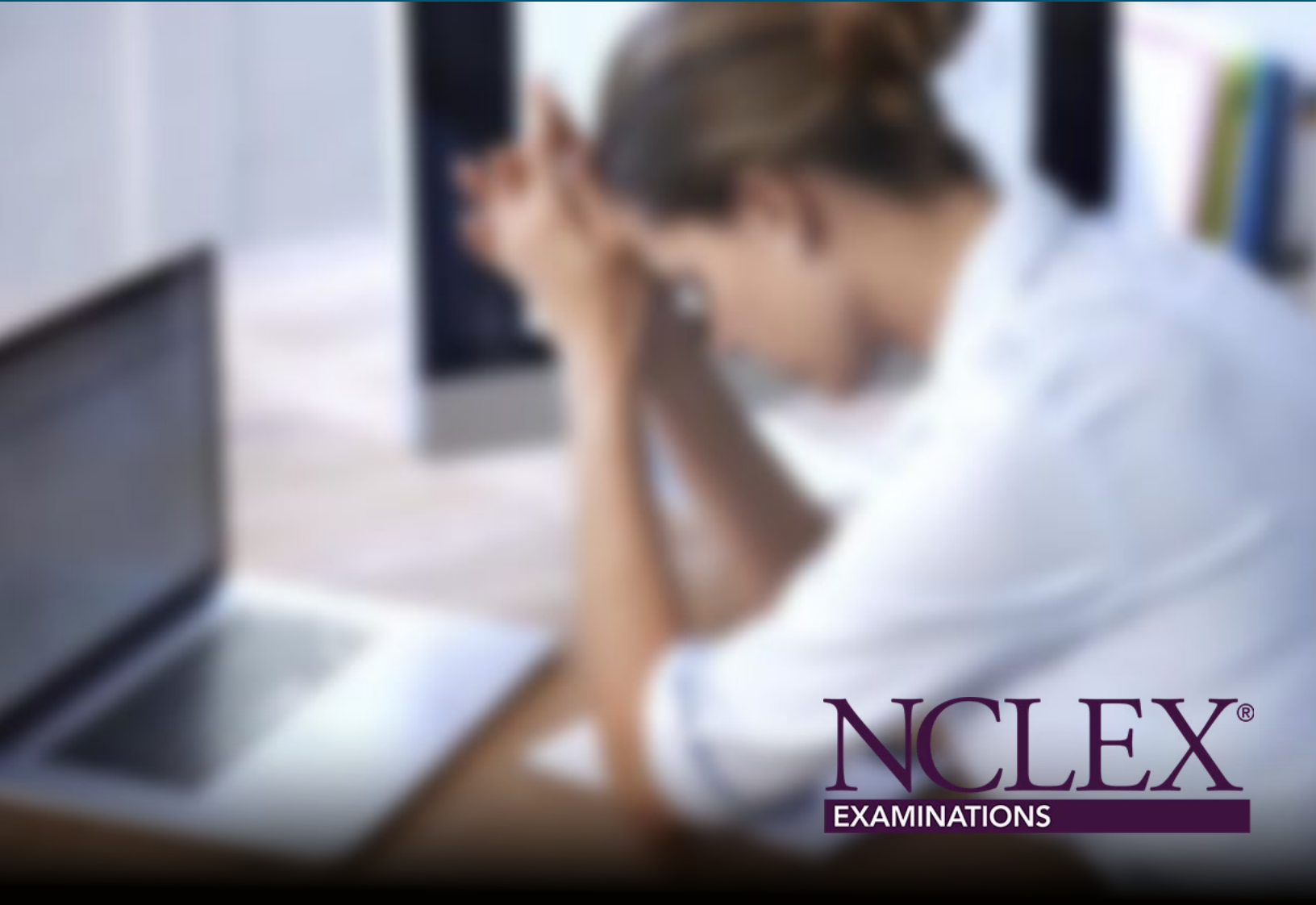


# What's **NU**?

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



**NCLEX**<sup>®</sup>  
EXAMINATIONS

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# President's Notebook

By Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA

## A New Season and New Opportunities for Member Engagement

Spring is upon us and with that comes hope for new beginnings, like stability in the labour movement and restored funding for health care. These are the things we dare to wish for as we look towards the future.

The release of the 2016 Federal Budget on March 22 made it apparent that we must continue to pressure federal, provincial, and territorial governments to negotiate a strong Health and Social Accord.

However, our new federal government appears to be listening and may be prepared to bargain for the things that matter to us. I look forward to meeting with

the First Ministers in July during the Council of the Federation in the Yukon. While there, I expect to witness real leadership from our premiers – leadership that will ensure a strong future for our public health-care system.

Our success and hopes for the future of nursing and health care are tightly hinged to the strength of our messages, our union and our members. Without your voice we are powerless to elicit change. That is why we work diligently to provide options by which you can “spread the word”. Our social media platforms provide an easily accessible means of receiving and disseminating information. We encourage all our members to

explore the options available to you – twitter, facebook, and our website.

Participating in local, regional, provincial and national nursing/labour events is another way to become informed about issues affecting you in your workplace. Our AGM and Education Day, Eastern Labour School, the CFNU Biennium, and of course, your local and regional meetings, all provide a venue for you to learn and have a say.

Last fall, CFNU and our provincial nurse union counterparts were very engaged in the federal election, campaigning for what we deemed important to nurses

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in this country. Members from every nurse union across Canada could examine the priorities we identified, as could the political candidates, via social media. It is through this kind of exposure that real impact and informed decisions are made.

Our focus for 2016 will be the promotion of a Health and Social Accord, Pharmacare, Safe Staffing, Health Human Resources, health care financing and the Trans-Pacific Partnership. In order to do this, we need your help and engagement.

Later this spring, the CFNU and all counterparts will be asking you to get involved again as we push for a Health and Social Accord that will address the needs of all stakeholders. To get the attention of Federal Ministers we need to build our network of nurse advocates as well as our messaging velocity. Quite frankly, we are a powerful lobby group; nurses are credible and trusted.

If we can build momentum, strength in numbers, we can move mountains.

We are always looking for new ways to involve members, which can be a challenge, but our goal is to support you with the tools, information and opportunities you need to be an active and contributing member of the NSNU. Any additional profile and attention nurses are able to

add to a debate will have positive benefits.

Nurses are busy people. We know that to achieve success in political action we must make it easy for our members to get involved, and that's exactly what we are working towards. Stay tuned for more information regarding our upcoming and innovative communications efforts.



Mike McNeil with NSNU president, Janet Hazelton

## The Nova Scotia Labour Movement Mourns the Passing of Mike McNeil

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union extends sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mike McNeil, president of CUPE Nova Scotia, who passed away unexpectedly on March 12th.

Messages on the CUPE Nova Scotia webpage described Mike as a caring and compassionate man who gave fully of himself in all things, saying he died doing what he loved. Mike had just completed a regional tour of Nova Scotia that gave him the opportunity to meet with CUPE members from Sydney to Yarmouth and all points in between. The last of those regional meetings took place on Friday, March 11.

"He was a staunch advocate and friend of the labour movement and workers alike – he will be missed," said Janet Hazelton, NSNU president.



## Long-Term Care Members Meeting to be Held on May 5th - Have You Signed Up?

Please remember that the NSNU will be hosting a province-wide meeting with our long-term care nurses to further discuss our publication, *Broken Homes*, as well as the reaction to it. The meeting is an opportunity for nurses to consider what role we can play in implementing the recommendations we brought forward.

The meeting will take place on **Wednesday, May 25th, 2016, 10am-3pm, at the Best Western Glengarry in Truro**. The NSNU will fund travel and salary replacement for one nurse from each LTC local in the province to participate. Travel expenses, but not salary, can be funded for other LTC nurses who wish to attend.

Since the book's release, we have met with the Minister and officials from the Department of Health and Wellness, including staff from the Continuing Care branch. The Minister has personally read our research and has committed to further discussions with the NSNU around the quality of care and work-life in LTC, and how we might collaborate on our recommendations.

In the lead up to the provincial budget, due to be released on April 19th, the NSNU will be sharing quotes and statistics from our research in long-term care to raise awareness around the need for serious reform. Please follow us on twitter (@NS\_nurses) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/novascotianursesunion](http://www.facebook.com/novascotianursesunion)) and retweet, like and share our posts.

To register for the May 25th meeting, please contact NSNU Research Associate Justin Hiltz at [justin.hiltz@nsnu.ca](mailto:justin.hiltz@nsnu.ca), or by phone at 902-469-1474, ext 318. Please register by April 29th, 2016. Your email to Justin will be confirmation of registration. Please indicate any dietary restrictions in your email.



## Supreme Court of Canada Decision on Physician-Assisted Death

As of February 6, 2016, following a Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) decision, individuals who have reached the age of majority can apply to the courts for approval to die by physician-assisted dying (PAD).

At this point, consultation is underway to clarify the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the PAD process, including nurses. Given the current circumstances and the lack of clarity about whether there is a Criminal Code exemption for nurses to participate in physician-assisted dying, at this time nurses could be put at risk, legally and professionally. However, nurses continue to play an important role in providing palliative and end-of-life care.

The report of the special joint

committee on physician-assisted dying includes 21 recommendations for the federal government to consider in crafting a framework. The report appears to demonstrate a deep understanding of the complexities associated with assisted death and the implications related to end-of-life care.

The committee acknowledges the process may be performed by a nurse practitioner, or a registered nurse working under the direction of a physician, by recommending an exemption for RNs, NPs and physicians under sections 14 and 241(b) of the Criminal Code.

Like other nursing organizations, the NSNU is a strong proponent of the need for ongoing, national oversight and analysis of the process. NSNU supports the

recommendations for yearly national reporting to Parliament and mandatory statutory review of the applicable federal legislation on a regular, cyclical basis.

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union looks forward to reviewing the eventual bill as it pertains to nursing practice. The NSNU is hopeful this report will lead to legislation that provides the public and the nursing profession with a clear understanding of nurses' roles in the PAD process.

We will continue to monitor developments as this matter unfolds.

Canada's highest court has given the government until June 6, 2016 to draft legislation on assisted dying.



# CWA-HTU Strike Continues

Members of the Communications Writers of America – Halifax Typographical Union (CWA-HTU) are still on the picket line after two months. They have not been able to return to the table with their employer, The Chronicle Herald, or make any meaningful progress on the path toward returning to work.

On March 12, CWA-HTU Vice President Frank Campbell spoke to CBC News, saying The Chronicle Herald had refused to return to the table, indicating that management “didn’t feel the union was ready to make ‘necessary’ concessions.”

In the negotiations that led up to the strike, CWA-HTU had offered numerous concessions including a five per cent wage cut across the board, decreased vacation time, increased work hours and decreased mileage, among others. The Chronicle Herald did not counter with a fair offer, sticking instead to cuts that would gut employees.

A strike is never the desired outcome in labour negotiations. It is the path of last resort for most unions, occurring only when negotiations can go no further. This is the case for CWA-HTU workers who are feeling

the immense strain of a long-term strike on their lives and in their households. Since the strike began, several CWA-HTU members have moved on to new positions, including many senior journalists who have years of experience and industry connections that will be impossible to replace.

As the strike goes on, CWA-HTU asks readers of The Chronicle Herald to suspend their subscriptions out of respect for the workers, and encourages advertisers to choose other channels until this dispute can be resolved.

Since the strike began, NSNU president Janet Hazelton has made many visits to the picket line, showing solidarity and support for our brothers and sisters of the CWA-HTU. The NSNU calls on The Chronicle Herald to return to the table and have fair and meaningful conversations with the union in order to get everybody back to work.

While on strike many of the Chronicle Herald workers are contributing to an online news site that you can read at [www.localxpress.com](http://www.localxpress.com).



Janet Hazelton joins the CWA-HTU information picket on March 1st, alongside Danny Cavanagh (NSFL), Jackie Swaine (SEIU), Tony Tracy (CLC) and a CWA-HTU member

# National Reconciliation Gathering

On Wednesday, February 24th, NSNU President, Janet Hazelton, was invited to attend the National Reconciliation Gathering at the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre in Sydney.

The Reconciliation Gathering at Membertou is one of six regional events taking place across the country over the coming year. These events bring together local and regional representatives of diverse cultural, faith and professional backgrounds to hear from reconciliation leaders and discuss the challenges and successes of the reconciliation movement. The goal of the Gatherings is to engage a broad group of people in developing a national narrative on reconciliation and to encourage action.

The National Reconciliation Gatherings are hosted by Reconciliation Canada, an Indigenous led non-profit organization with the goal of improving relationships between Indigenous people and all Canadians. The organization is working towards strengthening Indigenous communities through outreach, partnerships and dialogue.

The Gathering featured many inspiring speakers, including a multicultural panel of survivors of residential schools. Throughout the day they celebrated recent successes of the reconciliation movement, and facilitated discussions in break-out groups around the issues that still remain, and ways to get more people involved.

Janet was honoured to be invited to the Gathering held in Membertou. She, along with the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, would like to thank Reconciliation Canada for including her in the conversation and the cause.

For more information about Reconciliation Canada, visit [www.reconciliationcanada.ca](http://www.reconciliationcanada.ca).

## National Nursing Week

National Nursing Week will take place from May 9 - 15, 2016. This year's theme is, "With You Every Step of the Way," which beautifully describes the relationship nurses share with their patients.

Nurses play a critical role in the health care journey of every patient they work with. They are essential to creating the conditions for wellness in our province's hospitals, emergency rooms and nursing homes, and within clients' personal residences. Nursing is synonymous with empathy, skill, knowledge and reliability. We commend our 6,900 nurse members who embody these ideals every day.

During National Nursing Week, keep your eyes peeled for our commercials on television, and interviews with NSNU president Janet Hazelton. She will be chatting with media throughout the week to discuss the important role of nurses in our communities, and the challenges that must be addressed in order for our nurses to work safely in all health care environments.

As always, the NSNU will provide each of our union locals with \$100 to put toward their National Nursing Week celebrations. We look forward to seeing all of the great things you do with your local to celebrate the importance of nursing as a profession, and the tremendous work done by each of our members to provide quality care for your patients.



### Share your National Nursing Week Story

How does this year's theme, "With you every step of the way," describe your career as a nurse? What does being a nurse mean to you? How did your local use the \$100 provided by the NSNU to celebrate National Nursing Week? Let us know! We'll share your stories in the next issue of What's NU?.

To share your story with us, please send it to [nursesinfo@nsnu.ca](mailto:nursesinfo@nsnu.ca). We look forward to reading it.



NSNU president, Janet Hazelton, speaks with media on March 31st regarding the NCLEX exam

## Nurses' Union Calls for Review of NCLEX-RN Exam

On March 31, the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia (CRNNS) and the Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNRR), released its review of the entry exam for registered nurses in this province known as the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN® exam). In 2015, the electronically administered and U.S. based NCLEX replaced the Canadian Registered Nurse Examination (CRNE) as the entry exam for registered nurses across Canada (excluding Quebec).

Nurse unions across the country have been critical of this move since it was announced in 2011, and the results from the first year confirm many of the initial fears.

CRNNS says that the results of the new RN exam show that NS graduates are prepared for nursing demands. The NSNU believes that new grads are well prepared by their schools but that the new exam does little to support the College's theory when approximately 95 nurses failed their first attempt at the exam during its inaugural run in 2015. In previous years, 90-96% of Nova Scotia students passed on the initial writing of the CRNE, and after a rewrite, nearly every graduate in the province passed.

The College says that the comprehensive analysis contained in newly published reports demonstrates that the majority of Nova Scotia nursing graduates have the ability to meet the demand of entry-level registered nurse practice.

"There has been an entry-to-practice exam in place in Nova Scotia for over 50 years and the NCLEX-RN

was introduced in 2015 as a replacement for the previous pen-and-paper exam," explains Heather Totton, CRNNS Director of Professional Conduct & Registration Services. "The NCLEX-RN is a state-of-the-art computer adaptive test which is more secure, is available year round, reflects current nursing practice and is a more effective and efficient measure of a nursing graduate's ability to safely work as a registered nurse."

CRNNS goes on to say the NCLEX-RN has been in place now for a full year and the new reports tell us that 89.1% of Nova Scotia nursing graduates who attempted the exam in 2015 successfully passed. However, that statistic reflects the overall success rate and is not indicative of how many successfully completed the exam on their first, second or even third attempt.

Under the NCLEX exam in Nova Scotia, 76% of graduates passed on the first write, and after two and sometimes three retests, 89% of graduates passed. This means that 43 of our BScN graduates (about 11%) across the province are still not able to practice and we are already projecting a shortage of 800 RNs in the next five years.

"As a province, we have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars into educating these professionals. It is completely unacceptable to lose over 10% of them under these circumstances. And this loss is nothing compared to the personal anxiety and stress experienced by these young people. I have had a steady stream of calls from graduates and parents desperately looking for help," says Hazelton.

The exam is designed to be different for each individual writing it, and it adapts based on student responses. This has been a source of frustration as not all students are writing the same exam. Universities, for their part, are spending tens of thousands of dollars on test preparation material and dedicated class time, in order to help students prepare for this particular type of test.

In the past, about three graduates a year were denied licensure. With the new exam, the province may deny five times as many.

NCLEX-RN reports from CCRNRR and CRNNS are available on the CRNNS website ([www.crnns.ca](http://www.crnns.ca)) as well as the CCRNRR website ([www.ccrnr.ca](http://www.ccrnr.ca)).



# NSNU 40th Anniversary Video Production

Over the course of two weeks in late March and early April, we hit the road with a video production crew to visit numerous facilities around the province to record a special 40th Anniversary video.

During our travels from Yarmouth to Sydney, with many stops in between, we were welcomed into several diverse health care environments, ranging from some of our busiest hospitals, to some of the smallest long-term care facilities. We were even able to catch a few of our community care nurses in between house calls with clients.

On the road we met many wonderful and dedicated nurse members who took time out of their busy schedules to work with us. Thanks to all who participated. We can't wait to premiere the video on April 26th at the Annual General Meeting.



Monique Curran, Kerri MacDonald and Chantell Hughes at the Sagewood in Sackville



The team at Yarmouth Regional Hospital: Dana Hamilton, Duane MacLeod, Duana d'Entremont, Marina Nixon and Tasha Doucette



Elise Buchanan and Courtney Johnston participate in the AGM video shoot at the IWK



Videographer Scott Berrington gets some action shots with VON Yarmouth nurse Claudette d'Eon

# Reminders: 2016 Annual General Meeting and Education Day Information

As we prepare to formally celebrate our 40th anniversary – our Ruby Anniversary – at the Annual General Meeting in Truro, here are some items to keep in mind.

- Online registration for our 2016 AGM and Education Day closed on March 24. If you have not yet registered, please contact your local executive to discuss your options.
- The AGM packages were mailed to your local executive the last week of February. It contains your annual reports and all documentation pertaining to this year's event. Much of this information is posted online at nsnu.ca.
- Please be advised that the AGM will begin on Monday, April 25 with registration starting at 11am and continuing throughout the day. There will be no meetings on Monday morning.

## Hospitality Night Door Prizes

Locals are reminded to bring a door prize item for the hospitality event at The Pond on Tuesday, April 26. All prizes will be drawn that evening but attendance is not required in order to win. Please wrap or place the item in a gift bag with your Local's name on the prize.

## Charity Auction

Locals are encouraged to once again solicit donations for our Auction held during the banquet on Wednesday April 27, 2016. While we appreciate receiving all types of donations, in previous years

items such as gift certificates, purses, jewelry and theme baskets were very well received. This year the Auction funds will be donated to the Marguerite Centre, a long-term residential facility empowering women to create their own path to healing and recovery from addictions and abuse. Tickets are a dollar each.

## Celebration Videos

We encourage each local to record a 40th Anniversary congratulatory message which will be featured at this year's AGM. Simply record the message using your phone or camera and email it to coleen.logan@nsnu.ca. Time is running out. Please submit all videos by April 15th (deadline extended from April 8) at the very latest. Your tribute to the NSNU can be as long or short as you wish. Thank you in advance.

## Merchandise

The NSNU will be selling merchandise at the AGM; the perfect time to select items for your National Nursing Week (NNW) celebrations. The NSNU will be accepting cash or cheques. We will also have NNW posters on hand for all locals.

## Wear Red

Don't forget we'll be wearing red at the AGM Banquet and Dance the evening of April 27th as we commemorate our 40th (Ruby) Anniversary. Shoes, blouses, neck or bow ties, dresses, jackets – whatever you choose, choose to wear red!

## Go with the Flow

A reminder that the NSNU is asking members to bring tampons and pads to the AGM for donation to local charitable organizations that provide sanitary products to women and girls in need.

As an organization that represents thousands of women, we understand and respect the need for basic sanitary products to be available and affordable. Women and girls should not miss out on the important things in life because of something as routine as having their period. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

# Occupational Health and Safety the Focus of Education Day 2016

On April 28th the NSNU will present a full day of educational sessions aimed at exploring occupational health and safety issues in our workplaces. The Education Committee has booked experts in the field of OH&S from Nova Scotia and elsewhere in the country, including our own Carl Quinlan, Labour Relations Representative / Respectful Workplace & Diversity Consultant. Carl will be presenting with Basia Solarz, Conflict Transformation Specialist with Nova Scotia Health Authority. She is an authority on workplace conflict and is very highly specialized in this field.

In today's healthcare environment, it is important that we respect one another and that it reflects in our work and patient care. So what do you do when you encounter workplace conflict?

The focus should be placed on:

- understanding our individual roles and responsibilities in helping to create/maintain a respectful work environment;
- building awareness of the issues and challenges involved in respect and disrespect;



Carl Quinlan, Labour Relations Representative and Respectful Workplace & Diversity Consultant

- becoming more comfortable and competent in recognizing and addressing disrespectful behaviour;
- highlighting tools and resources available to members/staff.

The Education Committee is certain that participants will find the Respectful Workplace presentations to be informational and applicable to your work environment.

For those who are not attending the educational sessions on April 28, Carl can be available to deliver the workshop at your workplace or a designated location. Please contact [carl.quinlan@nsnu.ca](mailto:carl.quinlan@nsnu.ca) to arrange for a Local presentation.



NOVA SCOTIA   
**NURSES'**  
**UNION** 40  
YEARS

**40 YEARS OF  
COMMITTED  
COURAGEOUS  
AND STRONG**

# Eastern Labour School

Registration for the 2016 Eastern Labour School, hosted by the Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland and Labrador, officially closed on March 21st. The NSNU is proud to see more than one hundred of our members attending this year's event, taking place at Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's from May 15 -17.

Congratulations to those who were selected in the draws for first-time attendees and members under 35, as well as to the recipient of the Glenna S. Rowsell Scholarship, Sarah Lace. We hope you enjoy your first time attending Eastern Labour School.

We encourage NSNU delegates to visit MyNSNU for all information pertaining to Eastern Labour School, including the courses, agenda, campus map and salary replacement forms. If you have any questions about this event, please contact NSNU Executive Assistant Lorna Myers at [lorna.myers@nsnu.ca](mailto:lorna.myers@nsnu.ca).

## 2016 Course List

Eastern Labour School is defined by its diverse and informative courses, offered exclusively to attendees. Members who are considering attending future events may be interested to learn about this year's curriculum:

### General Labour Relations

For new union members or activists, this course will provide information about the benefits of belonging to a nurses' union and how they make a difference to the workplace, our co-workers, the community and those in our care. The goal is to give newer members the opportunity to learn how the union fits with work life, leadership opportunities, understanding the benefit packages, cultural inclusiveness, and health and safety advocacy. Participants will learn about labour history, the role of a union, the collective bargaining process, labour terminology, grievance and arbitration, and duty to accommodate.

### The Grievance and Arbitration Process

This course is designed to assist shop stewards, grievance officers, committee members and/or anyone else at the local level who files and processes grievances. Participants will examine the dispute resolution process available to them under their



ELS is a biennial event for members of NSNU, NBNU, PEINU and RNUNL. The 2014 event, pictured above, was held in New Brunswick

collective agreements. They will take an in depth look at the overall grievance process.

### The Negotiations Process

This course is designed to give nurses a better understanding of the process that results in a collective agreement; it will examine all aspects of collective bargaining, including the steps in the process, preparation, construction of contract clauses, bargaining strategies and tactics. Participants will examine factors, both internal and external, which affect negotiations. This program will include a simulated bargaining session where all participants will be expected to put into practice the concepts presented to them.

### Safety Committee Basics

This interactive course covers duties and responsibilities of people in the workplace. Details regarding the role and function of the health and safety committee will be covered including procedures and requirements for meetings, hazard recognition and control, inspections and right to refuse scenarios. Setting up a well-trained safety committee is the first step in achieving a good safety and health culture.

### Comment assurer une représentation syndicale efficace

Ce cours a pour but d'approfondir les connaissances et les compétences des délégués syndicaux et des Sections locales dans la représentation de leurs membres. À l'aide d'exercices pratiques, les participants développeront les outils et les compétences nécessaires afin de guider, d'accompagner et de

conseiller les membres dans une variété de situations liée aux relations de travail, notamment en ce qui concerne les mesures disciplinaires, la procédure de grief, la gestion de l'assiduité, le retour graduel au travail, les mesures d'adaptation (accommodement), les comités d'exercice de la profession et de santé et sécurité au travail, les plaintes et les enquêtes d'harcèlement ainsi que les audiences d'arbitrage et devant l'Association professionnelle.



NSNU Labour Rep Lilo Wessels presents at the 2012 event hosted by the PEINU

### Legal Realities of the Nurse

This course will introduce participants to the legal rights, responsibilities, and professional standards of a nurse. This course examines the various judicial proceedings in which a nurse may become a participant including professional misconduct, fitness-to-practice proceedings, civil suits, criminal proceedings, privacy and communications issues, workplace violence, occupational health and safety, to name a few. Through a multi-media presentation, participants will work on case studies and discuss nurse-union related legal issues to better assist them in representing their union members.

### Duty to Accommodate

Current Human Rights legislation places responsibilities on both unions and employers to accommodate the disabilities of injured members. These responsibilities often conflict with collective agreements and may impact on the contractual rights of other employees. The legal obligations of employers, union, and co-workers will be examined in light of recent human rights tribunal and/or court decisions.

## End the Silence on Workplace Bullying: Standing up for a Healthy Workplace

The nature of our particular duties, our working conditions, the demands and stresses of the job, the compensation and reward systems, the workplace climate, and our relationships with our bosses, co-workers and patients/clients/residents all have a huge impact on our well-being. Most of us enter the workforce eager, enthusiastic and energetic. If we lose that commitment and sense of possibility along the way, then we should analyze what has happened to cause that, and what could be done to keep the workplace-relationship healthy and productive. Humiliation, intimidation, harassment and other negative workplace behaviours should not be part of our workday. We need to learn to prevent workplace bullying, identify it when it happens, and develop strategies to deal with it.

### Personalities and Generations at Work

Curious about understanding what motivates behavior in yourself and your colleagues? Interested in exploring tools and techniques for working with different personalities and generations in the workplace? During this highly interactive course, participants will do a personality self-assessment, recognize their own unique blend of strengths and qualities, and appreciate the personality traits of others. They will be able to identify the most critical generational influences, identify potential workplace motivators and irritants for each generation and describe strategies for adapting to different personality styles at work. This knowledge of self and others will improve interpersonal relations and communication.



CFNU president, Linda Silas and NSNU president, Janet Hazelton join NSNU delegates at the 2014 ELS



NSNU Educator/Researcher Paul Curry teaches a course during the 2014 ELS

### Communication and Social Media

Got something to say? Who should you tell and how should you spread the word? The media, internet, and social media present enormous opportunities and obstacles when we attempt to get our messages across. In this course, participants will acquire practical experience that can be used as health care and labour activists in order to survive in a hyper-media era. We will look at the elements of a successful trade union public relations campaign. We will look at “netiquette”- the dos and don’ts of social media and how to use social media at the local level to reach our members.

### Nursing Workload

We now know there is a clear relationship between inadequate nurse staffing and poor patient outcomes, including mortality, hospital acquired pneumonia, falls, medication errors, length of stay and many more. With appropriate staffing levels, we can improve nursing workload while at the same time improving patient care. Relying on evidence-based research, this course will help nurses better articulate their own value and will highlight the danger of not addressing the problem of nurse workload. The focus will be on proven solutions, including workload reporting systems, independent assessment committees, safe staffing levels and dynamic staffing tools.

### Together Fairness Works

We know that policies that make our country great have been won by unions first and then extended

to everyone – pensions, health and safety in the workplace, minimum wage, public health care, child care and more. We need to tell our story to engage members in their workplaces in conversations about unions and to take those conversations to the public. Let’s start the conversation! Let people know that we want what is fair and just for all!

### Private versus Public Health Care

The debate on public versus private health care in Canada is not new but it has never been so important. More and more we are seeing the emergence of privately run centres. These centres differ in that their services are not only privately delivered but also privately funded. There is already a significant component of private care under our current system: drugs, cosmetic surgeries, dental services, etc. How does privatization impact our publicly funded system? How much privatization is good for the Canadian system to achieve sustainability in the long term?

### Facing Management Effectively

This course is about helping union representatives become effective in all their dealings with management. We will be talking about management styles, emerging trends and the rights of the parties. We will practice with appropriate tools to act strategically in dealings with management on such issues as contracting out, workforce adjustment and changing work practices as well as the ongoing day to day conflicts that may arise between union members and management.



Linda Silas addresses attendees at the 2014 ELS, hosted by the New Brunswick Nurses Union in Moncton

# International Women's Day

March 8th was International Women's Day, a global celebration of the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

This year's theme was #PledgeForParity which can be as simple as encouraging women to achieve their goals, speaking out when you see injustice, valuing the professional and cultural contributions of women, and supporting those in the public sector who prioritize parity.

This year marked the inaugural International Women's Day Breakfast, hosted by the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour. Nova Scotia Nurses' Union president, Janet Hazelton and Executive Director, Jean Candy were happy to have the opportunity to attend the event, which celebrated women with a resounding outpouring of support and inspirational presentations. The keynote speaker was Christine Saulnier, provincial director for Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Nova Scotia, who spoke about the Nova Scotia government's record on gender equity and women's rights.

The NSNU is proud to represent thousands of women. Our members are mothers, sole-breadwinners and partners; they are women with goals, dreams and



Jean Candy, Maureen MacDonald (MLA), Danny Cavanagh (President, NSFL), Janet Hazelton and Shelley Morse (President, NS Teachers' Union) attend the IWD Breakfast

far-reaching abilities. We commend our members for their work and we happily take the #PledgeForParity, promising to continue to work for a fair and equal workplace for all.

For more information about International Women's Day, please visit <http://www.internationalwomensday.com/>.



The NSFL's inaugural International Women's Day Breakfast attracted a large and diverse group of attendees representing multiple sectors and organizations



## Cross-Canada Check-In

The nursing climate in Nova Scotia provides only a snapshot of the profession as it operates across the country. It is beneficial to occasionally take stock of the challenges that are being faced by nurses in other provinces and to look at some of the initiatives of our fellow nurse unions to improve conditions on the front lines of care.



In November, 2015 the New Brunswick Nurses Union (NBNU) partnered with other health and labour organizations to produce a Violence Prevention Tool Kit that was distributed to workers in nursing homes. The initiative focuses on the message that violence is not part of the job, while the tool kit will be used to identify, develop and share resources. It prioritizes reporting incidents as a key element in reducing violence in nursing homes

The tool kit is just the first phase of a long-term plan for reducing violence in nursing homes, which will eventually be expanded to include educational sessions and the addition of more tools as they're developed.

Twenty-four nurses in Alberta recently had disciplinary actions rescinded after being investigated for inappropriately accessing patient information. According to United Nurses of Alberta, the members were looking at information related to their work, and were not arbitrarily reading through patient records.

Alberta Health Services agreed that it was an unintentional breach, and rather than enforcing disciplinary action, they chose instead to focus on creating better understanding around the importance of respecting patient privacy. They plan to launch further education and training sessions to address this issue moving forward.

Prince Edward Island is in the midst of a nursing shortage that is placing undue strain on the province's health care system.

"We hear from the membership that they're exhausted, they're overworked. Our part-timers are working full-time and our full-timers are working over that," said Mona O'Shea, president of the Prince Edward Island Nurses Union.

Health PEI has said they plan to develop a three-year strategy to address their chronic staffing issues. They have reached out to nurses and the public as part of their consultation process.





A Saskatchewan nurse is facing charges of professional misconduct following a Facebook post in which she criticized the quality of palliative care provided to her grandfather.

Following the post the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association (SRNA) charged the nurse with several infractions, including a violation of confidentiality and using her status as a registered nurse for her personal purposes, among others.

In response to the charges, the nurse's lawyer said, "I don't think the SRNA knows the rules and regulations [around sharing on social media] and I think they're using [this nurse] to try and figure them out."

He added, "What happens to the discussion of health care if you take the people who are experts on that subject and remove them from the discussion?"

In early March this case went before a disciplinary committee, results of which are still pending.



The Manitoba Nurses' Union (MNU) has launched a new initiative to reduce violence in Manitoba health care facilities, in partnership with Prairie Region Health. The program will see hospital patients considered violent or verbally abusive flagged with a bracelet or a note in their medical charts. This is intended to reduce violent incidents by allowing nurses and other health care providers to engage patients in a safe manner while preventing potential altercations.

Although the program seems like a sensible measure, there have been concerns about whether flagging potentially dangerous patients would impact the quality of care they receive. MNU President Sandi Mowat assured, "The whole goal of the flagging is to make sure that everyone is kept safe but also that that patient or resident gets the appropriate care they need."



Violence against nurses is a priority issue for all Canadian nurse unions. In 2015, St. Joseph's Hospital in Ontario proved itself to be a particularly dangerous workplace, with an

estimated 124 violent incidents. The Ontario Nurses Association attributes the violence to many things, including insufficient safety measures and inadequate staffing levels of nurses.

In recent months the events at St. Joseph's have become increasingly troubling. One of the most serious incidents occurred in December 2015, in which two nurses were hospitalized with concussions after being repeatedly punched by a patient. On January 12, 2016 a Registered Practical Nurse had hot coffee thrown in her face by a patient in the medium-security forensics unit.

The prevalence of violence and seriousness of these incidents have prompted the Ministry of Labour to order an investigation into workplace violence at that hospital.



Over the past several months the Registered Nurses Union of Newfoundland and Labrador has been addressing concerns in Lewisporte, NL related to an unsafe staffing model put in place by Central Health which allows for only one RN on-call during the night shift. This individual is responsible for overseeing the care of patients in long-term care, protective community residents, palliative care, respite care and an after-hours emergency clinic.

Unsurprisingly, this model has created serious clinical capacity issues. Nurses have expressed concerns around their ability to provide safe patient care under such challenging conditions. However, despite these complaints and pressure from the union, Central Health has not made any plans to add more RNs to the roster.

# Janet Hazelton Visits College and University Campuses around Nova Scotia

Since January, NSNU president Janet Hazelton has been visiting classrooms around the province to meet with future nurses and discuss issues important to them as they prepare to begin their careers, as well as students in other programs eager to learn about the role of unions in the political and business landscape of Nova Scotia.

Janet is thrilled to have been welcomed by the Nova Scotia Community College to speak with students in the Practical Nursing Program on multiple campuses. During these visits, Janet discussed issues relating to professional practise, the importance of understanding your collective agreement and the value of getting involved with your union, among other topics. As a nurse and union activist, she offers a unique and multifaceted perspective on the life of

a nurse, backed by years of experience both in the nursing profession and in the union.

In addition to her visits to NSCC campuses, Janet was also invited by Dalhousie University to speak with Master of Public Administration and Master of Business Administration students. On this visit she shared the union perspective on the P3 hospital experience in Canada, and her expertise around union interactions with the government.

Janet appreciates visiting local universities and colleges and connecting with future nurses and other professionals. Many thanks to NSCC and Dalhousie for inviting Janet into your classrooms to discuss the nursing profession and the importance of unions with our future leaders.



Janet Hazelton joins Practical Nursing students from the NSCC Kingstec Campus in Kentville on February 12

## An Important Milestone for Long-Serving NSNU Member

Long-time NSNU activist, Karlene Pynch, has left the building. After a long and productive nursing career, she has retired.

Leading up to her last day of work, February 29, 2016, Karlene wore a tiara and was feted by her coworkers at Annapolis Valley Regional, her work-home for 39 years and 5 months.

AVR became part of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union in the late

seventies, and she has been an active member ever since. The NSNU would like to congratulate Karlene on her much deserved retirement and recognize the many outstanding contributions she made to the Nurses' Union through her committee involvement, particularly her work on the Provincial Negotiating Committee.

Karlene will be staying on as a casual and will continue to work on the BUGLM.



Karlene Pynch, seen on right, and with her AVR co-worker, Pearl Galley, enjoying some of their last hours on the job before their retirement



## Keeping Up to Date

Did you know the NSNU keeps an up-to-date calendar on the Union website, loaded with important information for our members? There you will find a full list of upcoming BUGLM and UMCC meetings, as well as special events, important deadlines, educational opportunities and more.

We also use the calendar to share information about events and programs sponsored by our friends in nursing and labour. If you have an event or opportunity that you would like us to share on the web calendar, please send the details to [coleen.logan@nsnu.ca](mailto:coleen.logan@nsnu.ca).

The web calendar can be accessed from the NSNU homepage at [www.nsnu.ca](http://www.nsnu.ca).

## New Executive Assistant hired by NSNU

Lorna Myers, who worked with CUPE for many years and has extensive experience in working with union contracts and labour documents, has been hired as the permanent, full-time executive assistant at the NSNU. Lorna started her new job on Monday, February 29 and has taken to her new assignments like the pro she is. We are very pleased to welcome Lorna to the NSNU.

The Nurses' Union wishes to thank Jennifer Graham for filling the temporary EA position vacated when Clear House went on Maternity Leave in the spring of 2015 and then moved back home to British Columbia. Jen's background in event planning and management made her an invaluable asset during the planning and execution phases of the CFNU Biennium here in Halifax last June. We were fortunate to hire Jen during that time period. Jen was recently been hired by another organization in Dartmouth and we wish her well in her new job.



Lorna Myers



Jennifer Graham

## Ontario Nurse Wins Discrimination Case in Arbitration

Via Lancaster House

A member of the Ontario Nurses Association (ONA) recently won an arbitration ruling against her employer after being “held out of service without pay during a flu outbreak while a vaccine took effect because she declined to take the antiviral drug Tamiflu due to her pregnancy,” Lancaster House reported.

According to the report, the nurse had initially refused the vaccine, but later consented when an influenza outbreak occurred at her facility. However, because of the two-week period that the vaccine requires to become fully effective, the employer placed the nurse on unpaid leave, even though the outbreak was not in her area. The nurse contested the leave as discrimination based on pregnancy.

Ultimately, the arbitrator agreed that the leave was unnecessary and discriminatory, finding that, “the grievor could reasonably have been accommodated by wearing a surgical mask for the period in question.” Given the evidence of the case, the arbitrator ordered the nurse be compensated for the five days of work she was forced to miss.

Congratulations to ONA and their nurse member for this success.



## Hello, My Name Is...

### Saskatchewan Nurses Fight Controversial Name Tag Policy

In February, CUPE Saskatchewan, which represents LPNs in that province, won an arbitration case regarding the use of name tags which included both first and last names of employees.

The employer, Prairie North Health Region, developed the policy in efforts to adhere to the province’s “Patients First” initiative, but CUPE contended that they did not do a full risk assessment before enforcing the new rule.

Although CUPE and its members were not opposed to nurses wearing name tags with just their first names, they argued that sharing their full name with patients could put them in harm’s way. An article published by the Regina Leader-Post on February 3, 2016 revealed some of the details of the arbitration:

“CUPE, hearing employees’ concerns over privacy and safety, advised them to consider covering their last names and invoke the province’s occupational health and safety law. It also launched a grievance.

The arbitration board heard testimony that:

- After the death in hospital of a 93-year-old woman, her son confronted an LPN, “peered at her name tag, repeated the first and last names and said, ‘You killed my mom — I won’t forget your name and I won’t forget your face.’ A few days

later, the LPN’s roommate reported a man outside their home. He was identified as the woman’s son — a convicted sex offender.

- A male patient admitted with mental health issues called another LPN several times at home, and the LPN also described a patient’s attempts to add her as a Facebook friend;
- The same worker heard a patient being held for murder and cannibalism threaten to find her “and slit her throat”.

Nurses and other health care workers are tasked with providing care to every individual who comes into their health care facility. They take this role on willingly, knowing that there is an inherent risk that a patient may become violent, be unstable, or have family members who pose a threat. They do this because they believe that all people deserve equal access to health care.

However, nurses should not be forced to willfully endanger themselves by providing their full names to all patients. In the age of social networking and the internet, it is far too easy to find personal information when armed with a person’s first and last name.

Congratulations to CUPE Saskatchewan for this arbitration win, and to the nurses of Prairie North Health Region.



## Dalhousie Graduate Certificate in Mental Health and Addictions

Dalhousie University is offering a new fully-online Graduate Certificate in Mental Health and Addictions, open to nurses and others in related fields working in Atlantic Canada. The program is evidence-based, interprofessional and reflective of diverse populations, with an emphasis on applied learning.

The four courses of the certificate were developed in collaboration with community-based mental health and addictions agencies and professionals, with the goal of addressing knowledge and skill gaps in the field. They include:

1. Mental Health and Addictions Services and Systems
2. Mental Health, Substance Use and Addiction across Health Practices
3. Concurrent Disorders and Complex Case Work
4. Prevention, Early Intervention and Population-Focused Health Promotion

In order to qualify for this certificate program, candidates must have a minimum of an undergraduate degree in Nursing or a related program. Applications are due by May 1, 2016.

More information about the new program can be found by searching Graduate Certificate in Mental Health and Addictions at [www.dal.ca](http://www.dal.ca).

## North American Occupational Safety and Health Week Kickoff Conference

On April 29th the Nova Scotia Health Authority will host a one-day conference to kick off North American Occupational Health and Safety Week – NAOSH Week – which runs from May 1-7.

The event will feature speakers from Steps for Life, AWARE NS, Working Safe in the Community, NSHA Patient Handling Program, Mental Health Resiliency, Paladin Security, and Fire Safety. There will also be booths and displays relating to occupational health and safety on site.

### Event Details:

**Date:**  
April 29, 2016

**Time:**  
8:30am-3:00pm

**Location:**  
Royal Bank Theatre,  
Halifax Infirmery

For more information or to register please contact [Sherida.Flemming@nshealth.ca](mailto:Sherida.Flemming@nshealth.ca).



## ***A Letter to Members***

*Dear Fellow NSNU Members:*

*I would like to voice the necessity and benefit of our Nurses' Union. I want to share with my fellow colleagues the result of a disagreement with my employer. I initiated a grievance by approaching our Cape Breton Regional Hospital Local president, Gerri Oakley, and explained my home situation. Our discussions with provincial leadership resulted in moving the issue to arbitration. This was a very expensive undertaking and without the support of our union I would not have been able to consider this process.*

*To make a long story short, I never imagined that I would experience such a process. As we age, life changes, as do our priorities. One never knows where life will lead.*

*I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to the NSNU, both at the local level as well as provincial. Without their support it would have made a difficult situation worse.*

*Darlene Gosse*

## **Share Your Story**

Here at the NSNU we love to share our members stories. *What's NU?* is a great platform for nurses to inform and inspire each other by sharing their experiences. We want to hear from you, and we encourage all of our members to send us their ideas.

If you have a story you would like us to tell, please contact [Coleen.Logan@nsnu.ca](mailto:Coleen.Logan@nsnu.ca). We will consider all suggestions and let you know if your submission will be included in an upcoming issue.



# Scholarship Program 2016

OPEN: APRIL 1, 2016

Johnson Inc. is proud to offer **50 scholarships, valued at \$1000 each**, to students completing high school in 2016 and starting post-secondary education in the fall.

**Application Deadline: August 31, 2016**

For eligibility criteria visit [johnson.ca/scholarship](http://johnson.ca/scholarship)

[scholarshipfund@johnson.ca](mailto:scholarshipfund@johnson.ca)  
1-866-544-2673



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

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Highlights and Happenings

National Nursing Week - Recap

Bargaining Update



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