

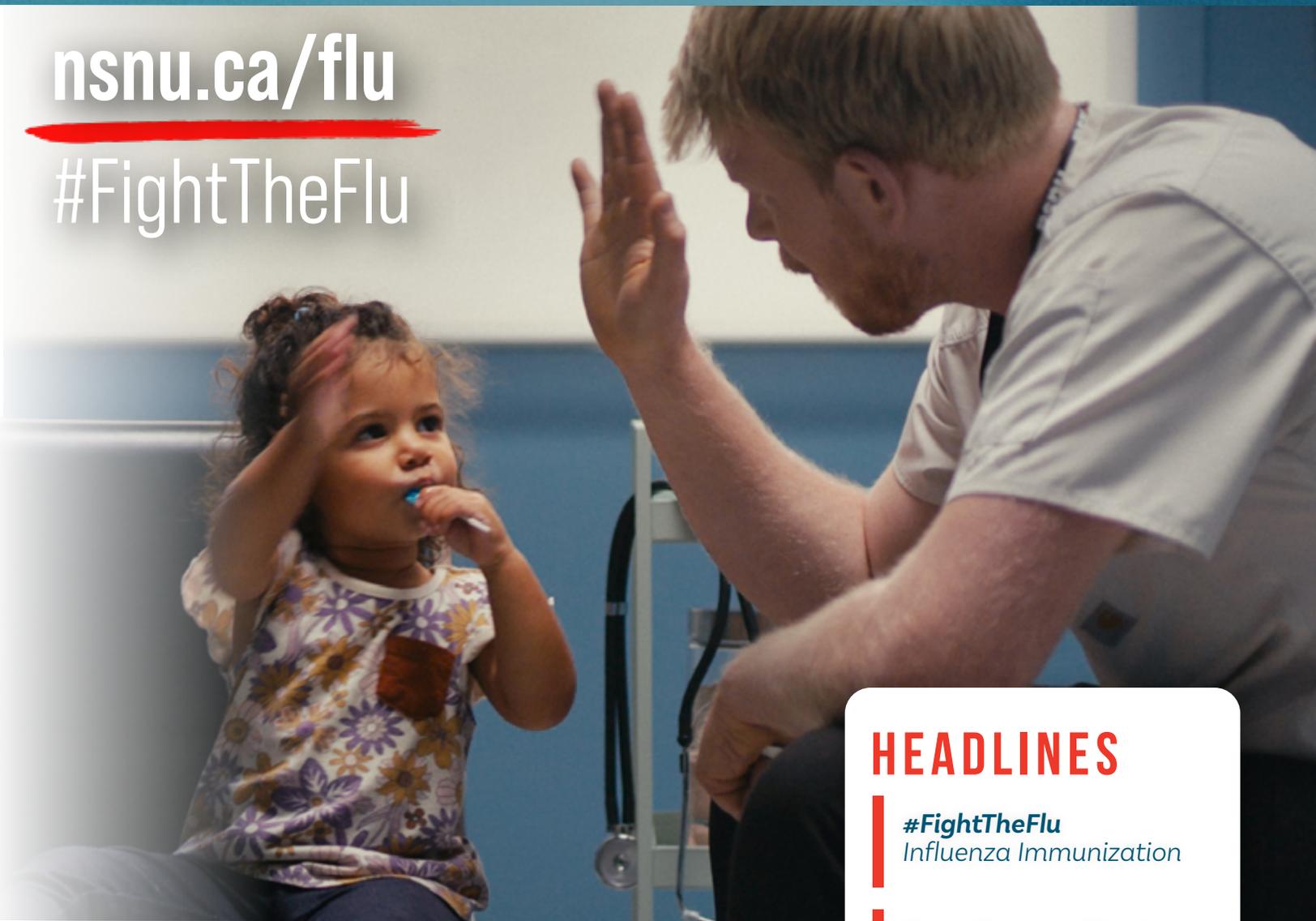
what's nu?

October - November 2023

Nova Scotia
**Nurses
Union**

nsnu.ca/flu

#FightTheFlu



Show a little **muscle** in
the **fight** against the **flu**

HEADLINES

#FightTheFlu

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Cross Country Check-In

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SOCIAL MEDIA

-  Nova Scotia Nurses' Union
-  @NS_Nurses
-  @NSNursesU
-  NSNursesUnion

MYNSNU APP

-  Available in Apple App & Google Play stores
OR: nsnu.itacit.com

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September Corrections

Corrections to the September 2023 edition of *What's Nu?*:

On page 13: A spacing error resulted in Jamie Stewart's CFNU feature being cut short. [The final paragraph should read:](#)

"You also need to need to look after making sure we get our days off, making sure we can get away, making sure our benefits are great and that we are looked after, too," he says. "We can only look after people for so long and then there's nothing left for us to give to ourselves."

On page 20: In the photo of NSNU Member Michelle Lowe with Premier Houston and MLA Lohnes, [the caption should read:](#)

Susan Corkum-Greek, MLA, not Suzanne Lohnes, MLA.

These corrections have been made in the digital copy of our newsletter, available online at nsnu.ca/resources/newsletters

Staying in Touch

To add or change any member information, the NSNU asks that you **fill out the following form**, which can be found by following the QR code or the link below:

forms.office.com/r/paX34P4cmY

After submitting the form, please allow at least 24 hours, during business days, for your information to be updated.



Are you paying the correct 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**.

PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK

Much Work to Do



JANET HAZELTON
BScN RN, MPA

This past summer, nurses working at the IWK and with Nova Scotia Health achieved an historical feat, ratifying one of the most responsive and innovative collective agreements I have witnessed in my 40-year nursing career.

The substantial salary increases aside, other improvements to this contract should benefit more than one party to the agreement. For 27 days, the employers and the unions discussed issues affecting nurses in this province, issues that also impact employers and those receiving care.

This process was unlike any other I'd experienced. At times, bargaining can be adversarial, each side taking a hard stance on a matter. That is the normal course of action. However, this last round was different, with both sides working towards meaningful, lasting, and positive change.

At the time the agreement was accepted, our Minister of Health and Wellness, Michelle Thompson said, "I feel that our part of the table wanted to hear, and we were willing to work together, and I feel that the nursing side of the table felt the same."

There's language in the new contract to limit overtime and make sure shifts are properly staffed. Within six months of the contract being signed employers are expected to provide a profile of all units and the current number of nurses working on each shift as an agreed upon starting point.

The employers and the unions (NSNU, NSGEU, CUPE, Unifor) will develop a framework that determines the appropriate number of nurses for each unit across the province. The goal is to ensure a guaranteed level of nursing staff. Contract improvements like this will improve work-life for nurses and patient outcomes.

But change can be slow, and frustrating. Nurses may not be feeling the benefits of this agreement yet, but there's a different and welcomed mindset. I am hopeful that by working together with government representatives and our employers, instead of at odds, the nursing profession will prosper.

We still have a long way to go in Nova Scotia - there are no shortcuts when it comes to fixing a system that's long been neglected. That said, many of our counterparts face similar or worse challenges.

In mid-October, the president of United Nurses of Alberta, Heather Smith told the approximately 950 Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses, staff and observers assembled for their AGM that solving Alberta's nurse shortage "is going to require treating nurses and other health care workers with respect."

UNA is calling for respect and stability in Alberta where the provincial government is currently intent on increasing privatization while enacting change without consultation.



In late October, I attended a rally in New Brunswick, part of NBNU's annual general meeting. Their president, Paula Doucet is showing incredible leadership as they struggle to convince government to address issues and invest in healthcare to improve retention and show respect for their hardworking nurses.

President Doucet called her members fearless and unapologetic as they faced down never-ending challenges.

In Quebec, FIQ (Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec) just took a strike vote. Those healthcare workers, including Quebec's nurses, have a strong message to the government. They voted 95% in favor of rolling out a strike. This mandate is a reminder that their poor working conditions have direct consequences on the accessibility and safety of care!

In Saskatchewan, nurses braved the early snow and cold on October 25th to tell their Premier that they've had enough. Their message: *We are Broken, but not beyond repair!*

Hundreds of Saskatchewan's registered nurses, nursing students and members of the public attended a rally in Regina. The rally was in response to inadequate action on nursing shortages that continue to grow unabated and the startling findings of a recent survey of more than 1,600 of the province's registered nurses. The survey revealed a health care

system riddled with patient safety concerns and declining quality of care.

And in Ontario, 50 public health nurses who work at Hastings and Prince Edward had to strike for almost two months before reaching a tentative agreement with their employer on September 30th.

On October 30th, the Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) launched a campaign calling foul on the Ford Conservative government's disastrous health-care policies in a new advertising campaign. It focusses on staffing, privatization, and underfunding, urging the public to send a message to decision-makers through the campaign website: nursestalktruth.ca.

Nova Scotia is not without problems. NSNU is listening to members and will be asking what, if anything, has improved in the wake of the new collective agreement. We will be looking for frontline feedback on work-life balance, security, overtime, violence in the workplace, travel nursing, burnout, access to time off and other concerns.

Advocacy on behalf of nurses is ongoing – *there's more work to do* to ensure our members are practicing in safe and healthy environments. Your Board of Directors wants to keep the conversation going so that we can retain, recruit, and respect all nurses.

Flu Season, *Again*

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

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

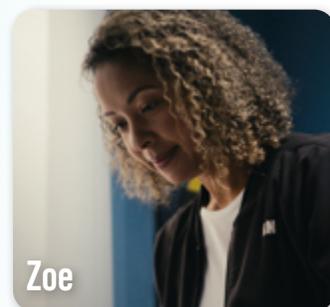
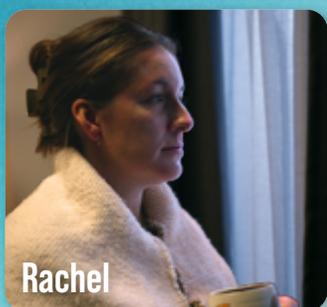
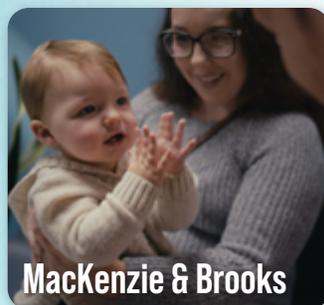
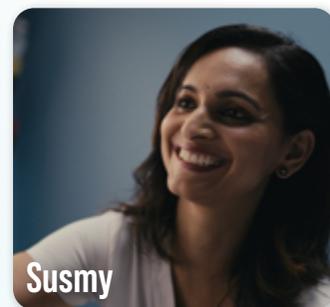
NSNU knows nurses don't need to be reminded about the importance of immunization or the risks getting the flu can present for certain populations - seniors, children, those who are pregnant and those who are immunocompromised. Nurses know.

Each year, NSNU embarks on an Influenza Immunization campaign to educate the public so that health practitioners can continue to safely do their jobs, and people stay healthier.

Once again, we're hoping that Nova Scotians will do their part to alleviate the pressures healthcare workers face every day.

In 2023/2024, we're asking Nova Scotians to **show a little muscle** in the **fight against the flu!**

Thank you to the nurses and other natural talents who helped NSNU spread the word via videos and social posts.



Learn more at nsnu.ca/flu



The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union as a *Trusted Platform* for Nova Scotians

As healthcare professionals, nurses have a wealth of knowledge and experience when it comes to health-related topics, and we understand that much of the information we share is likely already familiar to you. You may have seen a post on our website or Facebook page and thought, “Nurses **know** this.”

While some of our communications, such as e-memos and newsletters, are sent directly to members, our more public-facing platforms, like our website and social media pages, are available to all Nova Scotians.

Because we believe that Nova Scotians look to the Nurses' Union as a trusted source for health advice and reliable information, our goal is to use these public platforms to provide accurate and up-to-date information to help ensure the safety and well-being of our communities, and reduce unnecessary strain on our healthcare system.

Several campaigns launched by NSNU throughout the year, such as our annual Influenza Immunization campaign, aim to educate the average Nova Scotian - equipping them with some of the knowledge that is so instinctive to nurses. By participating in and sharing these campaigns, you can help increase awareness about essential health-related topics and encourage Nova Scotians to take the recommended measures.

We believe that by working together, we can make an impact on the healthcare system and improve health outcomes. We value your expertise and encourage you to share your knowledge and experience with us.

Together, we can continue to be a trusted source of healthcare information for the community.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The NSNU is excited to present the 47th Annual General Meeting in May 2024.

Once again, we will gather at the **Best Western Glengarry Hotel** in Truro to host our AGM and Education Day events - another great series of meetings as we conduct business, develop strategies, make important decisions for the coming year, and inform members about past, present, and future activities.



highlights & deadlines

registration

- » **Online registration opens February 28 and closes March 28.** One representative from each local is responsible for registering all participants (delegates and observers) who will be attending. Links to registration forms will be available on the Member's Only section of the NSNU website in the new year.
- » **For those attending only the Education Day on May 9th, there will be a separate online registration form** to be completed by the individual attending. Payment of \$50 will be required to complete your online registration.

resolutions

- » Resolutions must be submitted by **February 22.**
- » Details on **how to write a resolution** will be available on the nsnu.ca/AGM 2024 webpage to be launched in late **December 2023.** Please send your resolutions to **debbie.grady@nsnu.ca.**

scholarships

- » Information on **Scholarship Applications** will be forthcoming. Watch for Campaigner e-memos for more details. The successful recipients will be **announced at the AGM on May 8th.**

events, draws & donations

- » The **hospitality event** will take place the evening of **Tuesday, May 7.** The location is to be determined.
- » Once again, the NSNU will be hosting a **charitable Auction.** Stay tuned for details in our upcoming newsletter.
- » **Each local is asked to donate an item to the charity fundraiser (Auction).** 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.
- » We will be collecting **dignity items** for the Truro Food Bank. Please help us fulfill a period promise on **Tampon Tuesday, May 7th.**

available for purchase

- » **Keltic Clothing** will be on site selling uniforms and accessories.
- » The NSNU will be selling an **assortment of merchandise,** perfect for sharing with members during National Nursing Week, which takes place the week after the AGM. **We now accept cash, credit, and debit.**

tentative schedule

sunday, may 5th

Board of Directors Meeting

monday, may 6th

Component & Regional Meetings

tuesday, may 7th

8:30 am - 4:30 pm **AGM Business**
6:30 pm - 11:30 pm **Hospitality Event**

wednesday, may 8th

8:30 am - 3:30 pm **AGM Business**
6:30 pm - 12:00 am **Banquet & Dance**

thursday, may 9th

8:30 am - 4:30 pm **Education Day**

denim & diamonds

country glitz dance 'n hoedown!

The theme for the **May 8th** Banquet and Dance is **Denim and Diamonds Country Glitz Dance 'N Hoedown!** It's a mouthful but promises to be an evening of good home cookin', country tunes, square and line dancing!

Start planning your country belle and beau costumes before all the gingham, denim, and cowboy hats get scooped up!



More information will be featured in the **January 2024** issue of *What's NU?*, emailed in Campaigner e-memos to members and local executives, and posted online at nsnu.ca/AGM in the coming weeks and months.





Nurses urge premiers to stay focused on solving nation-wide nursing shortage

In early November, Halifax hosted The Council of the Federation bringing together Canada's premiers. The premiers were united in their commitment to take action to improve health services, tackle housing issues and strengthen strategic infrastructure.

Healthcare was a top priority with the premiers holding a dedicated summit focused on health innovation at the Nova Scotia Health Innovation Hub. They expressed their deep appreciation for the work and dedication of front-line healthcare workers and discussed actions being taken across the care continuum, including addressing wait times and access to primary care, mental health and substance use services, and recruiting and retaining healthcare professionals.

In a November 6th news release, Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) warned the premiers not to lose sight of just how critically important tackling the nationwide nursing shortage is to bringing Canada out of this health care crisis. Silas underscored the need for premiers to finalize their action plans, detailing the initiatives they will implement in support of nurses as part of the bilateral agreements provinces and territories

signed with the federal government earlier this year.

"While it is positive that premiers discussed best practices across the provinces and territories, we must move from conversations to concrete action," said Silas. "Nurses have repeatedly shared leading retention, return and recruitment initiatives with premiers and health ministers that can be readily acted upon. We need to see less talk and more action that matches the urgency of the crisis facing our country."

Amidst ballooning spending on for-profit nursing agencies to fill staffing needs, Canada's nurses unions applauded the premiers for working toward a unified approach to limit the use of costly for-profit nursing agencies.

Silas emphasized the importance of collaboration in solving the nursing shortage in Canada - and globally. Silas said internationally educated nurses should be a part of a sustainable recruitment process for Canada, where IENs account for 64% of the increase in registered nurses in 2022, up from 19% in 2021. This increase in IENs in Canada underscores the importance of ethical recruitment and fair treatment as critical to sustainability at home and across the world.



Global Nurses United

We Learn from Each Other

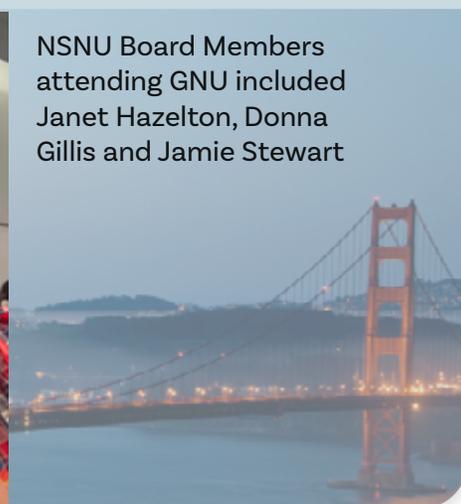
Global Nurses United (GNU) celebrated a successful meeting in San Francisco in October, marking the 10th year since its inception. In total, more than 250 nurses from over thirty countries across six continents gathered to discuss the ongoing impacts the Covid-19 pandemic has had in their countries, as well as their current and future concerns about the pervasive understaffing in hospitals, clinics and other facilities around the world, as well as the climate crisis.

“This was a landmark meeting for our international federation of nurses and health care worker unions,” said National Nurses United president Zenei Triunfo-Cortez, RN, who presided over the meeting. “Nurses’ union leaders from all around the world shared how their members and unions have fought to

protect patient care throughout this pandemic and discussed the lessons we’ve learned about responses to the climate disasters already taking place in many member countries.”

Several new member unions joined GNU during the pandemic, a sure sign that, in the hardest of times, nurses worldwide understand the importance of international unity and solidarity in tackling the issues facing our patients, our communities, and the entire world. For all our differences, we are very much alike.

Global Nurses United is the premier federation of international nurses’ unions operating worldwide. Proudly participating in the event were nurse leaders from 38 member unions in 35 countries, including CFNU president Linda Silas and NSNU president Janet Hazelton.



NSNU Board Members attending GNU included Janet Hazelton, Donna Gillis and Jamie Stewart



Canada's Nurses Unions

Bring Solutions to Nurse Staffing Shortage to Health Ministers

In mid-October the CFNU was on the ground in PEI as Canada's health ministers gathered in Charlottetown for critical meetings around the future of our public health care systems.

Nurse union leaders shared their views on the state of nursing and healthcare in their provinces with federal Health Minister Mark Holland and raised concerns about privatization and skyrocketing use of expensive private nursing agencies.

"It's encouraging that ministers heard and understood nurses' concerns and are committed to addressing workplace challenges and creating environments where nurses and patients can thrive," said Linda Silas, CFNU president.

Phasing out private nursing agencies and ensuring safe hours of work were the focus of policy briefing between Canada's union nurses and federal, provincial and territorial health ministers.

"Relying on private nurse agencies to fill ongoing staffing needs is both unsustainable and an irresponsible use of taxpayer's money," said Silas.

As the nursing shortage continues to grow unabated, health care employers across the country have increased their reliance on private nursing agencies – at a high cost to taxpayers and our public health care system:

- » Newfoundland and Labrador spent **\$100 million** on private nurse agencies in 2022.
- » Ontario spent **\$174 million** on private nurse agencies in 2022, four times more than the year before.
- » British Columbia spent **\$146 million** between 2019 and 2023, compared to \$8.7 million in years prior.

Years of persistent underfunding and the rising pressures of COVID-19 have created untenable working conditions, fueling the exodus of nurses from the health care system. Now, four in 10 nurses are considering leaving their workplace, with seven in 10 citing insufficient staffing levels and high workloads as the top reasons in a recent CFNU survey.

"Overwhelmed ERs, delayed surgeries, long wait times and dwindling access to care in rural communities have become the norm. The effects of understaffing are severe and far-reaching," explained Silas. "In the absence of staff to replace nurses when their shifts end, 24-hour shifts are becoming more and more common. It's not safe for nurses, and it's certainly not safe for patients."

The CFNU is calling on provinces and territories to use the recent increase to the Canada Health Transfer to bolster the nursing workforce by investing in strong retention initiatives, enabling a robust recovery of the country's health care systems.

Read more at nurseunions.ca

CFNU ENCOURAGED BY HEALTH MINISTERS
COMMITMENT TO RETAIN & SUPPORT NURSES



SCAN QR CODE
WITH PHONE CAMERA

Standing Committee on Health

Community Care

In a November 14th appearance before the Nova Scotia Legislature's Standing Committee on Health, NSNU President Janet Hazelton shed light on the pressing issues faced by community care nurses in the province. Emphasizing the vital role these professionals play in delivering healthcare in the heart of Nova Scotian communities, her testimony highlighted paramount concerns from a recent union survey.

Community care nurses grapple with heavy case-loads and frequent overtime, impacting their work-life satisfaction. President Hazelton echoed their plea for more predictable hours, reduced evening shifts, and safer working conditions, emphasizing the need for a balance that ensures quality care without compromising well-being.

Issues surrounding staffing levels, scheduling practices, and the use of on-call shifts are pervasive. Community care nurses call for improved scheduling practices, self or team scheduling, and equitable distribution of work, reflecting a desire for a more supportive and balanced work environment.

The challenges of navigating the interface between continuing care and community care were discussed. Red tape can hinder nurses from exercising professional judgment, and they seek more autonomy to rectify this. Concerns were raised about under-resourced continuing care leading to delays and incomplete information,

impacting the quality of care provided.

Safety concerns took center stage in President Hazelton's testimony, particularly during evening and night shifts when nurses work alone in unpredictable home environments. The appeal for more support, access to resources, and improved communication on safety concerns and protocols underscores the need to enhance the well-being and security of community care nurses.

In her closing statement, the NSNU President expressed a sincere commitment to collaborative efforts with stakeholders like the VON, government, and continuing care, to address these concerns. The union aims to ensure community care nurses can continue providing exceptional care to Nova Scotians and welcomes a productive dialogue for positive change.

Witnesses presenting before the Committee included:

Nova Scotia Nurses' Union - Janet Hazelton

Victorian Order of Nurses Canada - Jeff Densmore, Regional Executive Director, Central and Western Zones and Carol Curley, Regional Executive Director, North and Eastern Zones

Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care - Tracey Barbrick, Deputy Minister

Canadian Union of Public Employees - Nan McFadgen, President - Nova Scotia



Standing Committees of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

On September 21st, the AGM Operations and Nominations Committee met to begin planning for the 2024 AGM.

Every two years, the Committee is tasked with choosing (via blind selection) self-nominated members to sit on the various Committees of the Union. The Chair, Donna Gillis, and members at large, Lisa Creed and Brooke MacKinnon, selected the members at large and alternates for the remaining Standing Committees of the Board.

Those Committees are now complete and will serve until May 2025.

AGM Committee

Chair: **Donna Gillis**
Members at Large: **Brooke MacKinnon** and **Lisa Creed**
Alternate: **Amy Campbell**

Constitution Committee

Chair: **Anne Boutilier**
Members at Large: **Vicki Royles** and **Jayne Fryday**
Alternate: **Joanne Boutilier**

Education Committee

Chair: **Tracy d'Entremont**
Members at Large: **Robert Burrows** and **Misty Hynes**
Alternate: **Yolanda Baker**

Finance Committee

Chair: **Jamie Stewart**
Members at Large: **Jessica Gillis** and **Brenda Mingo**
Alternate: **Gerri Oakley**

Personnel Committee

Chair: **Natalie Nymark**
Committee Members: **Janet Hazelton**,
Donna Gillis and **Jamie Stewart**

Provincial Negotiating Teams for LTC & Community Care

The Provincial Negotiating Teams for Long Term Care & Community Care have been finalized. They are as follows:

Janet Hazelton **Chris Albrecht**
NSNU President NSNU Executive Director, Chief Negotiator

Community Care PNC Member Representatives

Vice-President Community Care: **Kim Williams**

Eastern: **Michelle Luker**
Northern: **Tammy Dupuis**
Western: **Tracy d'Entremont**
Central: **Tammy Jones**

Long Term Care PNC Member Representatives

Vice-President Long Term Care: **Glenda Sabine**

Eastern: **Michelle Swan**
Northern: **Cheryl Myers**
Western: **Kim Forsythe**
Central: **Audra McNeil**

Bargaining is underway.

The wage pattern established by acute care nurses will form the basis of NSNU's compensation proposals for long-term care and community care. Other changes to collective agreement language will also need to be negotiated to ensure the distinct characteristics of each sector are captured.

As per usual, the NSNU sought member input on issues to better inform and prioritize proposals for these rounds of bargaining. Follow-up comments may be directed to nsnu.bargaining@nsnu.ca.

The NSNU thanks our LTC and Community Care members for their patience and understanding during this process.

Who is at the Helm of CFNU?

Earlier this year, members unanimously supported bold advocates Linda Silas and Angela Preocanin as the leaders of the CFNU.

Linda Silas, who has been the president of the CFNU for the past 20 years, was acclaimed to her 11th two-year term at the biennial convention.

Angela Preocanin, first vice-president of the Ontario Nurses' Association, was acclaimed as Secretary-Treasurer of the CFNU. Preocanin, a registered nurse, has served in executive positions at ONA over the past two decades and has worked in thoracic surgery, head and neck, urgent care and home hemodialysis. She will continue in her current role as ONA's executive.



Angela Preocanin & Linda Silas

Pauline Worsfold, CFNU's Secretary-Treasurer of over 20 years, retired from the position in June. First elected as Secretary-Treasurer of the CFNU in 1999, Worsfold has been a lifelong nursing activist. In over 40 years of nursing, she has received many awards for her exemplary commitment and contributions to the community and her union. She continues to serve as chairperson for the Canadian Health Coalition.



Pauline Worsfold

RETIRED 2023

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Convenes for 52nd Biennial Convention

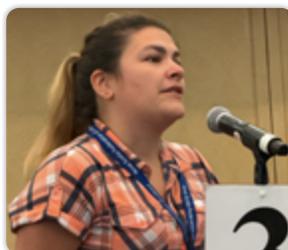


The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour recently held their 52nd Biennial Convention on the scenic Halifax waterfront from November 5th-7th.

The NSNU, a proud affiliate of the NSFL, was well-represented by several members, including President Janet Hazelton. Delegates from all sectors of labour listened to guest speakers, engaged in debate, presented important resolutions and more.

The Executive Council Elections were also held, and Danny Cavanaugh was re-elected to serve as President for his final term over the next two years. We are confident that Danny will continue to make Nova Scotia's labour movement proud. Melissa Marsman will also take on the role of Secretary-Treasurer, working alongside Danny to create a more equitable and prosperous future for Nova Scotian workers.

We extend our congratulations to the NSFL on a successful convention and commend them for their ongoing work.



what's nu? with members and others



L-R: Heather MacVay RN, Erica Donovan RN, Erin Maclsaac RN, Jessica MacLean RN, Jennifer Donovan RN, Mikayla Courtney RN, and Chelsea Blair RN.

Cape Breton Regional Hospital Dialysis Nurses attended a Renal Nurse Dine and Learn conference sponsored by Otsuka. Held at Flavor on the Water in downtown Sydney, topics covered included Mental Health and CKD, as well as hyperphosphatemia.

Erin Maclasc, Jessica MacLean and Erica Donovan just graduated from the Registered Nursing program at Cape Breton University and secured full time positions at the Cape Breton Regional Dialysis Unit. Congratulations!

CBRH Dialysis welcomes you to the team!



Members of NEB and retired CFNU Secretary-Treasurer, Pauline Worsfold

Along with the National Executive Board of CFNU, NSNU President Janet Hazelton was happy to join the Ontario Nurses' Association in Toronto for their Biennial Convention, celebrating 50 years of momentous gains for nurses and healthcare workers across Ontario.

Members kicked off the convention with a Human Rights and Equity Caucus, followed by important Union business and a recap of ONA's political actions over the past two years. They heard from keynote Hayley Wickenheister, who shared her journey from elite athlete to emergency medicine physician.

What's Nu with NSNU Staff?

NSNU Staff enjoyed a spooky lunchtime potluck to celebrate Halloween. Lots of spirit was on display, with prizes awarded to Morticia, Snow White and Taco Belle Patti!

After some laughs and festive treats, staffers were back to business as usual.

Pictured here are our Labour Relations Representatives, **L-R:** Farrel Huculak, Shannon Wark, Angela McKenna, Lilo Wessels, Wendy Johnson and Patti Humphries.





President Janet Hazelton and VON Nurse Erin Clarke visit Global News, Halifax



President Janet Hazelton and VON Nurse Erin Clarke visit CTV Atlantic in Halifax

As part of the NSNU’s annual Influenza Campaign, President Janet Hazelton and VON nurse Erin Clarke packed up an influenza kit and set out to spread important information regarding influenza immunization to Nova Scotians.

While visitng Global News and CTV Atlantic, Paul Brothers and Amanda Debison, respectively, rolled up their sleeves to #ShowALittleMuscle and recieve their flu shots from Erin.



President Janet Hazelton Meets with Students

On October 18th, NSNU President Janet Hazelton was invited to her hometown and alma mater to speak to fourth year nursing students at St. Francis Xavier University. It is always a pleasure for Janet to be able to meet nursing students and share her experiences, answer questions and make connections.

During these visits, Janet typically discusses professional practice concerns, emphasizes the importance of union involvement, and shares her knowledge of the realities of nursing along with other pressing issues.

She enjoys taking questions and creating a dialogue with future nurses, many of whom will become members of the NSNU when they graduate and begin their careers.

Thank you to St.F.X. for welcoming Janet into your classroom once again. She looks forward to the next visit.

Submissions?

If you’d like to share what you or your Local is up to with your fellow NSNU Members, send a photo and description to nsnu.office@nsnu.ca

a little good news

Six Once-Homeless Sisters to Become Nurses

The Lawrence sisters experienced homelessness for a decade after losing their family home. As challenging as that was, they didn't allow their circumstances to stop them from pursuing higher education and working towards their shared dream of becoming nurses.

All six siblings were homeschooled, then went on to college where they graduated with Bachelor Degrees in Public Health. They now plan to enroll in nursing school.

The Lawrence sisters say their unbreakable bond has sustained them through immense challenges. Through it all, their father encouraged them to pursue higher learning and to not allow difficult times to limit their ambitions.

Now, they aim to complete nursing degrees and find work serving others in their community.



Cuddly Robots Alleviate Loneliness in Elder Care

Researchers from the University of British Columbia are studying the effects of using AI robots as companions for seniors in elder care. The robots, named Kiwi and Mango, were designed in Japan and are equipped with artificial intelligence, capable of recognizing faces and voices, speaking, indicating they want to be picked up and even offering hugs. The robots aim to combat loneliness, which has been linked to emotional distress, depression, and even premature death.

While some seniors remain leary of the robots, many have immediately gravitated toward Kiwi and Mango. "It's like having a great little pet," concluded one of the residents. These robots could be great companions for residents who don't often leave their rooms, as they don't require any walking, cleaning or feeding.

Researchers will observe how seniors interact with the robots and survey families and facility leaders to gauge their success.



They Say “Nurses Eat Their Young”

With a job this tough, why add to the stress and give each other a hard time?

They say nurses eat their young.

We all know so many kind, compassionate and caring nurses who embody the spirit of the job. Yet, every one has experienced relationship and communication challenges with other nurses in the workplace. In the best cases, it's a few snippy or passive-aggressive comments, but in the worst cases, it's full-on animosity and overt bullying.

Some consider it a rite of passage, ingrained in the culture, or simply an unavoidable fact of life for those in the nursing profession. Unfortunately, the nurse bullying phenomenon is well documented in almost all care settings and units – from the classroom to the bedside to the boardroom.

Nurse bullying is a systemic and pervasive problem that begins well before nursing school and continues throughout a nurses' career.

A significant percentage of nurses leave their first job due to the negative behaviours of their coworkers, only exacerbating the growing nursing shortage. Further, nurse bullying leads to a poor work environment, increased risk to patients and lower patient satisfaction.

In the digital world, social media, text messaging, online forums, and even video games have expanded the scope of all bullying. This includes direct harassment as well as indirect harm.

Bullying behaviour thrives when it goes unnamed.

Overt bullying is easier to recognize, and includes techniques like extreme micromanaging, verbal criticism, name-calling, insults, and direct threats.

Covert bullying is indirect and passive-aggressive, and can include rumors and gossip, withholding information, unfair assignments, low grades or undesirable tasks as punishment, and sabotage.

Microaggressions – brief and commonplace indignities denigrating a person's race, religion, or membership in another marginalized group—are also considered a form of covert bullying.

While many of us may believe that we are not bullies ourselves, it's worth questioning whether we have ever played the role of a bystander. Although it's difficult to admit, it's necessary to recognize our own behavior to prevent bullying. Without the approval or support of an audience, bullying loses its power.

When bystanders see habitual bullying and don't speak up, the situation turns into an organizational and systemic issue. A quick comment in support of a colleague can diffuse a situation before it turns into something more damaging.

Sometimes it is the bully who needs support the most. If a colleague is stressed, burned out or facing criticism, a helping hand or kind word can stop a negative behaviour spiral before it begins.

Addressing nurse bullying begins with acknowledging the problem, raising awareness, mitigating contributing factors and creating and enforcing a strong anti-bullying policy. Nurses and leaders must actively work to change the culture and understand that bullying has no place in the nursing profession or anywhere in healthcare.



This year, Anti-Bullying Week was acknowledged November 13–17th



Cross-country

New Brunswick

In October, NBNU held their AGM. Joined by nurses from unions across the country and many Liberal MLAs, NBNU rallied in front of legislature, calling on government to address the nursing shortage.

In their latest campaign, *Still Calling*, NBNU celebrates the nurses working in NB. Members told their own unique stories about why they became a nurse, while New Brunswickers

were encouraged to celebrate nurses who have touched their lives.

While the province has recently reported hundreds of new nurses entering the system, the Union does not want the public to be misled by these optimistic reports. Fewer nurses are actually working in their healthcare system and many are on a short contract.

Prince Edward Island

The PEINU was proud to host the CFNU's Biennial Convention this June. Almost 1200 nurses, including NSNU members, were in attendance. Their "Die-in" rally made national news.

Recently, government announced tuition subsidies for LPN students and paramedicine students. Additionally, a partnership was renewed with Holland College, adding 32 seats to their LPN program.

Like the situation in New Brunswick, Health PEI has been reporting hundreds of new hires including NPs, RNs and LPNs. Barbara Brookins, president of PEINU said the number of new hirings do not reflect the actual number of nurses working in the field. Brookins reports that the Union's membership numbers have actually dropped in the same time period, and the number of nurses working casually has increased.

Newfoundland & Labrador

Spending on travel nurses is costing the NL government millions upon millions. While they typically filled gaps in remote locations like Labrador, travel nurses are now employed in every corner of the province.

Last spring, the Registered Nurses' Union of NL released their latest campaign, #HungOutToDryNL, in response to the worsening conditions of the healthcare crisis - without retention efforts, the system will not survive. RNUNL encourages solidarity by wearing a clothespin.

October saw the opening of MUN's Faculty of Nursing satellite site in Grand Falls-Windsor. The Associate Dean with MUN's Faculty of Nursing hopes that training nurses closer to home will help with the expenses of post-secondary education and keep nurses in the community.

In late summer, RNUNL signed a new 4-year CA that will see nurses receive a 2% wage increase each year from 2022-2026. Health Minister Tom Osborne called the agreement a step towards stabilizing health care in NL.

Quebec

Quebec's government announced financial bonuses of up to \$18k for nurses willing to work full-time or return to work. However, the plan received criticism for failing to address working conditions and forced overtime. Additionally, the government announced a plan to hire 3000 administrative workers to assist nurses with any bureaucratic duties, allowing them to focus on caring for patients.

The FIQ rejected the government's offer of a salary increase of 10.3% over five years and a one-time payment of \$1000. By early November, about 80,000 nurses and respiratory therapists and other healthcare classifications walked off the job, launching a two-day strike to demand better working conditions, with more strike action to come.

Ontario

As they celebrate their 50th Anniversary, ONA has launched a new brand identity. The renewed brand comes as ONA fights back like never before against a provincial government that is underfunding public healthcare while expanding privatization.

ONA is pleased with a recent arbitration decision for significant wage increases to hospital-sector RNs and other healthcare professionals. ONA President, Erin Ariss, considers this decision a first step in improving staffing and patient care.

Continued...

check-in

Conciliation for Home and Community Care Support Services is set for mid-November, seeking competitive wage increases, in-line with what was attained in hospitals. If an

agreement is not reached, ONA will look toward province-wide mobilizing and engaging in strike planning and other next steps.

Manitoba

The Manitoba Nurses Union's 2021 campaign, *The Frontline is Not Okay*, grew into a movement where families could share stories of how the pandemic affected their lives. It is still popular to this day, with nurses sharing their stories on The Courage Channel.

Ahead of the October 3rd election, the MNU endorsed the provincial NDP's healthcare plan that intends to bring back

nurses who have left their jobs, simplify the process for international nurses and expand retention incentives.

Healthcare employees will head to a crowded bargaining table next year, as contracts between Shared Health and several unions are set to expire simultaneously. They will introduce a pattern bargaining system aimed at improving working conditions, recruitment and retention.

Saskatchewan

In late October, SUN coordinated a rally in front of the Legislative Building. Busloads of RNs, nursing students and supporters turned up, hoping to bring attention to the current condition of the province's healthcare system.

An agreement was reached with the federal government in March, to send \$61 million in funding to Saskatchewan's health-care system. The goal is to accelerate or enhance new measures aiming to improve primary health care, surgeries

and mental health services. SUN President, Tracy Zambory, says more money must be spent on dealing with the province's nursing shortage.

Overcrowded hospitals are evidence of Saskatchewan's failing healthcare system. Reports show a Saskatoon hospital was overcapacity for weeks before the Fire Department found them to be in violation of fire code requirements. According to SUN, their seasoned nurses have never seen it so bad.

Alberta

The Alberta government's plan to restructure the health-care system has been met with opposition from unions and staff. UNA President, Heather Smith, is concerned an overhaul of the province's healthcare system will spark chaos at a time when hospitals are already under intense strain; driving away they healthcare workers they currently have and jeopardizing patient care.

In early November, UNA shared their support for a petition

calling for presumptive coverage for traumatic psychological injuries. This coverage would mean that nurses would not have to wait or be denied access to workers' compensation benefits after traumatic events on the job.

As their current contract will expire in 2024, UNA has emphasized the importance of member input during their upcoming negotiations.

British Columbia

Adriane Gear, a Victoria-based RN who has been practicing since 1993, has been elected as the new leader of the BC Nurses' Union.

Earlier this year, a historic commitment was made to bring minimum nurse-patient ratios to healthcare settings in BC. By late October, senior leaders of the BCNU met

with members of all political parties, emphasizing the importance of these minimum ratios. BCNU President Gear believes ratios will bring nurses back to the profession, bring relief to nurses in the system and improve patient care across the province.

NSNU STAFF CHANGES

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is pleased to formally announce that Debbie Grady, a familiar and friendly face known to many NSNU members, is the new Executive Assistant to Janet Hazelton, NSNU president, Chris Albrecht, Executive Director and Tom Daniels, Director of Finance and Operations.

Debbie first joined the NSNU in 2008 as the EA then accepted the position of Labour Relations Assistant in January 2015. She brings to her new position a wealth of knowledge and experience, second to none.

The Nurses' Union is happy to welcome Erin McInnis to the Union. Erin is the new Labour Relations Assistant, replacing Debbie Grady.

Erin, who has 25 years of administrative know-how, will oversee the work of our six labour relations representatives.

When not working, Erin enjoys walking her dog, Lily, spending quality time with her two daughters, and cooking, one of her many skills and passions.



Debbie Grady



Erin McInnis

Please join us in welcoming Erin and congratulating Debbie.

Holiday Staffing Coverage

Please note the NSNU Office in Burnside will be closed to the public from Monday, December 25 to Monday, January 1, reopening on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

Labour Relations Representatives will be available on a rotational, on-call schedule during this time. While the building remains closed, some staff may be working on-site during this time.

The holiday schedule for Labour Relations Representatives can be found at nsnu.ca/LRRAssignments

Johnson Insurance makes the change to belairdirect

Johnson Insurance has long partnered with NSNU to support our members, our charities, and our events. The NSNU is grateful for their contributions and for the services they provide to our members.

In late October, Johnson Insurance gradually rebranded to belairdirect. Under the belairdirect brand, members will continue to have access to exclusive offers and coverage.

Visit belairdirect.com/savings or call 1-833-887-4626 to learn more.

The NSNU group ID code is **NOVA4**.

The NSNU's belairdirect webpage can be found at www.nsnu.ca/belairdirect-johnson.





Season's Greetings

from the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

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

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

The NSNU regularly gives to other charitable organizations over the holidays. The union is grateful to have the opportunity to contribute to such deserving causes during this season of giving.

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



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