeting, held at the NSNU office in Dartmouth. The groups convene up to three times each year.

These meetings allow all parties – the Union, employer and nurses – the opportunity to discuss operations and initiatives that present challenges and impact care delivery.

VON nurses face similar issues to those working in hospitals and other facilities related to short staffing, unrealistic expectations and untenable workloads, and violence in the workplace. However, they also experience unique struggles.

During the meeting, the group focused on several relevant matters including occupational health and safety, inclement weather procedures, overnight safety protocol, virtual visits, pensions, and overtime and sick leave data. They also discussed on-call related concerns and extra shift requirements.

Like all other sectors of care, one of the biggest obstacles facing VON is staffing. And while the sites share similar operational concerns, each has distinct interests that need to be addressed.

The VON serves thousands of Nova Scotians with medical needs, many requiring daily healthcare services. Registered and Licensed Practical Nurses employed by VON are represented by the NSNU.

Currently, there remain hundreds of people on the VON wait-list for homecare in this province and the organization has approximately 100 nurse vacancies. The VON is the only publicly funded source of home-care nursing in Nova Scotia and Ontario.



Historic NSFL Convention

For the first time in its 53-year history, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL) has elected a woman, and the first woman of colour, to hold this role of president. Melissa Marsman was elected on October 28th at the Federation's convention in Halifax. This election is a testament to the ongoing work of unions in breaking down barriers and building a stronger, more inclusive movement for everyone.

Marsman says, this election represents progress and inclusion at a time when working people across the province are demanding stronger voices, fairer workplaces, better pay and job security, with a renewed focus on equality and justice for all workers.

Tammy Gillis has been elected Treasurer, marking the first time two women have held the top leadership positions within the NSFL. This is a proud moment for workers; change is happening, and it's powered by solidarity, equality, and the strength of working people across our province.

The NSNU thanks outgoing president, Danny Cavanagh, for his service as president of the NSFL for ten years and his 35-plus years as a labour leader and staunch activist.

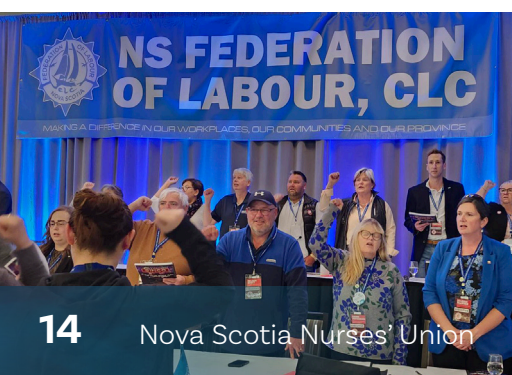
NSFL Officers

Melissa Marsman, *President*
Sandra Mullen, *First Vice-President*
Tammy Gillis, *Secretary-Treasurer*
Janet Hazelton, *Vice-President-at-Large*
Peter Day, *Vice-President-at-Large*
Alan Linkletter, *Vice-President-at-Large*
Rocky Beals, *Vice-President BIPOC*
Nicole Turple, *Vice-President, Young Workers*

NSFL General Vice-Presidents

Nelson Scott, *CUPE*
Dianne Frittenburg, *CUPE*
Peter Perry, *NSGEU*
Pam Grace, *NSGEU*
Ellen Cross, *PSAC*
Chris DiLiberatore, *PSAC*
Donna Gillis, *NSNU*
Glenda Sabine, *NSNU*
Sarah Tutty, *NSTU*

Jo-Leigh MacPhee, *NSTU*
Craig Anderson, *IBEW*
Dwayne Corner, *CUPW*
Kevin MacMullin, *IUOE*
Leslie Campbell, *Labour Councils*
Jessica Jeddry, *UFCW*
Cynthia Black, *Unions under 1000*
Debbie Richardson, *Unions under 1000*



Labour Management Partnership

BUILDING A LABOUR PORTFOLIO

On October 29th, healthcare workers, including NSNU members, were invited to take part in a free labour management webinar.

Co-sponsored by CMS, CPHR, and the NSNU, Anna Marenick, Vice President of People, Culture & Belonging for Nova Scotia Health, and Janet Hazelton, President of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union presented a fireside chat moderated by Lindsey Harrington, CMS Strategic Initiatives Lead.

The topics of discussion ranged from building positive union-management relationships, exploring opportunities for collaboration, and what to do in those difficult moments every relationship faces.

A question-and-answer period followed the event, which engaged those who joined the discussion.



Student Nurses Engage with Union Leadership

On November 3rd, while in Newfoundland and Labrador, NSNU President Janet Hazelton, NBNU President Paula Doucet, and RNUNL President Yvette Coffey spent time getting better acquainted with nursing students from across the region.

The “Get to Know Your Atlantic Region Unions” session was hosted by the Canadian Nursing Students Association (CNSA). The students had an enviable opportunity to learn the ins and outs of the labour movement and how unions directly and positively impact nursing and patient advocacy. Lucky students! Janet, Paula and Yvette are some of the best union leaders in the country, full of sage advice and union know-how.

The Canadian Nursing Students' Association, is a national voice for nursing students. A non-profit, student-run organization that advocates for the needs and interests of nursing students across Canada. The organization represents students to governments and professional bodies, promotes leadership and professional development, and provides educational and networking opportunities through conferences and other events.

The CNSA is known for helping nursing students connect with nurse union leaders. CNSA provides, and is provided with, networking opportunities that expand a student's knowledge about the role and benefits of nursing unions. These connections help new nurses better understand workplace issues, such as professional practice, occupational health and safety, and the realities of nursing.

Sessions like the one held in St. John's, encourage new nurses to get involved in union activities and/or leadership roles early in their careers. The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions has fostered a productive and mutually beneficial relationship with CNSA for many years.

2025 WSIS Annual Meeting

The 2025 Workplace Safety and Insurance System (WSIS) Annual Meeting took place on Thursday, October 9, at the Sandman Hotel in Dartmouth, with a virtual option for participation.

Co-hosted by the Deputy Minister of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI), Ryan Grant, and the Chair of the WCB's Board of Directors, Karen Adams, the meeting featured updates from WSIS partners (LSI, WCB, the Workers' Advisers Program, and the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal). Also on hand was WCBNS Board Chair, Saeed El-Darahali.

The program covered system performance reporting and highlighted one year of progress since the Workers' Compensation System Review Committee's Report, followed by an audience Q&A.

Also, in attendance was **NSNU's Occupational Health and Safety Advisor, Heather Matthews**, an expert in her field and a remarkable resource for our members.

The Report disclosed encouraging data on the reduction in injuries, a meaningful achievement resulting from investments in prevention and a collaborative approach by all parties in establishing common goals.

The provincial injury rate is currently less than half of what it was 20 years ago. In 2023, 3.00 workers per 100 suffered injuries on the job, while in 2024 the rate was 1.38 per 100 workers. These numbers represent injury rates for all sectors and categories of workers insured under WCB (i.e. construction, health care, fisheries, etc.).

Injury rates between 2017 and 2023 for homecare workers have decreased by 48% from 9.64 to 4.99. In long term care, over the same period, that number went from 5.33 to 3.60, a 32% reduction.

This progress can be attributed to investments in training, support for backfill which frees workers up to attend educational sessions, instructional videos, posters and signage, and equipment (lifts, transfer belts, transfer sheets, etc.).

Looking forward, there is an opportunity to take lessons learned in injury prevention in both home care and long term care sectors and apply them to acute care. Health care is trending in the right direction, but all partners must stay vigilant. These measures are critical to recruitment and retention strategies.

To learn more about workplace safety, go to: wsis.ns.ca.

THANK YOU
FOR JOINING US
Please watch for an email survey and
visit [WSIS.NS.CA](https://wsis.ns.ca) for further updates



Saeed El-Darahali, Heather Matthews, Karen Adams

A group of young children are sitting at a white table, focused on drawing or coloring. They are using various colored pencils and markers on white paper. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a classroom or activity room.

Improved Childcare Access for Nurses

In early 2025, a resolution was submitted by NSNU 1st Vice-President Donna Gillis and IWK Vice-President Natalie Nymark for debate at the April Annual General Meeting regarding childcare accessibility. That resolution received unanimous support from delegates at the AGM.

The resolution recognized the significant challenges nurses face in accessing childcare for children under 18 months, resulting in many taking extended parental leave of 18 months instead of 12 months, which poses financial and systemic burdens.

The resolution called for the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union to actively lobby our provincial and federal governments to take a coordinated approach to implementing measures that improve childcare access for young.

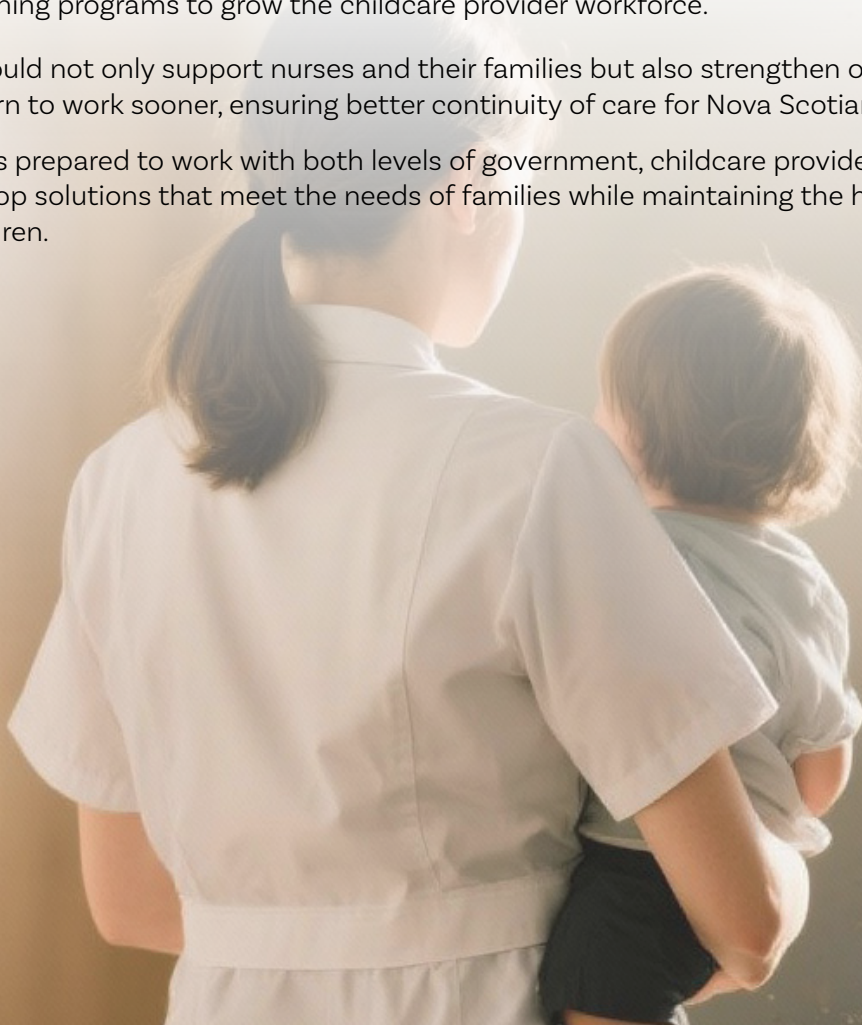
On October 10th, 2025, the NSNU sent separate letters to Prime Minister Mark Carney and Premier Tim Houston on behalf of the more than 9,000 registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and licensed practical nurses represented by the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union urging both governments to take immediate action to address a critical gap in childcare access that is negatively impacting families and our healthcare system.

NSNU urges our province, in collaboration with the Government of Canada, to:

- » Expand subsidies and funding for childcare providers to increase capacity for children under 18 months.
- » Review and revise provincial caregiver-to-child ratio regulations to address gaps for this age group while maintaining safety and quality standards.
- » Encourage the development of workplace childcare programs, particularly in healthcare facilities.
- » Enhance training programs to grow the childcare provider workforce.

These measures would not only support nurses and their families but also strengthen our healthcare system by helping nurses return to work sooner, ensuring better continuity of care for Nova Scotians.

The Nurses' Union is prepared to work with both levels of government, childcare providers, and healthcare employers to develop solutions that meet the needs of families while maintaining the highest standards of care for young children.





Atlantic Nursing Leaders Tackle Shared Challenges

The Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador (RNU) welcomed nursing union leaders from across Atlantic Canada to St. John's for Atlantic Caucus meetings, November 3-5.

The Atlantic Caucus brings together the presidents and executive directors of the nursing unions representing licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, and nurse practitioners in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick. The group meets to address shared challenges, exchange strategies, and coordinate advocacy that strengthens public healthcare and the nursing profession across the region.

This week's agenda includes nurse-patient ratios, collective bargaining, the use of agency nurses as staffing solutions, and preparations for the 2026 Eastern Labour School (ELS).

"Nursing is under threat from many fronts, and what we are experiencing in Newfoundland and Labrador is being felt in every Atlantic province," said Yvette Coffey, President of RNU. "These caucus meetings give us the opportunity to share strategies, align our advocacy, and strengthen our collective voice for nurses and for public healthcare in Atlantic Canada."

Nurse Practitioners (NPs) were also a key focus, with leaders reaffirming that empowering NPs to work to their full scope is essential to improving access to primary care across the region.

"Nurse Practitioners are ready to do more to meet the healthcare needs of our communities," said Janet Hazelton, President of the NSNU. "We need to ensure NPs have more autonomy, authority, and funding to work to their full potential. I am encouraged by the pilot funding models underway in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is a strong step forward in recognizing the critical role NPs play in improving access to care."

Collective bargaining was a top agenda item, with NBNU sharing lessons learned and successful strategies from their recently completed negotiations. RNU's collect agreement (CA) is set to expire June 2026. NSNU's CAs recently expired. Preparations for the next round of bargaining are gearing up in both provinces.

The Atlantic Caucus meetings highlight the strength of regional collaboration and the shared commitment of Atlantic nursing unions to advance safe staffing, fair and violence-free workplaces, and a sustainable public healthcare system for all.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

The NSNU Board of Directors holds meetings throughout the year to discuss issues and to conduct Union business.

NSNU members in good standing have the right to attend meetings of the Board, in person or virtually.

If you would like to join the NSNU BOD at an upcoming meeting, we ask that you state your intention to attend at least one month in advance by emailing debbie.grady@nsnu.ca.

Monday, January 12, 2026
Virtual

Friday, February 27, 2026
In person

Sunday, April 12, 2026
In person in conjunction with AGM

Thursday, May 28, 2026
Details to be determined

Monday, June 22, 2026
Details to be determined

DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

NSNU ENCOURAGES NOVA SCOTIANS TO JOIN THE *Fight Against the Flu*

For six months of every year – typically November through April – that coughing, sneezing, sniffing, aching, feverish feeling is a sign that the flu has caught you!

With more people unmasked and emergency departments already overflowing, getting vaccinated against the seasonal flu and COVID-19 is an important step to protect yourself and others this flu season.

The NSNU understands that nurses are already aware of the significance of immunization and the risks the flu poses to vulnerable groups – such as seniors, children, pregnant individuals, and those who are immuno-compromised. Nurses know the facts.

Each year, NSNU shares an Influenza Immunization campaign aimed at educating the public, easing the

strain on health practitioners as they continue their vital work.

Once again, we're encouraging all Nova Scotians to do their part to alleviate the pressures healthcare workers face every day. Show a little muscle in the fight against the flu!

Our campaign to Fight the Flu is communicated through various channels, including earned media, a dedicated webpage, video messaging and social media promotions.

On November 13th, CTV paid a visit to the NSNU Office in Burnside to speak with NSNU President Janet Hazelton, who rolled up her sleeve for the flu shot, encouraging viewers to do the same.

LEARN MORE AT [NSNU.CA/FLU](https://nsnu.ca/flu)



#FightTheFlu

what's nu? snapshots

HALLOWEEN AT HSASS

Halloween magic was in the air at HSASS, where the Oncology Clinic (below) and Ambulatory Care (left) teams brewed up plenty of spirit. Thank you to Michelle Lowe, RN (the purple-haired witch) for sharing the fun!



BLUE JAYS SPIRIT

What do you get when Halloween and Game 6 of the World Series fall on the same day? A special visit from the Blue Jays at the Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital! Thank you to Kelly Glabais-Cummings for sharing the photo - we love to see the Halloween spirit and support for Canada's team! Go Jays Go!



NSNU SPOOKY STAFF

NSNU staff got into the Halloween spirit with a lunchtime potluck filled with treats, tricks and plenty of creativity!

From frightfully fun costumes to a spread of delicious dishes, it was the spookiest lunch break of the year! The coveted costume prizes went to the Tooth Fairy, the Crochet Queen, and the Louvre Thief.





SHOP STEWARD TRAINING

Led by NSNU Education & IT Officer Chad O'Brien, with support from NSNU Labour Relations Representative Patti Humphries, members from the Aberdeen Hospital participated in Shop Steward training on October 22nd.

Shop steward training equips union members with the knowledge and skills to effectively represent their colleagues and enforce the collective agreement within the workplace. Training typically covers topics like the grievance process, contract interpretation, communication skills, and understanding union rights and responsibilities.

SHOPPING KELTIC CLOTHING

Keltic Clothing, locally headquartered in Sydney, NS, has been making the rounds, allowing nurses to freshen up their work wardrobes.

Numerous pop-up shops have already taken place, including at the Aberdeen, and Keltic will visit several other sites across the province (including the NSNU office!) before the end of the year.

Pictured: Happy Shopper and NSNU member Jamie Hurley, LPN & Keltic Clothing's Katherine Van Nostrand



SUPPORT FOR STRIKING CUPW

On September 29th, NSNU President Janet Hazelton showed support for the Canadian Union of Postal Workers by visiting the picket line at 28 Topple Dr. in Burnside. The NSNU stood in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who were off the job, fighting for their rights and fair treatment for all employees. Solidarity in action!

SHARE YOUR LOCAL UPDATES:
SEND A PHOTO AND DESCRIPTION TO COMMUNICATIONS@NSNU.CA



attention:

ARE YOU RECEIVING NSNU EMAILS?

Campaigner is the secure email service that enables the NSNU to share information with members all at once, or with specific groups of members, in an efficient and timely manner. NSNU uses Campaigner to distribute important information promptly and securely, allowing members to receive timely updates regarding bargaining, educational opportunities, contests, events and more.

According to the analytics within Campaigner, **the overwhelming majority of emails that do not reach our members are Nova Scotia Health, IWK, and VON hosted accounts**. For this reason, we strongly encourage members to use their personal email accounts in the NSNU database. These work-hosted addresses account for nearly all of our “bounced” emails – meaning messages that are rejected or blocked before they reach your inbox. We encounter the same problem with members who are still using a university-hosted account. This often happens due to strict firewalls or internal filters that prevent bulk or external messages from being delivered.

To ensure you receive all NSNU updates without interruption, we recommend updating your contact information in the NSNU database to include a personal email address that you check regularly. You can also add nsnu.ca and nursesunion.com to your safe sender list to reduce the chance of messages being filtered into spam or junk folders.

Keeping your inbox open and contact details current helps us stay connected and ensures you never miss important union news, opportunities or announcements.

To update your information in the NSNU database, please log in to the **Members Only** portal of nsnu.ca, and navigate to **Update Profile Info**.

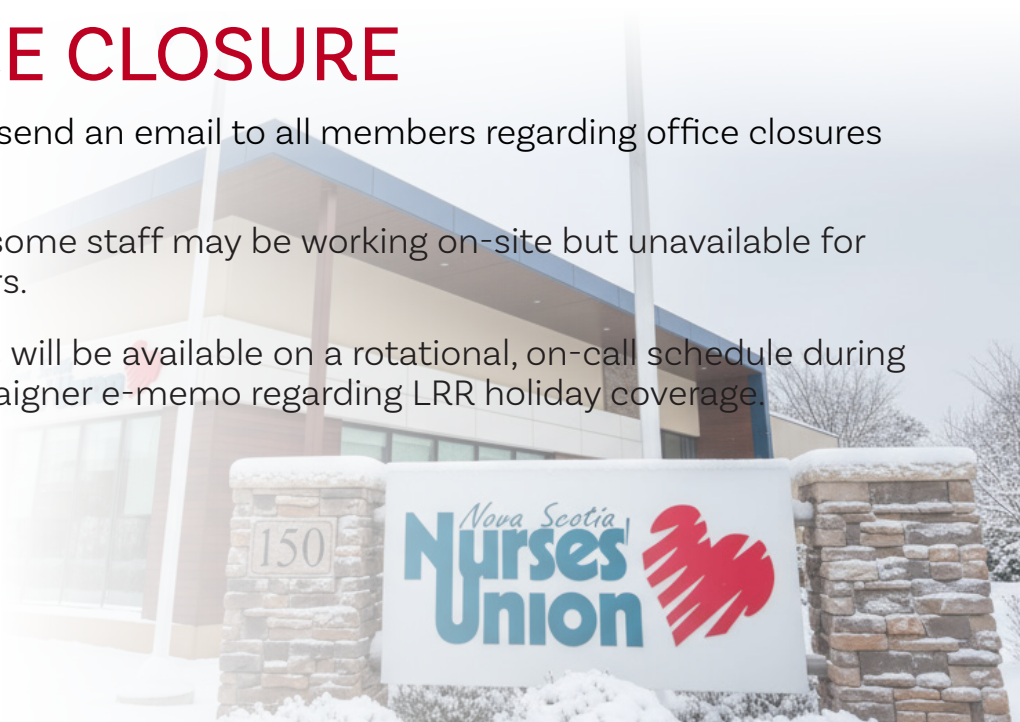
UPDATE PROFILE INFO

HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURE

Please note the NSNU Office will send an email to all members regarding office closures over the holidays.

In the event of an office closure, some staff may be working on-site but unavailable for in-person meetings with members.

Labour Relations Representatives will be available on a rotational, on-call schedule during this time. Stay tuned for a Campaigner e-memo regarding LRR holiday coverage.



Season's Greetings

from the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is spreading holiday joy through acts of kindness and generosity. Charitable donations are more significant than ever, while many struggle to make ends meet.

In observation of this festive time of year, NSNU has made contributions to the Marguerite Centre in Halifax and The Hope Project Foundation in Sydney. Both centres provide long-term residential programs to women who are overcoming addictions. These programs help women return to their families, friends and work, helping them to feel whole again.

The NSNU regularly gives to other charitable and non-profit organizations, like Feed NS, over the holidays. The Union is fortunate to share with meaningful causes during this season of giving.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the NSNU, we wish all Nova Scotians, especially our dedicated members and their families, a safe and healthy holiday season, and a Happy New Year!



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