



17 June 2020

The Honourable Stephen McNeil
Premier of Nova Scotia
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Premier McNeil,

I am writing today to discuss the good news, bad news scenario the recent LPN award has created. While we must acknowledge the expanded scope of practice for licensed practical nurses and celebrate the monetary award for some 385 LPNs in the province, the application of this award is incredibly divisive.

This judgment in favour of the 2014 grievance filed by the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union on behalf of LPNs in the former Central District Health Authority is appropriate but requires that the same treatment be applied for LPNs across the board.

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is seeking immediate action and full acknowledgement and compensation for all licensed practical nurses, regardless of where they work.

NSGEU argued that LPNs were doing work above their pay grade and deserved to be reclassified. Other health care unions have made the same argument but, unlike the NSGEU, did not have language in our contracts to grieve job reclassification. Thousands of LPNs represented by five health care unions, including the NSGEU, have not been included in the arbitrated award.

It is imperative that employers, government and all other health stakeholders recognize the expanded role of all LPNs and the immeasurable contributions they make. It is not all that long ago that health care unions fought for and won wage parity for all LPNs across the sectors and regions.

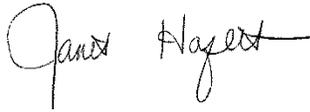
The recruitment and retention of nurses to rural and remote areas of Nova Scotia is an ongoing concern. This latest affront will do nothing to help that cause. LPNs, in all sectors, are working just as hard as nurses in Halifax and are equally deserving. Any disparity of their professional role or compensation is egregious.

Nurses are the backbone of an already fragile health care system – from Yarmouth to Cape Breton. To have inequities of any kind, especially during a pandemic, sets us back and demoralizes nurses.

The Nurses' Union calls on government, the Nova Scotia Health Authority and all others who employ LPNs, including in long term care and community care, to address the matter as quickly as possible so that nurses can get on with caring for patients, while feeling respected and valued.

Thank you in advance for giving this issue the attention it deserves. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Hazelton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the name.

Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA
President, Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

Cc Hon. Randy Delorey, Minister of Health and Wellness, DHW