

June 2022



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June 2022

President's Notebook

Janet Hazelton, BScN RN, MPA



Time Off - A Must, Not an Option

Newsflash – nurses are not machines, but we are some of the most passionate and determined professionals in the workforce. Some might even say we're our own worst enemies. Our sense of obligation and compassion are strong and admirable characteristics, traits your employers are counting on. Those who take advantage of our work ethic by overworking us, are catapulting nurses headfirst into burnout, with little chance of full recovery.

Burnout is often defined as a "syndrome illustrated by a high degree of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and a low sense of personal accomplishment at work." It's been around long before the COVID pandemic; long before many NSNU members became nurses.

The term "burnout" is now more widely used and associated with nurses and doctors due to sustained media reporting and advocacy work by unions and healthcare providers themselves. There's no denying there's a nursing shortage, or that nurses are at the end of their rope. The overall strain of the pandemic, unfathomable wait times, increased morbidity and mortality associated with both chronic and acute health conditions due to delayed or avoided medical treatment, pre-existing staffing shortages exacerbated by COVID, increased workplace violence and harassment, longer than normal shifts, and other concerns have taken a tremendous toll.

There's a long list of fixes for employers to address, however one truly stands out for nurses who hope to have a long and healthy career. Time off.

It's summertime, when trips to the beach, BBQs with friends and family, walks in the park, a good book with a cup of coffee or a nice glass of wine, and days without schedules should be the norm. Time off to sleep, regroup and return to work simply doesn't cut it. All nurses deserve and require days off to allow ample and restorative separation from one world (work) to the next (home) – a complete recharge and refresh.

If you are feeling a sense of dread before you head to work, are still fatigued, are lacking confidence and a sense of accomplishment, you need to disconnect.

Some are doing just that by leaving the profession, opting to reduce their availability or leaving the public healthcare system in search of greater autonomy. Nurses have every right to make these decisions for the sake of their own well being, but if nurses want to stay in the positions they love, at facilities and with organizations where they gain great satisfaction, change must come.

Employers know that nurses who experience physical, mental and compassion fatigue are more at risk for making mistakes or demonstrating clouded judgement. That is counter to the very

President's Notebook Continued...

nature of our work – caring for others with a high degree of skill and knowledge. If our system does not care about, or for, those providing care, the deficits compound.

Many nurses have told me their vacation time this summer is negligible or nonexistent. Again, that is not acceptable. Nurses need days off to reset their stress levels back to neutral. Nurses who are permitted by their employer to step back are more likely to feel valued on the job and experience intrinsic rewards.

Contract language protects you, on many fronts, from being overworked. There is language that prohibits employers from completely exploiting your good nature and your duty of care – but at times nurses feel pressured to work. You have the right to refuse work and it's imperative that you make your mental and physical wellbeing a priority.

Focusing on your health and that of your family allows nurses to avoid having to choose between their career and their own needs. Achieving a work-life balance is an absolute must.

While the NSNU understands why some nurses are leaving the system, our goal is to work with employers and our members to create workplaces and conditions that allow nurses to practice safely and enjoy a long and happy career.



My sincere hope is that you're afforded guilt-free time this summer to unwind and unplug from work. We encourage dialogue between nurses and employers, and nurses and the union, to allow that to happen. With your feedback and your stories, we are better able to advocate for you and enact positive change.

Without a doubt, when employers listen to nurses and respond to their needs, retention is often the outcome.

For those feeling overwhelmed by work, we encourage you to seek care and support. Consider reaching out to Togetherall – a channel that offers anonymous online mental health support 24/7. The platform includes groups, courses and resources tailored to the needs of healthcare workers.

Visit [wellnesstogether.ca](https://www.wellnesstogether.ca) for more information.

No judgement. No stigma. This is a place where anyone can begin their journey towards better mental health.





The Honourable Brian Comer was first elected to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly as MLA for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg in a by-election in 2019 and was re-elected in 2021 as MLA for CB East.

He is a registered nurse and was a lobster fisherman.

Access to Hope & Healthcare

Op-ed

The following is an op-ed from **Brian Comer, Minister responsible for the Office of Addictions and Mental Health - June 15, 2022**

I've had the honour of serving as the province's first Minister responsible for Addictions and Mental Health for almost a year now. I've had the opportunity to travel around the province and to visit with many who are working in our hospitals, in community clinics and in community organizations to support people experiencing mental health challenges - and I will continue doing so this summer.

I, too, worked on the frontline as a registered nurse. Time and again, I'm inspired by the great work that is happening in the field.

There will always be those who want to paint a dismal picture of the state of mental health and addictions care. This does nothing to help. I want those who are struggling to know they are not alone. Help is available.

We know that there are challenges in accessing care and we are committed, as a government, to making the much-needed improvements. I know from first-hand experience that there are solutions, if government is willing to be bold and put in the work - and we are.

We need to do more for those who are suffering. We need to address the stigma that so often stops people from reaching out for help. We need to create a system where all Nova Scotians can get the support and care they need, whether or not they can afford to pay. And we need to provide access to early interventions and care that reflect the diverse experiences of all Nova Scotians.

We are committed to doing more and doing better. For example, we opened the province's first acute mental health day hospital and recovery support centres, which are allowing Nova Scotians to get the treatments they need, close to their families and communities.

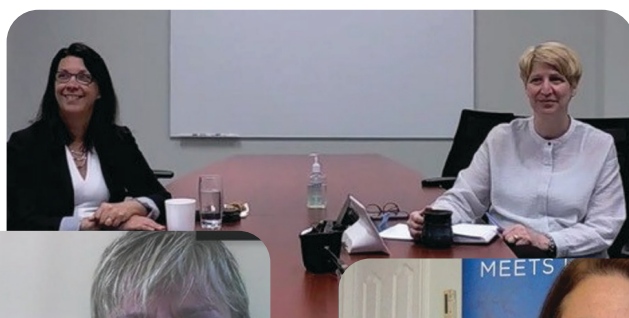
The past two years have been tough on Nova Scotians' mental health, and we must come together in response. These challenges are too big for politics. We must work together with compassion and hope, and a commitment to better care.

We need to lift each other up and ensure the right care is available to support us when we're struggling, and to catch us when we fall.

Ministers & Presidents Meet

CFNU President, Linda Silas and NSNU Janet Hazelton, NSNU President met virtually with Nova Scotia's Minister of Health and Wellness, Michelle Thompsom and Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness, Jeannine Lagassé on June 23 to discuss the critical nursing shortage in Nova Scotia and how we can work together to solve the staffing crisis provincially and across the country.

Talks are ongoing on this urgent matter, requiring swift action in order to stem the tide of nurses who are leaving the system.



PREPARING FOR PRIDE

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is eagerly preparing for Pride 2022, and this time, traditional Parades and live Pride events are back in full force! With both virtual and in-person events on the calendar this year, you're sure to find an opportunity to celebrate Pride in whatever way makes you most comfortable.

The NSNU is proud to sponsor Pride events and performances across the province, including a Halifax Pride Gold sponsorship. Halifax Pride, Cape Breton Pride, and other organizations across Nova Scotia are working hard to create events that celebrate the history, culture, activism and perseverance of the queer community.

The NSNU is excited to be marching in various parades across the province, including the Halifax Pride Parade on Saturday, July 16. President Janet Hazelton celebrated at her local Truro Pride Parade on June 25 and many other NSNU staffers and Board Members will be attending Pride events across the province all summer.

We encourage our members to celebrate by joining the Pride events are most convenient to them. You can find information about Pride and more about Pride events in your area at nsnu.ca/pride.

We are proud to represent many members within the 2SLGBTQ+ community, working in acute, long-term and community settings across the province.

PRIDE GUIDE

PICK THE RIGHT EVENT FOR YOU From parades to parties, attending virtually or in a crowd, there's a Pride event for everyone! Check out what is going on in your area.

WEAR COMFORTABLE SHOES You should plan to be on your feet all day, so make sure your Pride 'fit features comfy and supportive shoes.

CHARGE YOUR PHONE You'll need a full battery for optimal memory-making, photo-taking, Insta-storying and accessing online resources.

SHOW YOUR COLOURS There's no right or wrong way to dress for Pride. Celebrate in something comfortable, but don't be afraid to dress loud, proud and colourful!

BE RECEPTIVE Along with a colourful outfit and comfy shoes, be ready for a day of love, celebration and inclusivity.

GO WITH FRIENDS Pride is about connecting, meeting new people and celebrating with the ones you love. Use the buddy system to stick together.



Musquodoboit Valley Memorial Hospital flying their Pride flag



BOD Member **Maria Langille** with her nephew Tyson Thompson...
...AKA **Miranda Wrights** performing with Haus of Jeckyl



Dr. Blaauwendraat & RNs Barb Campbell & Chantel Bishop are rocking their NSNU Pride tshirts!

Happy Pride, this month and every month!



NSNU SHOWS SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN'S CAMP

On Saturday, **September 24th** the NSNU will be a **proud sponsor** of **Brigadoon Village Corner** at the **Halifax Wanderers** soccer game. Our game-day contribution supports Brigadoon Village Camps and the kids who attend.

Brigadoon Village, located in Alyesford, Nova Scotia is the largest pediatric medical camp facility in Canada and offers over 30 camp programs, each of which is designed to accommodate a health condition or other life challenge.

In return for NSNU's contribution to this worthy cause, the Wanderers have gifted us with 50 tickets to the nationally-televised, September 24th match against team Pacific from British Columbia.

To win a set of two-tickets to the 3:30 pm game on the Wanderers Grounds in Halifax, please send your name and email address to nsnu.office@nsnu.ca using the reference **WANDERERS DRAW** in the subject line.

The deadline to enter is September 1st.

The draw will take place September 6th. Winners will be notified that day.

Go Wanderers!

BRIGADOON
VILLAGE



New Merchandise Coming Soon!

The introduction of debit and credit capabilities to our NSNU Boutique has been a hit! We appreciate your patience on the long overdue upgrade, and we hope to continue making improvements to our members' shopping experience.

While we do our best to manually update the website, please be aware that the selection of merchandise on nsnu.ca may not always be as advertised. We are currently out of stock in several size and colour options as we face ongoing issues related to manufacturing delays and supply chain issues.

We are working on adopting new technology to streamline our merchandise inventory – thank you for your patience.

Keep an eye out for replenished and new stock coming in the Fall.

Happy Shopping!



NOVA SCOTIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CHARTER ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Janet Hazelton participated in a panel discussion with other esteemed guests at the May 19th Health and Safety Charter Annual Conference at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax.

From *Survival to Revival – Leading toward a better-than-ever post-COVID province*, explored the innumerable challenges experienced by healthcare workers throughout the pandemic.

Led by and designed for senior leaders, the program focused on leveraging the success organizations and employers had in safely navigating the pandemic toward workplaces that are more prosperous and safer than ever before.

One panel discussion focused on how Nova Scotian leaders continue to successfully adapt their organizations as we move to a post COVID Province.

The second panel discussion, titled Acknowledge and Act, reviewed how COVID has shone a bright light on inequities in many of our communities and workplaces — this panel discussed how we can be a better province across the spectrum, and included the following participants:

Moderator, **Mark Gascoigne**, CEO, Trampoline Branding
Janet Hazelton, President, Nova Scotia Nurses' Union
Michele Lowe, Managing Director, Nursing Homes of N.S. Association
Rustum Southwell, Founding CEO, Black Business Initiative



BILL 75 STRUCK DOWN

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TEACHERS & OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS?



With Exerpts from CBC News Nova Scotia

In June, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court struck down a controversial piece of legislation that imposed a contract on Nova Scotia's 9,300 public school teachers. Justice John A. Keith called the law, known as Bill 75, "vengeful," "terribly wrong" and ultimately unconstitutional in his ruling.

In February 2017, the Liberal Government under Stephen McNeil passed Bill 75, to bring an end to more than a year of failed contract negotiations between the province and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union. When it was eventually enacted, it stripped the union of its right to strike, the long-service award and imposed a four-year collective agreement along with a three per cent salary increase.



Lawyers for the province argued Bill 75 was essential because three tentative agreements reached between the NSTU's bargaining team and the province were all voted down by the union's membership — even though each agreement was recommended for approval by the NSTU. It was after the third failed agreement that the McNeil Liberals introduced Bill 75.

In his judgement, Justice Keith wrote that the terms of the collective agreement imposed by Bill 75 were significantly inconsistent with and worse than the third and final tentative agreement that the province said was the by-product of good faith bargaining.

Justice Keith called Bill 75 an overzealous but misguided attempt at fiscal responsibility - at worst, Bill 75 was punitive a attempt to gain some unrelated, collateral benefit related to ongoing negotiations with other public service unions at the expense of NSTU.



This decision raised questions about another Liberal law, Bill 148, which imposed wage restraint throughout the public service and also scrapped a retirement bonus known as the long-service award. The Bill imposes a wage pattern impacting thousands of public sectors workers, including nurses.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and eight public sector unions filed a legal challenge against Bill 148 back in 2017, but that case went into suspended animation pending the Court of Appeal decision. If the labour organizations revive the Bill 148 lawsuit there may be even greater repercussions for the government.

Premier Tim Houston promised during last summer's provincial election campaign that, if elected, the Tories would repeal Bill 148. More recently, they've backed away from that plan.

In May, Deputy Premier Allan MacMaster said that Bill 148, passed in 2015, was "no longer impacting the negotiations that we want to have with our unions," and that the law was "time-limited legislation." MacMaster did not close the door on rescinding Bill 148, he made it clear there was no plan to follow through on the end-of-campaign pledge.

The eight unions recently launched a letter writing campaign imploring government to keep their 2021 promise to rescind the Bill. Following the decision on Bill 75, government is more prepared to talk about Bill 148. The Federation of Labour is working on behalf of eight unions, including the NSTU, that opposed the Bill.

The Premier says, people who are working in Nova Scotia should be fairly compensated and, where they're part of a union, that should come as a result of a union negotiation. This government says it wants to be different than the last government – not antagonistic with labour.

The president of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union Paul Wozney said his union will meet with its legal counsel to discuss any fallout from the ruling on Bill 75. Justice Keith has said the NSTU is entitled to recover costs incurred to go before the court.

Lancaster House 2022 Atlantic Canada Labour Law Conference

On **May 27th**, NSNU president Janet Hazelton participated in a panel discussion called

EDI Front and Centre: New approaches to redressing discrimination and fostering a respectful workplace

hosted by Lancaster House.

Widespread recognition of the moral imperative and practical advantages of workplace equity and diversity are sparking new initiatives to tackle the age-old problem of systemic discrimination in Canadian workplaces. As concepts of equality, diversity, and inclusion at work evolve, and the need to reflect these ideals in workplace policies and practices gains widespread recognition, organizations have begun to look beyond conventional programs to take additional steps to foster and achieve equity and diversity in their workplaces.

In this session, the panel discussed new strategies and initiatives across sectors to overcome the barriers of systemic discrimination and advance the goals of workplace diversity and inclusion.

The moderated panel engaged in a structured conversation between themselves, tackling tough issues like: Combating systemic discrimination in the workplace; Using EDI to inform legislative reforms; Collective agreement language to foster equity and diversity and create a respectful, inclusive workplace culture; Pay equity versus employment equity, and the role of accountability in both pay and employment equity; The role employers and unions play in reflecting changing societal attitudes, re-energizing and modernizing employment equity, and combatting the effects of systemic racism; and more.

In addition to Janet, the Panel included:

April Howe

🏠 Founder/Advisory Crayon Strategies Inc.

Tracy Jones-Grant

🏠 Managing Director, Diversity and Inclusion African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office

Lynn Jones

🏠 Human Rights Community and Labour Activist

Sheilagh Murphy (Moderator)

🏠 Arbitrator, Mediator and Independent Workplace Investigator with MacNab, Fagan and Murphy



EXPLORING EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION WITHIN THE UNION

In the fall of 2021, the Board of Directors of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union identified new strategic directions for the organization. One of the priorities is to explore issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, with the goal of increasing the union's institutional knowledge within this area. A further goal is to help create safe spaces for our members through embracing and respecting all cultures and backgrounds. Ultimately our workplaces must be safe and welcoming for nurses, patients, visitors, and other colleagues.

As the first step into the arena of equity, diversity, and inclusion, the NSNU engaged the expertise of Ann Devine, who delivered the keynote address at this year's Annual General Meeting. Ann Devine and her company, Ashanti Leadership, graciously provided NSNU with a survey template which was adapted to reflect the nature of the NSNU and its role as a membership-based organization. The survey, which was deployed in early April, was intended to be a catalyst to begin the NSNU's EDI journey and lay the groundwork for further initiatives. The questions were designed to gather preliminary information about the members of the NSNU, and their experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion, both in relation to their personal workplaces, and in relation to the union itself where applicable.

For now, only preliminary results are available. A total of 121 members provided responses to the survey. Much of the data are still in the process of being analysed, but already the results show is that there is more work to be done. Most respondents fit the following demographic breakdown: over 55 years of age, heterosexual, woman, European Canadian, with more than 30 years of nurse experience. This indicates that further research must be conducted to gather information on the perspectives of those that do not fit that description. More consideration will be given to the views of those members who do not represent the majority of respondents, to ensure any conclusions drawn from the survey reflect the principles of inclusion, diversity, and equity.

Further quantitative analysis is underway to examine the difference in participant views of their employer's approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion and the NSNU's approach. Other questions will explore how the role of union activism influences EDI perspectives, and how these perspectives vary across the membership. The inclusivity and bias of the survey itself will also be examined. Many of the members who participated in the survey took extra time and consideration to provide thoughtful answers to the open-ended questions on the survey. These responses will be qualitatively analysed for themes that will hopefully provide diverse perspectives and context to the quantitative analysis.



POSITIVITY COMMITTEE

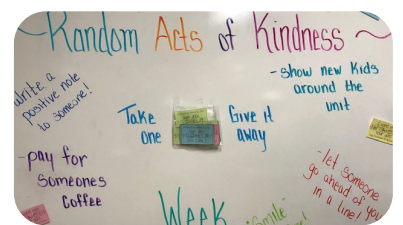
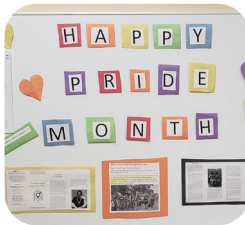
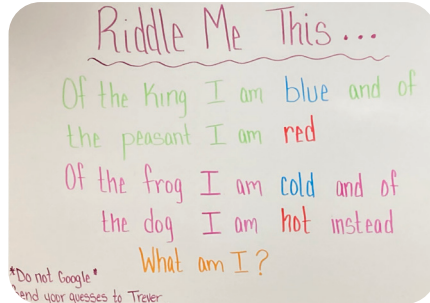
AT COLCHESTER EAST HANTS HEALTH CENTRE

After multiple changes to their acute medicine floor over the course of the pandemic, Stacy Swistun (LPN) and Trevor McKelvie (RN) noticed that morale was low and stress was high on D3 at the Colchester East Hants Health Centre.

Trevor came up with the idea to start a **Positivity Committee, with hopes to lift spirits and build morale amongst their team.** Stacy and Trevor implemented relatively simple activities around their floor, including bingo, a Riddle of the Week and planned gatherings outside of work.

Nurses on D3 can text in their answers for the weekly riddle and are entered to win prizes, but the positivity on D3 doesn't end with games and gifts. The Committee has also set up boards for nurses to cheer each other on and to "Remember Why." Shout outs allow staff to personally or anonymously applaud their coworkers' hard work, while the Remember Why board is filled with accounts of why the nurses of D3 chose this career path. Both boards, filled with messages, serve as a visual reminder to face each day with positivity.

Since the introduction of the Positivity Committee last year, morale is up and D3 nurses have become a closer team.



INTERESTED IN STARTING YOUR OWN POSITIVITY COMMITTEE?

Take Stacy's advice: **Communication!**

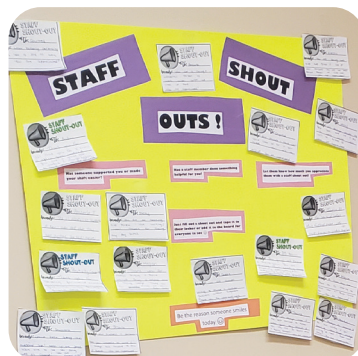
"Talk to your coworkers. Encourage them to get involved and find out what they would like to see happen to make your unit a more positive place to work!"

Facebook is an effective means of communicating with and organizing the group.

An **anonymous suggestion box** has also been a helpful way for the Positivity Committee to receive feedback and suggestions.

"Being a nurse means both embracing the challenges and experiencing the reward of making a difference in someone else's life. If you face each day with positivity, the reward will outweigh the challenges."

- Stacy Swistun, LPN



NSNU 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 **Education Day** is **Resilience: from Hurting to Healing**.

The day, now planned as an **in-person event on October 14th in Truro**, is designed to help NSNU members appreciate the burden of grief they carry as health providers and provide resources and encouragement to increase resilience.

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

Dr. Jackie Kinley, MD, CEO and AIR Faculty Lead at the Atlantic Institute of Resilience will guide us through an informed discussion on mental fitness - a shift from an illness approach to a growth mindset. An expert in the field, Dr. Kinley is a much sought-after presenter on the subject.

Janice Landry, an award-winning journalist, author and advocate, who will share the lessons she has learned from the incredible stories she has covered on trauma, survival and resilience.

We will end the day with a motivational presentation to will leave us feeling hopeful and invigorated. Alvin Law will recount his incredible and engaging story as a survivor of the thalidomide tragedy and the extraordinary life he has come to lead, including the attitude that helped him get there.

The NSNU Education Committee and staff look forward to seeing you on October 14th and hope the day will contribute to building resilience and strength in our nurses.

This summer watch for e-memos from the NSNU regarding registration and participation. One representative from each local (local executive or designate) will be responsible for registering participants.

As per our current policy, all attendees will be required to be fully vaccinated.



Practice and Leadership Premiums

Each year, NSNU members are eligible to receive Nursing Practice and Nursing Leadership Premiums. These premiums are offered to qualifying nurses to recognize and encourage nursing leadership activities.

In order to be eligible for one or both premiums, a nurse must earn a sufficient number of points for each premium. The list of activities eligible for points, along with the amount of premium paid, can be found in the article pertaining to Nursing Practice and Leadership Premiums in your Collective Agreement (<https://www.nsnu.ca/contracts-bargaining>).

The NSNU recognizes the challenges the pandemic has imposed on members as you seek out educational opportunities to earn points. We encourage members to contact the Nurses' Union if you have questions or if you require assistance. Our Education and Technology Officer, Chad O'Brien is eager to provide support and can be reached at chad.obrien@nsnu.ca.

The deadline to submit for leadership and practice premiums is October 31 of each year.

Nurses propose innovative solutions to protect patient care and address nursing shortages

In early June, Canada's nurses – leaders from each province, including Janet Hazelton - wrapped up a national summit on the staffing crisis facing nurses, with an agreement to push federal and provincial governments to support a series of nurse-developed proposals. These proposals would begin solving the dire staffing shortages now plaguing health care systems across the country – and driving so many nurses out of the profession.

"This crisis impacts all of us, nurses and the people they care for, in every community across Canada," said Linda Silas, President of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. "Canada's nurses are ready to work urgently with governments on lasting solutions so patients can get the care they deserve – and nurses can work in healthy workplaces, free of violence."



The frontline nurses' groups agreed to a plan that would help alleviate the strain on the health care system through better retention of nurses now working in the public system, innovative ideas to return departing nurses back into the profession, and new measures to recruit and train the next generation of nurses

- **Solutions start with the three Rs: retention, return and recruitment.** This means funding for proven programs backed by firm timelines and real accountability – to keep experienced nurses in their jobs, bring nurses back to the public sector, and recruit nurses where they are needed most.
- **To lower nurse-patient ratios, address workloads and improve care,** we need increased investments in more nursing seats, bridging programs, new mentorship initiatives, support for transitioning internationally educated nurses (IENs), public long-term care, and creating attractive full-time nurse positions.
- **A national health workforce body to improve decision-making** with better data alongside ongoing pan-Canadian coordination, backed by the tools and investments needed to support health workforce planning in all our communities.
- **Provide immediate and ongoing support for nurses' mental health programs.**

"Solutions start with respecting and listening to nurses – because preserving our health care system depends on it. We are looking to all levels of government to now get behind a plan that meets the needs of Canada's aging population and gives nurses the support and resources they need to do their jobs effectively. A plan backed by real accountability and sufficient long-term funding," concluded Silas. "Our cherished public health care system hangs in the balance. Now, it's time for governments to step up and support nurses, just like nurses have been stepping up to support Canadians for so long."

The CFNU is Canada's largest nurses' organization, representing Canada's frontline nurses in every sector of health care – from home care, LTC, community and acute care, including nursing students – and advocating on key health priorities and federal engagement in the future of public health care.

EASING THE PATH FOR LPNS TO BECOME RNS

On June 7th, government announced they were prepared to make the path from LPN designation to becoming a Registered Nurse easier and more accessible. More licensed practical nurses can now further their education to become RNs more quickly in Nova Scotia.

Government announced that eligibility criteria is being expanded to allow more LPNs to qualify for bachelor of science, nursing (BScN) programs at Cape Breton University (CBU) and St. Francis Xavier University (St. FX).

"Nurses are needed in so many communities across the province," said Health and Wellness Minister Michelle Thompson. "Interest in nursing as a profession - and these programs at CBU and St. FX in particular - has seen a real increase over the last few years and we're excited more people will be able to take advantage of them."

Eligibility is being expanded to include LPN graduates from out-of-province programs, as well as graduates from Nova Scotia

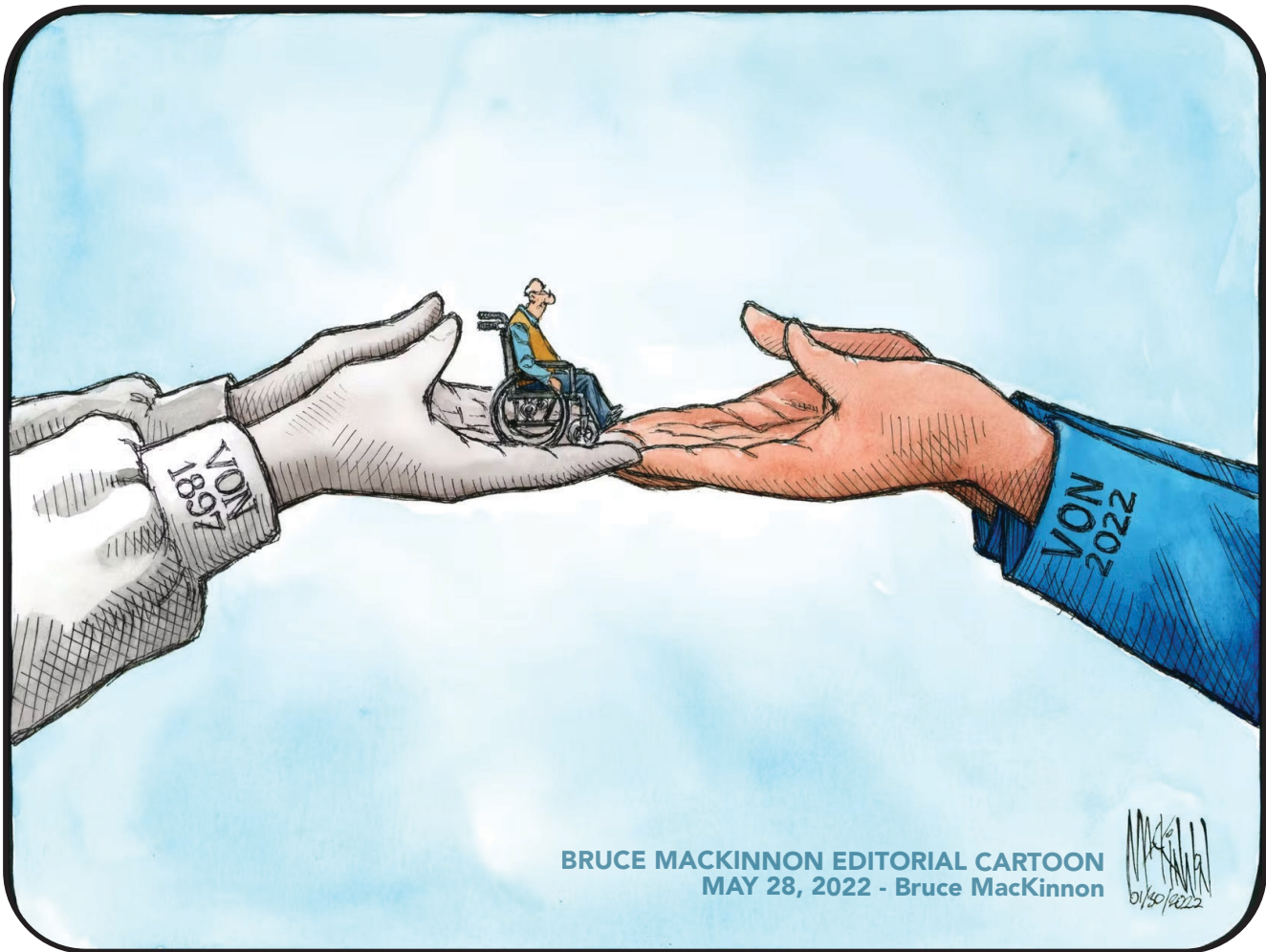
Community College (NSCC) from before 2008. Previously, only NSCC graduates from 2008 or later were eligible.

Sue Smith, CEO and Registrar, Nova Scotia College of Nursing says every nurse is vital to our health system; expanding eligibility criteria for education to make it easier for LPNs wanting to become RNs will benefit everyone - the LPNs, the nursing profession, the health system and all Nova Scotians.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton says that the contributions LPNs make to our overall healthcare system are invaluable, and that enabling LPNs to more easily expand their scope and learning is recognition and appreciation of those contributions.

Changes take effect for students beginning their studies in the 2022-23 academic year. It is estimated that about 4,400 Nova Scotia LPNs could now be eligible.





BRUCE MACKINNON EDITORIAL CARTOON
MAY 28, 2022 - Bruce MacKinnon



125 YEARS

Leading the future of home and community care

From **May 22 to 28**, the **Victorian Order of Nurses** celebrated another exciting VON Week, acknowledging their dedicated staff.

A time to celebrate the innovative and creative spirit of VON and their **125-year legacy** of providing home and community care in Canada.

There were many public displays, flag raisings, proclamations and landmarks illuminated blue in honour of their teams. Further, colleagues recognized one another, recorded team thank you videos, and after two years of celebrating virtually, some safely gathered in person to observe VON Week and VON's 125th anniversary – including many NSNU VON locals!



Given the many challenges in our healthcare system, home care services are now more critical than ever to the health and well-being of our communities. VON is well positioned as a long-time leader in the sector. They have the experience and expertise to be a key part of health-care revitalization in Nova Scotia and to help set an example for other provinces in Canada.

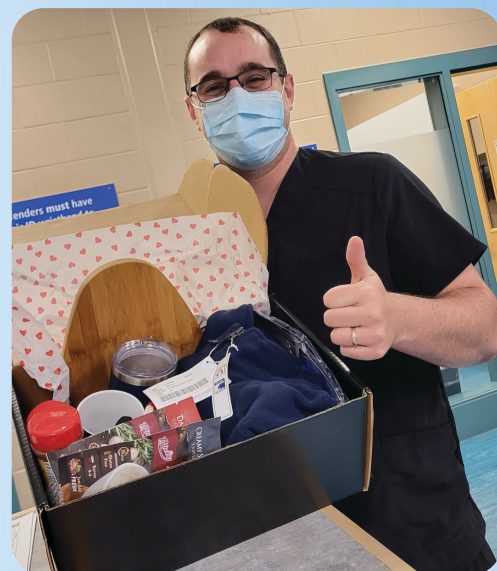
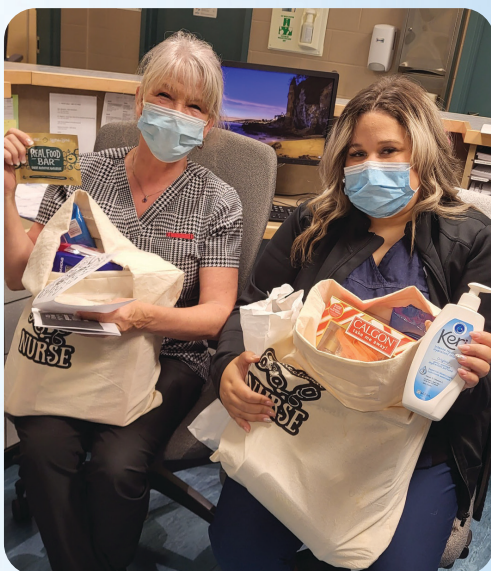
The NSNU VON Corrections Local at NNSCF had a full week of fun and surprises in store for their members. Home-made treats, special gift bags, daily prize draws and food galore. They also gifted items to all their coworkers in community! The local presented each member with gift cards from PetroCan, Sobeys and Tim's along with a white carnation.

They enjoyed a fantastic week full of laughter and joy after a grueling two years dealing with COVID.

We thank this local for sharing their photos and their positivity with us.

NSNU salutes our nurses in community care for their compassion, courage and caring. You brave the wintery roads, the solitude of home-care nursing, and other challenges that come with the job.

We are proud to represent our hard working and dedicated VON members, each and every day.



escape



presented by  Nova Scotia Nurses Union



WHAT'S YOUR ESCAPE? *Summer Photo Contest 2022*

Nurses are very good multi-taskers, brimming with talent and imagination. Nurses are always on the go!

That's why the Summer Photo Contest 2022 promises to be even more exciting and visually interesting this year.

We're asking NSNU members to once again share their pastimes - how you creatively unwind and relax when you're off-the-clock. From cooking, paddling, gardening, high flying acrobatics, and relaxing with your kids, you all find ways to escape.

On September 21st, the NSNU will give away a \$500 Visa gift card to one lucky member. To enter the draw, send a photo of yourself engaged in your favourite pastime to nsnu.office@nsnu.ca.

One entry per member, and you must appear in the photo. The winner will be selected in a random draw.

In mid September, visit nsnu.ca/escape to see the entries.

**Contest closes
September 20th.**





7 SURVIVAL TIPS FOR SUMMER '22

- 1 RECONNECT WITH YOUR SCHOOL MATES**
Renew old friendships, remember the good old days and make the time to catch up
- 2 DON'T APOLOGIZE**
Most people don't really understand what nurses go through regularly at work. No matter how you choose to de-stress and enjoy your time off, make no apologies for living your life
- 3 MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BREAKS**
Getting a break isn't always guaranteed but when you get the chance, do something you love to make those minutes count
- 4 TACKLE THAT NEW HOBBY YOU'VE BEEN MEANING TO TRY**
Focusing on something you're interested in can give you a healthy outlet to reduce stress and keep your mind off work-related concerns
- 5 BE KIND TO YOURSELF**
Declutter your work bag (yikes! things can really get lost in there), treat yourself to some new compression socks, stock up on your favourite snacks. Taking the time to do these simple things for yourself can make all the difference
- 6 FOLLOW A YOGA CLASS ON YOUTUBE**
Practices that quiet the mind, focus breathing and regulate breathing can help reduce stress
- 7 SPOIL YOURSELF**
If you're unable to take the time for long vacation – a day at the spa, splurging on those new work shoes, or a night at your favourite restaurant can go a long way! Apply a face mask or spend the day watching your favourite series, soak up every minute of your self-care time

NYC ♥ NURSES



From the What's NU? editor's desk

On a recent trip to New York City, I quickly noticed colourful banners in recognition of their healthcare heroes, skyscrapers adorned with massive billboards honouring nurses, COVID testing kiosks on street corners where nurses actively solicit passersby to get tested, and verbal shout-outs to nurses, still superstars to many who occupy that iconic city. In short, the nurse presence in NYC was as striking as the Empire State Building.

Like Italy, NYC was one of the hardest hit in the early days of the pandemic. You may recall the images from NYC ICUs where video production crews, adorned in full PPE like the healthcare workers they were documenting, recounted heart-wrenching stories about COVID patients, New Yorkers desperate for lifesaving treatments, and teams of care providers who were frantically working around the clock to combat the deadly virus that had taken hold of their city.

News channels reported eerily empty streets where bustling yellow cabs, tour buses and other brave motorists once crowded the streets and thoroughfares. Where rush-hour is normally an all-day occurrence and commuter chaos ruled, there was stillness. Times Square, a tourist destination known for its eccentric mayhem, elbow-to-elbow pedestrian traffic, and classic NYC-style commercialism, complete with 3D video billboards and blinding neon lights, was now a dimmed and vacant lot from 42nd to 47th Street.

Things are pretty much back to "normal" in NYC. The sidewalks are brimming with people. The honking of car horns is like an urban anthem, only less melodic. Street vendors are back in the hustle and bustle business, and picture-taking visitors from around the globe are in full force, always glancing up, looking every bit like a Big Apple explorer.

On the surface, there's not much evidence to remind visitors and locals that less than two years prior the city was under siege from an unyielding disease. What does stand out is the public's ongoing gratitude for frontline and essential workers who helped keep the City That Never Sleeps, from falling deeply into a proverbial coma.

Retail workers ask customers if they're military, a teacher or a healthcare worker as they checkout their purchases. Discounts for frontline workers is their way of thanking them for their service during the pandemic. Whether



you are shopping or dining out, there's a good chance you'll be offered a rebate if you're an essential worker.

Gone are the pot bangers and other signs of gratitude that prevailed in 2020, but the appreciation for nurses and others lingers on. At least for an onlooker. Like other regions of the world, the nursing struggle in New York is daunting.

Earlier this year, the New York State Nurses Association (NY State equivalent to NSNU) asked legislators to - Show Love to Nurses and our Patients: Nurses Lobby State Legislators on Pandemic Priorities this Valentine's Day.

The nurses outlined a plan to address healthcare disparities and quality care through fair funding and safe staffing. Clearly, nurses in that state face the same challenges on the job as their Nova Scotia counterparts, regardless of the love NYC outwardly displays.

New York State nurses spent February 14th in virtual lobby visits with New York State legislators, imploring them to respond to the nursing crisis. Like NSNU, they asked government to take bold action to address healthcare problems, and ensure resources address longstanding healthcare disparities in staffing and patient care.

New York State nurses spent February 14th in virtual lobby visits with New York State legislators, imploring them to respond to the nursing crisis. Like NSNU, they asked government to take bold action to address healthcare problems, and ensure resources address longstanding healthcare disparities in staffing and patient care.

Their messages have a familiar ring. Like our members, NY nurses have been at the breaking point for far too long. They too are asking for relief, respect, and resources to retain nurses and provide quality care to every patient – insured and uninsured alike.

They too are urging legislators to do more to expand the workforce through increased recruitment efforts, and improve working conditions.

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workforce through increased recruitment efforts, and improve working conditions.

In their view, much like NSNU's position, the nursing shortage is really a shortage of nurses willing to work in declining conditions, where they feel unprotected, disrespected, and unable to provide the quality care patients deserve because of chronic understaffing.

Like Nova Scotians, New Yorkers appear to love nurses. Like everything in life, actions speak louder than words and colourful signs! Our governments, both in Canada and stateside, need to act quickly to preserve our nursing resources.

Billboards, accolades and discounts are great but putting your money where your mouth is and committing to meaningful and lasting improvements is always better.

LOOKING AHEAD » FALL PREVIEW

EDUCATION DAY

 **October 14, 2022**

Make plans to attend our upcoming NSNU Education Day in October. In an effort to reflect the deeply challenging and extremely rewarding realities of the nursing profession, the theme of the event is Resilience: from Hurting to Healing. [Find details on pg 13.](#)

NSNU EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

 **Ongoing**

The NSNU believes that educating and informing our members is the best way to defend working conditions, enhance members' understanding of their rights at work and develop leadership skills. Our education staff is committed to delivering quality education sessions to NSNU members, including Education Days, Eastern Labour Schools and local workshops.

To look at our selection of workshops and courses - from social media to memory care and promoting residents' rights - check out the MyNSNU app. As always, keep an eye out for your Campaigner e-memos.

NSNU BOARD OF DIRECTORS FALL MEETINGS

 **Ongoing**

The NSNU Board of Directors holds meetings throughout the year to discuss current issues and to work on Union business. You can find the dates for these meetings by checking the calendar on nsnu.ca.

Members have the right to propose topics of discussion for the Board and attend meetings. If there is a particular issue you would like to be brought to attention, please email nsnu.office@nsnu.ca at least one month in advance of the meeting.

MEETINGS OF NSNU COUNTERPARTS

Like the NSNU, our fellow nurse unions across the country hold annual or biennial meetings of their membership to conduct business, elect leadership, discuss issues pertaining to nurses in their home provinces, debate and vote on resolutions.

Upcoming meetings of our counterparts will take place on the following dates:

 **United Nurses of Alberta Annual General Meeting**
October 18-20, 2022

 **New Brunswick Nurses' Union Annual General Meeting**
October 24-27, 2022

 **Registered Nurses Union of Newfoundland and Labrador Biennial Convention**
October 24-28, 2022

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Application deadline is **December 31** for travel the following year.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Johnson Insurance is proud to offer 50 scholarships, valued at \$1000 each, to eligible students completing high school in 2022 and starting post-secondary education in the fall of 2022.

Johnson Insurance has awarded over 1500 scholarships valued at more than \$1 million to support young Canadians across Canada in pursuit of their post-secondary education.



Open: April 28, 2022
Deadline: July 28, 2022



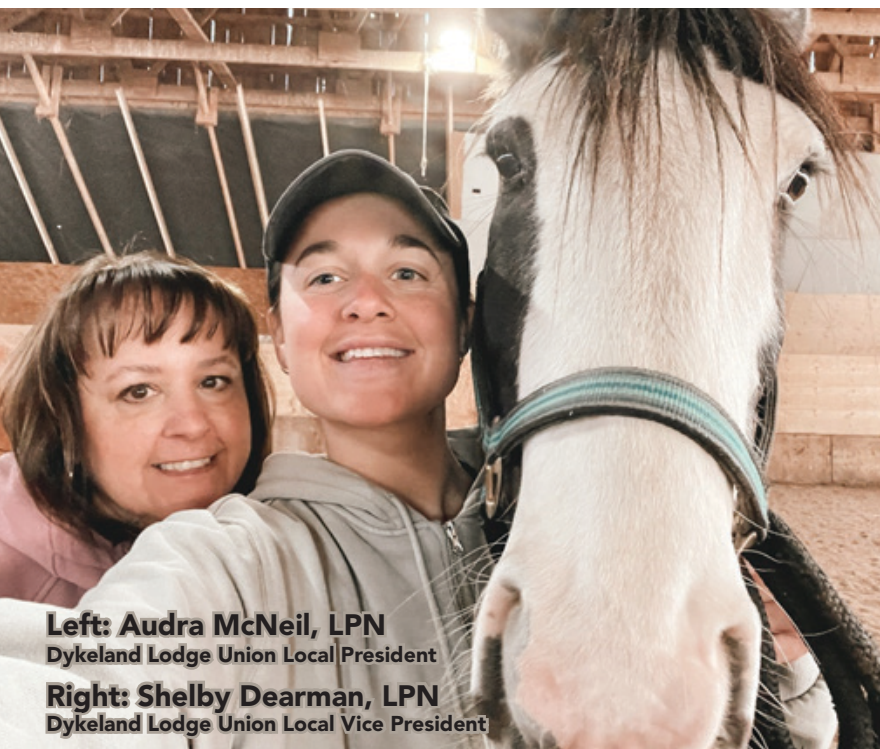
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johnson.ca/scholarship
scholarshipfund@johnson.ca



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AT NSNU
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RESPECT
PRIDE
YEAR ROUND



Left: Audra McNeil, LPN
Dykeland Lodge Union Local President

Right: Shelby Dearman, LPN
Dykeland Lodge Union Local Vice President

Nursing Education: Building Resiliency & Empowering Nurses

Jennifer Kirk, a nurse at Valley Regional Hospital, of Dragonfly Meadows Farms located in Grand Pre, NS holds workshops incorporating equine therapy in teaching and guiding nurses about workplace resiliency and boundaries.

This one-day workshop is small, intimate and uses a very unique approach to nursing education. The need for work-life balance is extremely important for health care workers to manage stress and reduce burnout.

This workshops helps nurses explore their coping strategies and acknowledge the struggles we have as empaths working in a field full of high emotions.



For more information, or to sign up:

www.dragonflymeadows.ca/for-nurses



Nurses

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