

October/November 2021



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from Government
Generosity

2022 AGM Dates and
Details

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Irish Hernandez, RN

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President's Notebook

Janet Hazelton, BScN RN, MPA

Christmas Comes Early for Nursing Students in Nova Scotia

All graduating nurses to get job offers, read the headline on the government's news release dated October 28. When Premier Tim Houston announced that all nurses graduating from Nova Scotia's universities and Nova Scotia Community College for the next five years will be offered a job in the province, many were shocked to hear that this wasn't the current practice.

From online social media posts, to watercooler conversations, the public seemed baffled by this promise to hire Nova Scotia-educated nurses right here in our own province. They assumed this was the norm, especially since the nursing shortage has been a decades-long problem.

That assumption is without merit. While a good number of our new grads are offered employment here, some choose to leave and others remain underemployed, especially our licensed practical nurses.

Under the new agreement, every nurse who wants a job in Nova Scotia from the current graduating class until the class of 2026 will be guaranteed one with Nova Scotia Health, the IWK or the continuing care sector. They will receive information about available opportunities and receive job offers.

Our premier called this a bold action to solve healthcare problems in Nova Scotia. Premier Houston said he wants nursing students to know they are not taken for granted, and that this initiative shows how much they are valued for their skill, energy and compassion.

There are many questions left unanswered regarding the offers – in particular, whether it's fulltime, stable employment. However, nursing

students appear to be hopeful at the prospect of working close to home. NSNU will be monitoring the program and its impact on the nursing shortage.

And there's more good news for some students. Accelerated nursing students at Dalhousie will receive another \$3,300 from their student loans. Currently, the provincial portion of the loan only covers 28 weeks of the 34-week program.



Nursing vacancies affect healthcare workplaces in all sectors, putting undue strain on those who must fill the gaps.

This will close a funding gap that some nursing students found insurmountable given the demands on their time and their limited ability to finance their education.

In mid October, government made a commitment to employ more NPs in long term care. Nova Scotia Health plans to hire at least 13 NPs at a cost of \$2.5 million. The nurse practitioners will diagnose and treat illnesses, order diagnostics, prescribe medications and perform minor procedures for residents in LTC.

While this news is all well and good, mid-career and senior nurses have been left wondering what's to incentivize them? Like the others, these nurses have been at the centre of the pandemic, mentoring students, working excessive hours, and bearing the brunt of a perpetual nursing shortage and global health crisis.

NSNU appreciates these sentiments and urges government and employers to recognize all nurses in a manner that demonstrates their genuine gratitude for the immeasurable contributions made by our entire nursing workforce.

The NSNU will be going to the bargaining table in the new year in pursuit of a collective agreement that reflects the remuneration nurses deserve. Our goal is to appeal to



Government has committed to putting more NP's in long term care

employers, asking them to reward those who have been there through thick and thin.

When I donned a cap and gown for my 1984 graduation, I was without fulltime employment. It was unsettling. Fulltime opportunities were scarce, and it was several years before I felt like my career was on solid footing.

Each year, Nova Scotia graduates about 700 registered nurses and licensed practical nurses. This assurance to hire all grads is, in many ways, like a gift. No other province has made such a guarantee. I'm

optimistic and pleased that our new grads will not experience the uncertainty I felt 37 years ago.

As 2021 comes to a close, I personally want to thank you all for your unwavering dedication to patients, clients, residents and each other. Without your expertise and steadfast selflessness, our healthcare system would be far worse off.

I wish those who celebrate the holiday season, the best. To all of you, may 2022 be kinder, healthier and filled with promise.



Acute Care Bargaining Update

The Executive Council for the Nova Scotia Council of Healthcare Unions met on Sept 20th to discuss the bargaining process and scheduling. At this time, our focus will be on completing the Essential Service Agreements (ESA) prior to meeting with the Employer for face-to-face bargaining.

NSH has not yet provided an ESA for Support, Admin Professionals or Nursing. The Councils have requested that the Employer provide these documents. The IWK ESA is also incomplete.

The Executive Council has decided that Support Services will negotiate next, followed by Administrative Professionals, then Nursing.

Based on this schedule and necessary preparations, the Nursing Council will defer meeting until January 2022. This will allow for the completion of the ESA and for bargaining to occur in the other two bargaining units, as well as ample time for thorough proposal development.



LPN Retroactive Pay Grievances Unresolved

In late 2020, the NSNU and other healthcare unions were successful in seeing a 12% increase uniformly applied to licensed practical nurses' wages based on a consent award NSGEU received on behalf of some of their LPN members. The award acknowledged the expanded scope of practice for LPNs employed by the former CDHA.

NSNU and the other healthcare unions representing LPNs continue to maintain that in order to achieve true wage parity, retroactivity to March 17, 2014 must be paid to all LPNs. To that end, NSNU filed grievances in every facility where we represent LPNs demanding full retroactivity to March 17, 2014. The unions have referred the grievances to arbitration, but no one has a hearing date set as of yet.

The original reclassification award took six years to achieve. Although NSNU would like to see an expedited resolution, we anticipate the grievance processes will take time based on the complexity of the issue and the number of parties involved in that process.

The NSNU remains committed to our LPNs and the issue at hand.





Why it's Necessary to Block Users, Hide Posts on Social

Like countless other organizations, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union has guidelines and terms of usage attached to all our social media and online channels. That is the norm, and in many cases, an ethical and professional responsibility of any online host.

Guidelines are the rules created for each social media forum to ensure a standard of behaviour resulting in a safe environment for users to interact.

NSNU uses social media to expand our relationships and become a source of valued information. The NSNU is dedicated to maintaining current virtual networks while consistently monitoring posts, commentary and other feedback.

The NSNU uses our platforms to communicate information and share media (photos, video, etc.). It is a two-way communication tool that allows our members and the public to engage with each other and the Nurses' Union.

Our goal is to be transparent, honest, and genuine. Our tone is professional and inviting.

While we welcome constructive discussion and diverse points of view, we discourage any discourse that is counterintuitive to the purpose of the platform. When a member of the public or the union breaches the codes

and expectations we have outlined, the NSNU must take action.

If a post is not factual, disparages any group or individual, or is threatening, the Nurses' Union will leave a comment hidden and/or suspend or block a user. Access to our public domains does not imply entitlement – our members deserve respectful spaces.

When we hide comments or block a user, we act to protect a member's license, reputation and the integrity of others who may be implicated. That is in keeping with the terms of use.

If you, as an NSNU member, have been blocked from using any of NSNU's social media platforms and would like an opportunity to discuss the matter, please reach out to nsnu.office@nsnu.ca. Your email will be directed to appropriate staff.

Members of the public who violate these rules will not be afforded the same opportunity.

We thank you for your continued support and use of our social media systems.

The NSNU Social Media Commenting Policy can be found at nsnu.ca/SMCommentingPolicy.

Standing Committees of the NSNU 2021

NSNU members have been chosen via Expression of Interest submissions and a blind selection process to represent the interests of members on the following Standing Committees of the union.

AGM Committee

Members:

Jayne Fryday, IWK
Tracey MacRae, St. Martha's Regional Hospital

1st Alternate: Pending

2nd Alternate: Pending

Committee Chair: Anne Boutilier, Dartmouth General Hospital

NSNU Staff Advisor: Coleen Logan

Finance Committee

Members:

Alaine Halliday, Aberdeen Hospital
David Fox, St. Mary's Hospital

1st Alternate: Vicki Royles, Aberdeen Hospital

2nd Alternate: Barbara Blays, IWK

Committee Chair: Jamie Stewart, NSNU VP Finance

NSNU Staff Advisor: Cindy Herbert

Education Committee

Members:

Misty Hynes, VON Halifax
Kayla Holleran, IWK

1st Alternate: Jessica McCormick, Cape Breton Regional Hospital

2nd Alternate: Chanda MacDonald, Aberdeen Hospital

Committee Chair: Gerri Oakley, NSNU VP Eastern Region

NSNU Staff Advisor: Chad O'Brien

Constitution and Resolutions Committee

Members:

Joanne Boutilier, Cape Breton Regional Hospital
Karen Eldridge, Hants Community Hospital

1st Alternate: Denise Elms, Aberdeen Hospital

2nd Alternate: Tracey MacRae, St. Martha's Hospital

Committee Chair: Donna Gillis, NSNU VP Northern Region

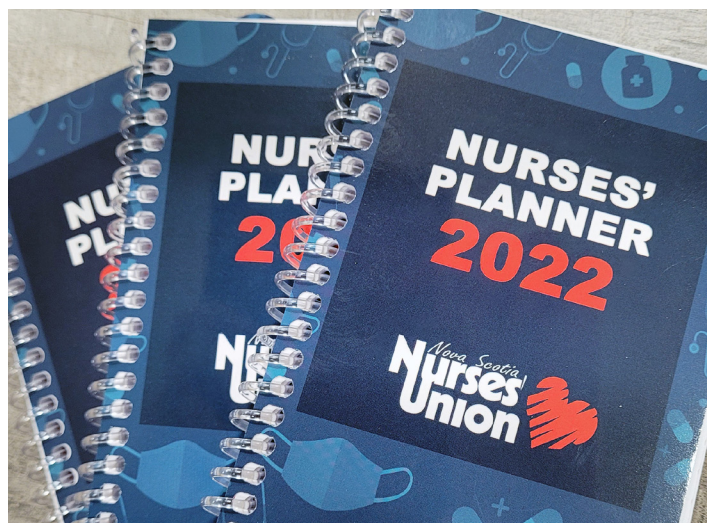
NSNU Staff Advisor: Chris Albrecht

The 2022 Nurse Planners are Here!

The 2022 Nurse Planners arrived in early November, and NSNU staff worked diligently to package and send them to your worksites for distribution. We know many members appreciate these handy pocket-sized calendars and use them regularly to aid in your scheduling. If your Local hasn't received your planners yet, rest assured, they are en-route.

Nurse Planners are designed and printed free of charge by Quebec-based company, Efficom. They also sell advertising inside the planner, and revenues are then donated to NSNU-supported charities. Proceeds from the 2022 planner are earmarked for the Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, an organization that assists women and children through the process of leaving domestic violence. THANS provides an invaluable service in our community, and the NSNU is proud to be a long-time supporter of their work

We hope you enjoy your 2022 Nurse Planner, and wish you all the best as we embark on what we hope will be a better year ahead.



AGM 2022 Dates and Details



NSNU is excited to be hosting an in-person Annual General Meeting in 2022.

Current public health guidelines allow us to gather once again at the Best Western Glengarry Hotel in Truro with fully vaccinated members, following additional safety measures in place at the time of the event. We will closely monitor the situation and make any and all necessary modifications should the recommendations change.

It will be another great event as we conduct business on behalf of the organization, develop strategies, make important decisions for the coming year, and inform members about past and future activities. The event marks the 45th time that members of the NSNU have gathered for an AGM.

The 2022 AGM is scheduled to take place Monday, April 25 – Thursday, April 28.

Here are some highlights, deadlines and things to know:

- Registration opens February 14 and closes March 14. 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.
- For those attending only the Education Day on April 28, there is a separate online registration form.
- Resolutions must be submitted by February 10. For details on how to write a resolution go to nsnu.ca/AGMFormsandDeadlines. Please send your resolutions to lorna.myers@nsnu.ca.
- The hospitality event will take place at the Engine Room the evening of Tuesday, April 26. Save the date.

- Keltic Clothing will be on site selling uniforms and accessories.
- Andrea's Jewelry Designs will be back to sell popular jewelry items.
- Johnson Insurance will be an exhibitor; there once again to support the NSNU AGM and our members.
- The NSNU will be selling a wide assortment of merchandise, perfect for sharing with members during National Nursing Week.
- Once again, we will be collecting dignity items for the Truro Food Bank.
- The NSNU Auction is back! Each local is asked to donate an item to the charity fundraiser. All proceeds from the 50/50 draw during the hospitality event and tickets sales for the auction go to The Marguerite Centre in Halifax and Hope Project in Sydney.
- Scholarship Applications must be submitted by March 31. Forms can be found on the NSNU website at www.nsnu.ca/resources/education/scholarships. The successful recipients will be announced at the AGM on April 27.

In the event of another lockdown, the NSNU will consider hosting a virtual meeting in place of the face-to-face conference. We're experienced in presenting on a virtual platform and feel well positioned to host again in that environment, if necessary. We are confident we could easily transition.

More information will be featured in the January 2022 issue of the newsletter, emailed in Campaigner e-memos to local executive members and posted online at nsnu.ca in the coming weeks and months.

2022 AGM Tentative Schedule

Sunday April 24

Board of Directors Meeting

Monday April 25

Component & Regional Meetings

Tuesday April 26

8:30 am – 4:30 pm: AGM Business

6:30 pm – 11:30 pm: Hospitality Event

Wednesday April 27

8:30 am - Noon: AGM Business

6:30 pm – 12:00 am: Banquet and Dance

Thursday April 28

8:30 am – 4:00 pm: Education Session



NSNU AGM Education Day 2022

Resilience from Hurting to Healing

The nursing profession is both deeply challenging and incredibly rewarding. To reflect those truths, the theme of the 2022 Annual General Meeting **Education Day** is *Resilience: from Hurting to Healing*. The day is designed to help NSNU members appreciate the burden of grief they carry as health providers and give them some resources and encouragement to increase their resilience.

Participants will learn what the Union does to help members dealing with

workplace trauma. They will also hear from a panel of nurses on the experience of grief and stress in nursing and how nurses can best deal with this troubling reality.

Attendees will hear from award-winning experts, authors and advocates who will share the lessons they've learned from dealing with trauma, survival and resilience.

We will end the day with a motivational presentation to leave us feeling hopeful and invigorated.

The NSNU Education Committee and staff look forward to seeing you on April 28th and hope the day will contribute to building resilience and strength in our nurses.

All attendees will be required to be fully vaccinated. Online registration opens February 14. Look for a separate online registration form if you are attending only the Education Day (April 28) portion of the AGM.





NSFL Hosts 51st Biennial Convention

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL) held their 51st Biennial Convention virtually on October 25 and 26. The NSFL Executive Council attended in person, including NSNU President Janet Hazelton, Jen Thiele (Vice President) and Glenda Sabine (VP Long Term Care). Other representatives from the NSNU Board and membership participated virtually.

The NSFL serves as the provincial arm of the Canadian Labour Congress, and as a united body for labour groups across Nova Scotia. Together under the NSFL banner, unions tackle issues facing workers and put pressure on governments to improve work-life for all Nova Scotians. At present, the NSFL represents approximately 70,000 workers in numerous industries across the province. The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union has been a proud member of the NSFL for many years.

The biennial convention provides an opportunity for labour leaders to conduct business, discuss and vote on resolutions, and hold elections. The event sets the course for Federation activities over the next two years. This year's focus was on paid sick leave for all workers, as well as a worker-focused pandemic recovery, which harkened back to the convention theme, **Unions, Leading a Just Recovery**.

COVID-19 has affected workers in all industries, and the recovery from the pandemic needs to be done in a way that puts people first. The Canadian Labour Congress, NSFL and its members are working together to ensure workers' voices are heard as we forge ahead.

Trade Unionist of the Year

In keeping with tradition, NSFL named their Trade Unionists of the Year during the convention. This year's recipients included Linda Moore, CUPE 8920, as well as NSNU's own Chris Van Zoost, RN.

Chris has held numerous positions at the local level and served as a regional representative on NSNU's Board of Directors before being elected Vice-President. She dedicated nearly two decades to the NSNU Board, and served on the NSFL Board for many years. Her service to the labour movement is extensive, and she has been a strong voice for nurses and all workers in Nova Scotia.

Congratulations to Chris and Linda on this well-deserved honour.

Executive Council Elections

During the convention, delegates voted for members to serve on the Executive Council for the next two

years. Janet Hazelton is pleased to be re-elected to serve again as Vice President at-Large, and Jen Thiele and Glenda Sabine will be continuing to serve as General Vice Presidents. NSFL president Danny Cavanagh was re-elected for a third term, a show of confidence for his hard work and leadership during his tenure.

"The past year and a half have been challenging for working people, as many frontline workers put their own health and safety at risk while our government refused to take the pandemic seriously and left working people behind," said Danny.

"I am committed to continuing the fight to demand better for the workers who have kept our province running throughout the pandemic, and to make life better for all working people in Nova Scotia."

Congratulations to the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour on another successful convention.



The NSFL Executive Council: Paul Wozney, Jason MacLean, Rocky Beal, Hugh Gillis, Danny Cavanagh, Janet Hazelton, Nan McFadgen

Nova Scotia Passes Bill 11 - *Protecting Access to Health Services Act*

Like most, the NSNU was disturbed by the choice made by a small number of Canadians to protest outside hospitals during a nationwide day of action opposing COVID-19 vaccines and safety measures. Following this incident in mid-September, the Government of Nova Scotia took action to protect healthcare workers, patients, and all who access to health facilities, by tabling Bill 11 - *Protecting Access to Health Services Act*.

The Bill establishes a 50-metre “safe access bubble” around hospitals and other health facilities where protests will not be permitted. An amendment to the Bill clarifies that the *Act* does not apply to labour action. If such action is taken, workers will be able to picket unimpeded.

Those who require medical care, or whose loved ones are experiencing a health crisis, should not have to pass angry protesters outside hospital doors. Those who work to care for Nova Scotians should be able to do so in peace. The NSNU is pleased to see legislation protecting people in these places, understanding that the pressure on our healthcare system is already significant enough without the additional stress of feeling unwelcome or unsafe in our healthcare facilities.

Protesting is the right of all Canadians, but it must be done in a way that respects the safety and dignity of others.

New But Familiar Face Takes Helm for Unionized Nurses in Ontario

On November 1st, the Ontario Nurses Association announced that Cathryn Hoy has been elected the new president of that organization, succeeding outgoing and long-serving representative, Vicki McKenna.

Hoy, a registered nurse, had completed her second term as First Vice-President prior to the election. Previously, she held the position of Region 2 Vice-President on the ONA Board of Directors, representing nurses in eastern Ontario communities.

An RN for more than 20 years, Hoy has extensive experience working in many units as a staff nurse at Kingston General Hospital, including neonatal intensive care, pediatrics, women’s health, emergency, medicine, oncology and surgery. She has also been a clinical educator.

The NSNU looks forward to our continued work with President Hoy and the dedicated team at the Ontario Nurses Association.



Cathryn Hoy will begin her term as ONA president in January 2022

The National Day of Action Was Just the Beginning

Canada's nurses continue to press all levels of government for safe staffing



CFNU president Linda Silas attended the Day of Action rally in her home province, New Brunswick

The NSNU Day of Action brought out dozens of nurses and supporters

By Linda Silas, CFNU President

Across the country, nurses are angry and fed up. It's no wonder – they have been expected to put up with too much, for too long.

Years of chronic understaffing, and the myriad problems arising from this, have been made acute by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. After the hollow applause faded, decision-makers have largely failed to deliver adequate solutions, or afford nurses even basic respect.

That's why nurses and their supporters took part in a national day of action this past September 17, organized by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) and its Member Organizations. More than 25 in-person events were held across the country, including a media conference in Winnipeg, a car convoy in Edmonton, and workplace outreach and community pickets in Atlantic Canada. Virtual actions were organized in Saskatchewan and Ontario while individual supporters flooded social media with images and stories.

These actions took place just days before Canadians headed to the polls in the September 20 federal election, raising the profile of nurses' issues when it counted most. Thousands of people participated, gaining media attention and capturing public awareness.

Our message? We are done asking for the basics; we demand action to fix the nursing crisis. This means addressing understaffing through retention and recruitment efforts at the national and provincial levels.

Despite the incredible momentum, history teaches us that politicians rarely deliver real solutions – especially costly ones – if they are not pressed to do so. So, the national day of action was only the beginning of this fight.

The CFNU has taken swift action following the election. We called on the Prime Minister to urgently meet with nurses and experts to deal with critical staffing shortages, and we prepared briefing sessions with major political party caucuses to gain their support for federal action.

With close to 1 million workers, the health care workforce amounted to 8 per cent of GDP in recent years, so we know it is past time we have a national health human resources strategy.

The CFNU is taking the next steps in this fight by launching a national study for nurses to "Be Heard." Members will be invited to join the study, which will explore their work experiences during the pandemic. We are also partnering with provincial unions to host discussion sessions where members can ask questions and share their feedback. The insights gained from these efforts will inform the demands we bring to premiers and the federal government.

For the first time in many years, there is real, national attention on health staffing, which is perhaps the most crucial factor affecting our working conditions and patient care. Unions, nurses and supporters have a unique opportunity to press forward for better and safer health staffing and the far-reaching improvements that this will deliver – for everyone.

BE HEARD

NATIONAL NURSE SURVEY

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged our health care system in unprecedented ways. As decision-makers chart a course for recovery, it's crucial for nurses and health care workers to be heard.

That's why NSNU is working with the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) to conduct a national study. The CFNU is Canada's largest nurses' organization representing about 200,000 care providers and nursing students in every health sector.

The CFNU is conducting an online survey with a randomly selected sample of nurses and health care workers from across all sectors, across the country.

The survey will gauge your job satisfaction, workload, stress and other factors during the pandemic. By illuminating these factors, we can better understand your experience and more effectively advocate on your behalf. The data gathered for this survey will directly inform our recommendations to governments on how to improve working conditions and patient care.

The CFNU has engaged Viewpoints Research Ltd., a professional research company, to conduct the survey. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential, and any identifying information, such as your email address, will be removed from the collected data. Results will only be reported in aggregate, and no individual responses will be singled out.

If you have been randomly selected to receive an email with a unique link, inviting you to participate in this important research, we urge you to complete the questionnaire. The survey should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. The survey link will remain open until late December. If you have any questions about the survey or the process, please contact the CFNU by emailing cfnu@nursesunions.ca or calling 1-800-321-9821.

Your voice matters, and we urge you to participate and be heard!

CFNU National Executive Board Meeting

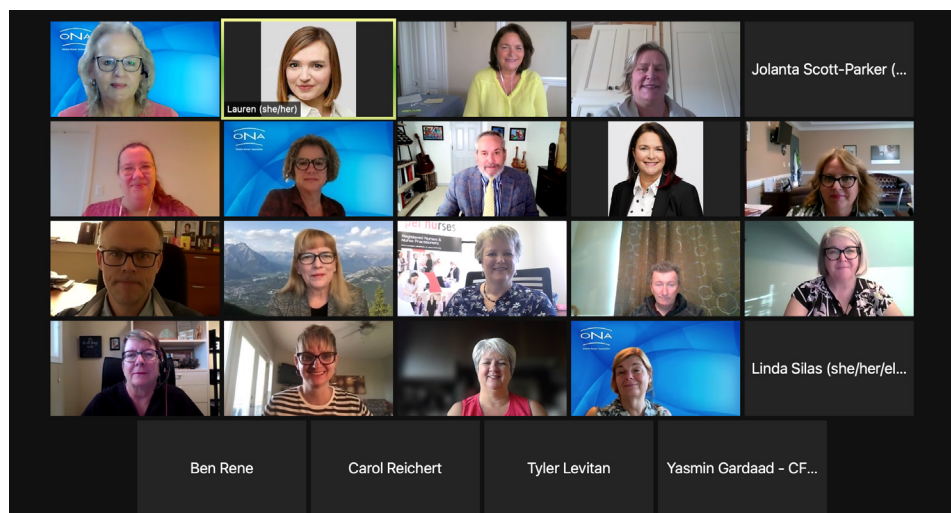
They had planned to meet in person, but pandemic restrictions prevented members of the National Executive Board (NEB) of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions from doing so.

Instead, the NEB met virtually (again) from October 5th – 7th to discuss the federal election results, the September 17th National Day of Action, chronic staffing shortages and burnout, provincial issues and ongoing COVID-19 concerns.

The meetings bring the leaders together several times each year to share, plan and execute initiatives that advocate and support nurses and high-quality public health care.

CFNU uses its powerful collective voice to speak up and pressure government to recognize the professional skills and knowledge that nurses bring to their jobs.

NSNU president Janet Hazelton and executive director Chris Albrecht were on hand to share the Nova Scotia perspective.



Reducing Our Environmental Footprint

Canada's Nurses have identified climate action as a priority. The 2019 discussion paper released by the Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions, *Climate Change and Health: It's Time for Nurses to Act*, lays out six recommendations for how nurses can use their position of trust and authority to impact employer policies and even lobby government for meaningful change, while helping educate the broader community about the real impacts of climate change.

With this renewed focus on caring for our planet, now is a good time to look at what the NSNU is doing to reduce our environmental impact, and what the Government of Nova Scotia is working on to set and meet provincial sustainability goals.

What the NSNU is Doing

The NSNU has long been dedicated to mitigating our climate impact. Our new building, completed in 2016, was constructed with sustainability in mind. It uses less energy during non-peak hours, ensuring comfort for staff and guests during the workday and lower usage overnight. It also relies on electric heating and cooling rather than burning oil, and LED lighting throughout.

The union also fosters an environmentally conscious workplace. Staff are working to reduce their personal impact through every-day choices, like separating our recycling and organics from garbage, and limiting our use of single-use plastics in the office and during events.

In effort to help members obtain their personal conservation goals, the NSNU offers merchandise to make environmentally conscious decisions more attainable – reusable grocery bags, thermoses, water bottles, lunch bags and more.

Check out nsnu.ca/merchandise to see what we have that can help you meet your goals.

What the Province is Doing

In October 2021, the Government of Nova Scotia introduced the *Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act*, which sets 28 new goals aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conservation, waste reduction and more.

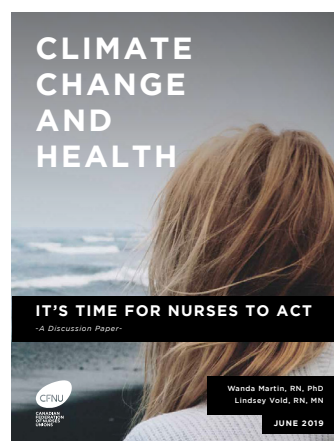
Some of the goals include:

- 80% of Nova Scotia's energy to be supplied by renewable energy by 2030
- 30% of vehicle sales by 2030 to be zero-emission vehicles
- Conserve at least 20% of total land and water mass
- Develop a provincial food strategy and support consumption of local food
- Reduce solid waste disposal rates to no more than 300 kilograms per person per year by 2030

This new Act is being applauded by environmental groups as the best of its kind in our province, however they say it still doesn't go far enough. They want Nova Scotia to be more ambitious, particularly around the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Environmentalists also want short-term targets to keep goals on track, and want stronger language around offshore fossil fuel exploration, aquaculture, and environmental racism.

The Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act is just the most recent effort to improve our provincial impact on the environment. The *Sustainable Development Goals Act*, passed in 2019, set the most ambitious goals in the country for reducing greenhouse gas emissions at that time. More information about our provincial climate strategy can be found at climatechange.novascotia.ca.

The new goals put forward by the Nova Scotia government preceded the COP26 climate summit, which was held in Scotland in early November. Halifax Mayor Mike Savage attended the summit, along with farmers and other industry professionals from across the province. The summit concluded with a new global climate deal that calls for the phasing down of coal and other fossil fuel emissions. The UN calls these steps "building blocks for progress," but says more action is needed to combat rising global temperatures.



The CFNU discussion paper, *Climate Change and Health: It's Time for Nurses to Act*, is available online at nursesunions.ca/research/climate-change-and-health

Not Your Grandmother's Work

By Archana Rampure

I remember an early women's studies class I took – probably at least 20 years ago, where we talked about how work that is supposed to be “natural” to women is always undervalued. Nursing is underpaid compared to doctoring precisely because taking care of sick people is supposed to be women's work. Teaching is undervalued for the same reason. And teaching younger children is far more undervalued than teaching older children. Think about how early childhood educators (ECEs) are viewed by society and compare that to how professors are treated. Then again, when it comes to teaching in universities and colleges, think about the value ascribed to those who teach history or literature and that ascribed to those who teach science or technology (the STEM disciplines).

For those who want to see equitable value given to what has traditionally been labelled “women's work”, this state of affairs has sometimes led to weird contortions: we have argued for credentialization because that was one way to have this work recognized as work. The creation of “Registered” nurses (RNs) was all about this, as was the later creation of “Licensed Practical” nurses (LPNs). These designations not only recognize the technical education one needs to have, they also underline the fact that one is a highly trained professional, not a person doing “what comes naturally” to them. If you look at the iconography that often goes with nursing work, it's easy to see that over the last 150 years it's moved away from the figure garbed like a nun laying soothing hands on the fevered brow of a sick patient. Now that figure is garbed in scrubs and surrounded by complicated machinery.

But as ever, things are more complicated than they appear on the surface.

Nursing's professionalization in the 19th century was driven in part by a historical association of nurses with sex work. It may seem farfetched now but think of the horrific sketches of nurses found in the work of Dickens, for instance. His portrayal of Sairey Gamp – untrained, uncaring, drunk and dissolute – was not a one-off but a popular stereotype of his time. It captured a particularly Victorian horror and fascination with any woman who had intimate knowledge of men's bodies. The rise of “professional” nursing – led by Florence Nightingale and her ladies with lamps – was a direct response to these popular notions of nurses as promiscuous (at best) and drunken (at worst). The model of Nightingale nurses – carefully selected from “good” families, who received some training (though much of this was in morality and correct behaviour) was designed to change the public perception of nursing as sexually compromising work.



An artist's rendering of Florence Nightingale's Ladies with Lamps

This class of nurses could be easily identified by their nursing uniforms, which were a marker of respectability as much as anything else. The continuation of this can be seen in the hospital-based nursing training programs of the 20th century – training in medicine, pharmacology and biology was added to the curricula but moral training and morality-policing were still an essential part of things. Think of student nurses in the 1930s – and well into the 60s and 70s – being confined to nurses' houses, not allowed to entertain men as visitors and being disciplined or dismissed for such breaches. There is a well documented 1959 “Case of the Kissing Nurse” from Vancouver General Hospital where a student nurse was disciplined for kissing a man outside the hospital.

Childcare work has had a similar, though later, trajectory. While childcare workers didn't have to begin with misconceptions about the kind of work they did being akin to sex work, childcare workers have had an even longer battle around childcare work being seen as work at all. That is why childcare workers are still among the lowest-paid workers today. Looking after children – your own or other people's – is still seen as not really being work. And childcare workers – who are almost overwhelmingly women – are not fairly compensated for it. This has led to childcare workers establishing their own regulatory colleges and demanding recognition for their training and their education credentials. We try to delineate the differences between “licensed” and “unlicensed” childcare, between childcare provided by trained ECEs and that provided by (mostly) other women who are not licensed.

And therein lies the rub, and the contortion – to have childcare work recognized as work, and as work that deserves proper remuneration, childcare workers have had to strategically assert that childcare performed in the home, by mothers and (mostly) by other women like sisters, aunts or grandmothers isn't really “work”. Unwittingly perhaps and certainly only strategically, professional childcare workers end up pitted against unpaid childcare workers as well as against the (mostly) migrant women workers who are imported to provide care in private homes. Once again, we need look no further than the dress codes adopted by “trained” nannies, the earliest of the professional class of childcare workers, which imitated nursing uniforms – remember Mary Poppins, with her neat and tidy dresses and aprons?

Where do women workers who want legitimacy for their work and fair wages go from here? I don't know but knowing these histories and understanding the ways in which we have always been manipulated and divided, mostly against our own sisters, can only help as we navigate government austerity.

Archana Rampure is a trade unionist living in Ottawa.

Find Your Zen (And More!) on the NSNU Discount List



Are You Paying the Correct Amount of Union Dues?

If you work at more than one NSNU facility and pay union dues more than once in a pay period, you may be eligible for a refund from the Provincial Office. Members who have been paid for less than 7.5 hours in Acute Care and less than 8 hours in Long Term Care in one bi-weekly pay period may also be eligible for a refund from the Provincial Office.

The Provincial portion of NSNU union dues (\$29.24 for RN's and \$21.48 for LPN's) will be refunded by cheque on a quarterly basis. Your rebate will only be retroactive for a period of up to 12 months prior to contact with the NSNU.

If either situation applies to you, please contact the NSNU Provincial Office c/o B.L. Moran at 902-468-6748 or bl.moran@nsnu.ca.

If you're looking for great deals, you need look no further than the Discount List located on the Members Only section of the NSNU website – nsnu.ca/memberdiscounts.

Many vendors offer discounts to members of the NSNU, including companies like Endless Savings & More, Avis Rent-a-Car, Neptune Theatre, The Brick, various hotel chains and others. They offer a broad range of services including hotel stays, spa treatments, car rentals, dining, yoga and more. There are also several discounts available to nurses during the pandemic to make your lives a little bit easier.

In order to take advantage of these deals, members should keep their NSNU membership card on hand while out and about. Even if an offer is not listed on our website,



members may wish to enquire about discounts for nurses, as some may be available that the NSNU has not been made aware of.

Offers are added to the list as they come in, so remember to check back every-so-often to see if something new has popped up that may be of interest to you.

If you do not have a member card, please contact the Union office at 902-469-1474 or nsnu.office@nsnu.ca.

Nana's a Nurse!

NSNU Executive Director, Chris Albrecht, welcomed an adorable new granddaughter this fall - Mya. Here she is showing her already well-developed fashion sense in an NSNU 'My Nana's a Nurse' onesie!

Congratulations to Chris and her family on their new addition.



Get Winter Ready with NSNU Merch

As we prepare for winter, the NSNU invites members to peruse our selection of branded merchandise for the members and activists in your life (and a little something for you too!).

The NSNU has many great options to chase away the chill this time of year, including branded fleece blankets and scarves, warm socks, and mugs perfect for hot cocoa. Looking for something else? Check out our assortment of apparel, bags, lanyards, keychains, pet lights and more.

Our inventory is available to view online at nsnu.ca/merchandise. You can place an order via email or make an appointment to shop in-person at the NSNU Boutique by contacting nsnu.office@nsnu.ca.

Please note, the following:

- Members wishing to shop at the NSNU Boutique at 150 Garland Avenue in Burnside must do so by appointment only
- All members and staff will be required to wear a mask while on the NSNU premises for a merchandise transaction
- Cash or cheque only – NSNU does not have debit or credit services
- Members requesting that merchandise be mailed to their local must understand that return policies will vary depending on the purchase (broken item, sizing issues) and shipping fees may be applied depending on the size of the order
- The NSNU does not pay shipping fees on large orders. If possible, please make arrangements for pick-up.



Pens – 4-Colour - \$3



Scrunchies - \$5



Tuber (Head Scarf) - \$5



Computer Tote Bags - \$45



Messenger Bags - \$10



Cotton Duffel Totes - \$10

The nsnu.ca/merchandise webpage includes photos and prices of all of our inventory, for your shopping convenience

Featured Items



Holiday Ornaments

The NSNU has a limited supply of hanging ornaments, perfect to spice up your holiday decor with a little activist flair! Purchase a set of four for \$12.



Masks and Lanyards

Due to high demand, the Nurses' Union recently brought in a new order of mask lanyards to pair with your branded masks. Our masks are comfortable and cool, and a great way to show your NSNU pride. Masks are available for \$5 and lanyards for \$2.

Please note, NSNU masks are not for use in clinical settings.

Season's Greetings from the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union celebrates the holidays by making charitable donations to organizations in our communities. Donations are more important than ever to charities as they continue to struggle due to COVID-19.

Again, at this festive time, NSNU gave contributions to The Marguerite Centre in Halifax and Hope Project in Sydney. Both centres provide long-term residential programs to women who are overcoming addictions. The NSNU also contributed to Feed Nova Scotia in support of foodbanks, soup kitchens and families struggling with food insecurity this holiday season. We are pleased to give to such worthwhile causes.

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



Nova Scotia
**Nurses
Union** 

Keeping Kids Warm This Winter



so everyone can enjoy safe holiday fun.

The Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions (CFNU) has a tradition of donating to the Snowsuit Fund in Ottawa in lieu of sending holiday greeting cards. Last year, they expanded the program to include member organizations, like the NSNU, across the country.

In 2020, they donated \$1000 to Nova Scotia's Family SOS snowsuit fund in the name of CFNU and NSNU. Once again, CFNU will donate the same amount to help keep kids warm this winter.

Thank you to our national affiliate for this generous contribution to a worthy cause.

If you'd like to give to the snowsuit fund, visit www.familysos.ca.



ESCAPE FALL PHOTO CONTEST

LPN Stephanie Harvey experiences the Cape Breton Highlands from a helicopter



This fall the NSNU ran our second Escape Contest, this time inviting members to send in photos of their favourite autumn pastimes and adventures – and you did not disappoint! Dozens of photos were sent in showcasing colourful hikes, canoe trips, yoga, fun with pets, family time, vacations, bonfires and more.

Thank you to all who submitted your photos for the chance to win a \$500 Visa gift card, just in time for the holidays. At the time this newsletter went to print, the winner had not been announced and entries were still streaming in. Stay tuned for the rest of our great photos – and the big winner – in the January edition of *What's Nu?*.

Can't wait? Check out all of the submissions at nsnu.ca/escape. A reminder that the Escape page exists as a resource for nurses as you seek to de-stress when you're off the clock. The page includes things to do on and off-line to help you find joy and relaxation. If you have any ideas for new content that can be added to the Escape page, please send them to nsnu.office@nsnu.ca.



Irish Hernandez, RN loves a good fall hike



Susan Savage, NP enjoys a paddle on a beautiful fall day



Chantal Hamilton, LPN has the best kind of running buddy in her pup, Remi



Joanah Sique, RN Loves the leaves changing colours



Heather MacVay, RN, hiking Franey Trail in Ingonish



RN Allison Jewers' favourite autumn activity: spending the day on a farm!



Amy Thibeau, RN apple picking with her daughter.



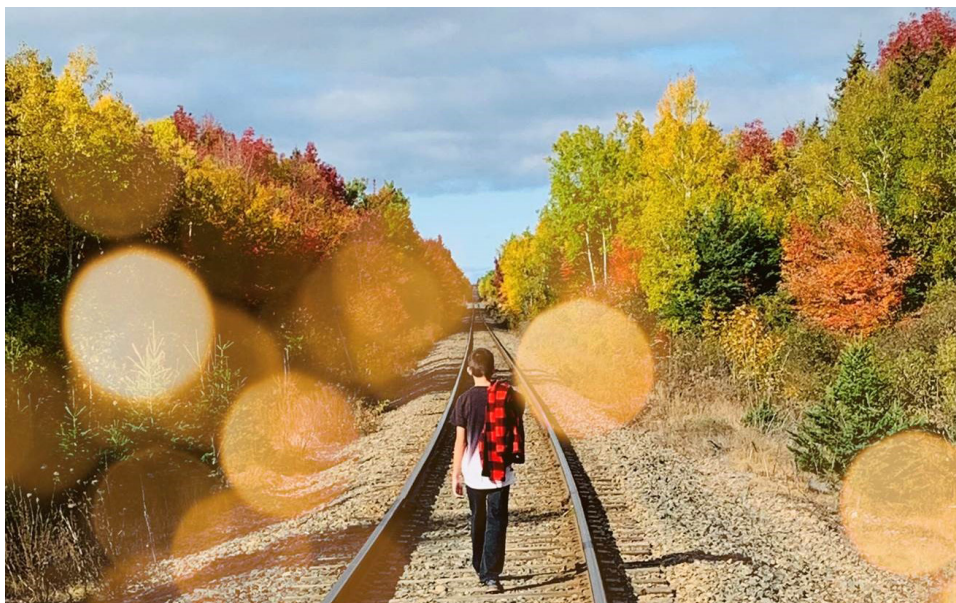
RN Marcy Dwyer's "granddoodle", Bella Doodle, on a fall day



Judy Veinott, LPN shares a lovely capture of fall colours



Jen Thiele, RN spends her days off immersed in her forest



Melissa Theriault, LPN shares an artistic and beautiful fall moment



Mandy Wagner, RN enjoys a backyard bonfire with the family



Colleen George, RN loves snapping photos



Rhonda Jacquard, LPN and her sister take in the vibrant colours of fall



Vinetta Rockwell, LPN goes for a fall walk with her husband



Kristen Hanna, LPN hiking with her sidekick, Cairo.



Tirzah McNutt, NP takes a lunchtime wellness break to enjoy the fall colours



Rachel MacDonald RN on a fall hike in Mabou, CB with her mom, Rosa



This pooch loves a good hike with Lorianne Peach, RN



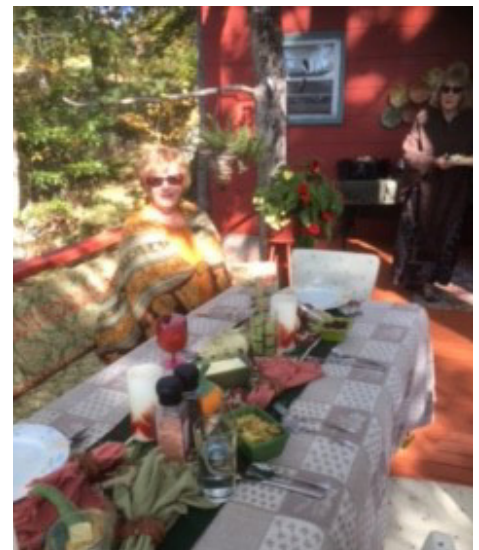
Debra Visser, RN rock climbing at Mills Falls



Alaura Moore, RN checks out the Spryfield farmer's market



Melissa Stronge, LPN enjoys her lovely fall view



Nurse sisters Connie d'Entremont, RN & Judy Maher, RN celebrate Thanksgiving at the family cottage



Tracy Gates, LPN loves fall family time with her granddaughters



Lindsey Smith, RN hiking with her adventure buddy, Blue



Jenna Hayes, RN & Matthew Rizzato, RN hiking the Skyline Trail in Cape Breton with their son, Jack



Vanessa MacLeod, LPN enjoys fall in Mabou, CB with her husband



Angela Gullens, LPN hiking a lookout trail in Wentworth Valley



Holly Dexter, LPN and her daughter de-stress by taking in the beauty around them



Animals are the key to happiness for Michelle Lowe, RN



Courtney MacPhail, RN practices yoga on the beach



Noel Ross, RN hikes Moses Mountain with her little ones

2022



Happy Holidays!

It has been a challenging and extraordinary year. May the coming year be filled with good health and happiness.



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