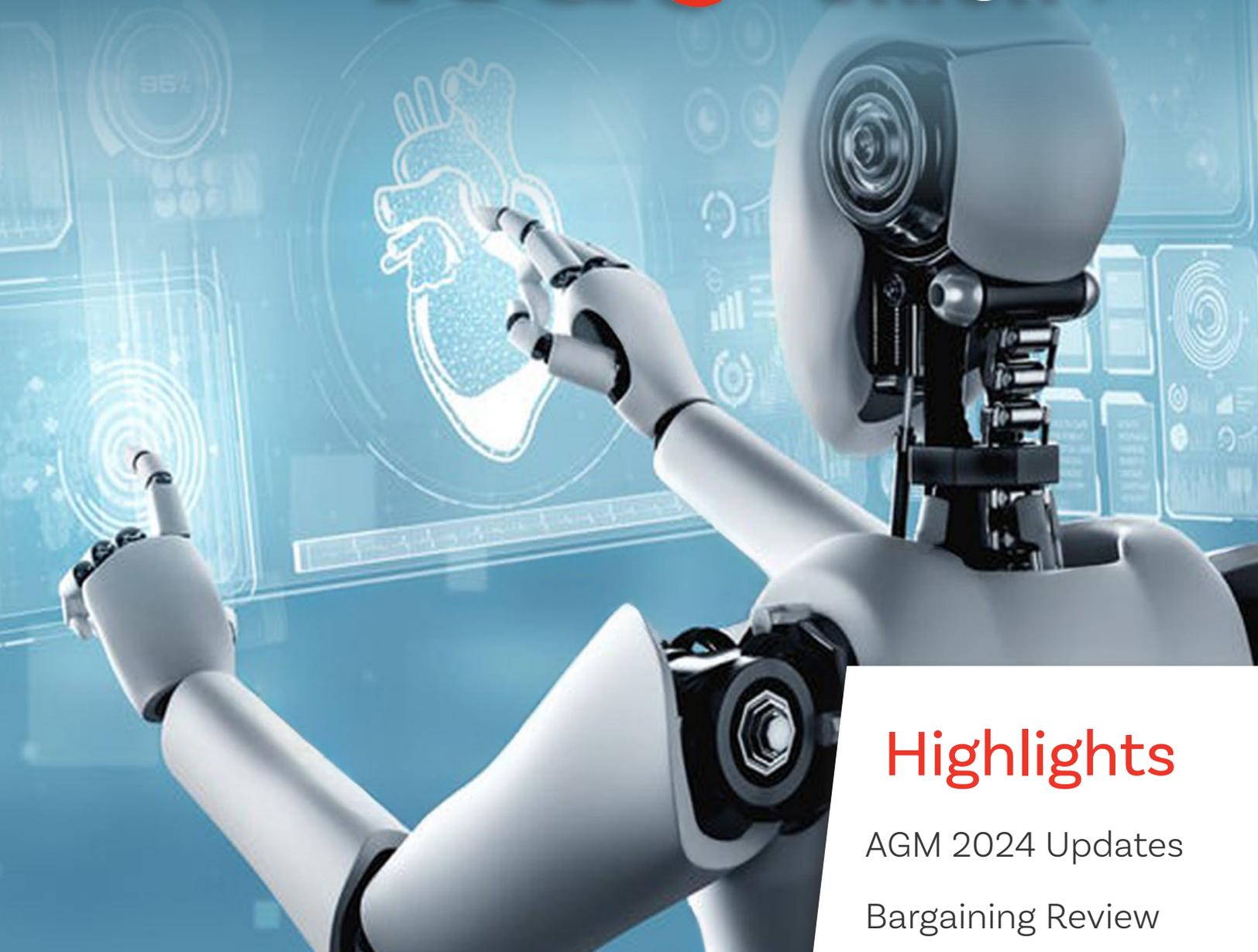


what's nu?

January 2024

Nova Scotia
**Nurses
Union** 



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At Work & On the Home-Front

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SOCIAL MEDIA

 Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

 @NS_Nurses

 @NSNursesU

 NSNursesUnion

MYNSNU APP

 Available in Apple App & Google Play stores
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Updating Info

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 five business days for your information to be updated.



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

*Unsafe staffing is putting patients at risk.
Nurses have solutions.*

By Janet Hazelton and Linda Silas, CFNU President

As we start 2024, an unprecedented number of ambulances sit idle, backed up in hospital parking lots due to overcrowding in our emergency departments. Health care in our province is still plagued by temporary closures and delayed procedures. A growing number of nurses are tempted by greener pastures. All are symptoms of the nursing crisis that has, sadly, become routine news.

Vacancies for nursing jobs are still hovering over 1,000 in Nova Scotia, a significant and disturbing deficit.

As the health care crisis rages unabated across the country, nurses are being pushed to work more overtime than ever before, with some nurses working as long as 16 to 24 hours continuously.

One nurse reminded me that nurses have more career options these days and feel less compelled to stay in positions that put them, and others, at risk. Fewer nurses are staying on the job out of obligation. In the past, nurses rarely walked away, even when the going got tough or unsafe.

"After each shift, I ask myself if I was 100 per

cent present for my patients, their families, my co-workers, and myself. The short answer is no, and that's crushing. It's not possible to manage the workload, bear the physical and emotional burden of caring for patients, and be the nurse I want to be. When my workday includes overtime, that adds to my exhaustion and feelings of inadequacy."

The moral distress this nurse describes is one of the main factors pushing nurses to leave.

The use of overtime to fill core staffing needs is not only short-sighted; it's downright dangerous.

A new study from the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions confirmed excessive hours of continuous work have a profound impact on nurse fatigue. Research shows that fatigue poses long-term risks such as high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes.

Moreover, evidence strongly links fatigue to health care safety incidents. Canadian data shows that one in 17 hospital stays now involves at least one harmful event.

Janet Hazelton

BScN RN, MPA



Alarming, there are no regulatory limits to the hours a nurse can work continuously. Nurses need legislation on consecutive hours that mirrors other safety-sensitive industries such as pilots who can only fly a maximum of 13 hours. Patients are surely as important as airline passengers.

Fixing the nursing shortage is not just about adding more nurses to the system; it's about creating environments where nurses and patients can thrive. Nurse-led solutions like minimum nurse-to-patient ratios offer double-fold success: safe staffing levels have been shown to improve patient safety and would also address the top reason nurses are looking for the exit sign - insufficient staffing.

Nova Scotia nurses have fought for and won critical steps towards better work-life balance: wage increases, a commitment to guaranteed staffing levels, and a cap on maximum hours of work to name a few proposed improvements. But action cannot come quickly enough.

It's time to make these commitments to nurses a reality. We have the funding available. After months of waiting, the province has finally signed the

bilateral agreement needed to take advantage of increased federal health transfers.

Nova Scotia's nurses are calling on the province to use this funding to fully implement evidence-based initiatives to increase nurse retention, create sustainable recruitment and put an end to the years-long shortage of nurses across the province.

If the state of health care at the end of last year tells us anything, it's that time is no longer on our side.

Janet Hazelton
NSNU President

Linda Silas
CFNU President

This opinion/editorial piece appeared in the Cape Breton Post on January 20th

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

Resolutions, Discussions and NNW!

The 47th NSNU AGM will take place in Truro **May 5-8**, promising to be an enlightening and educational experience for all our attendees, familiar and new.

We are hopeful that nurses will get time off to participate in the event, as it affords us the opportunity to be together during National Nursing Week! The first time in many years!

The AGM offers a face-to-face platform for members to inform and direct leaders and activists on matters of importance to the frontline.

The AGM also provides an opportunity for members to review constitutional language and, through the **Resolution** process, enact change by modifying language and introducing new articles to better serve union members and the organization.

Once again, the NSNU will invite leaders from across the county and labour representatives from our own province to participate. They will join us either in person or via video presentations to bring greetings and share their struggles, strategies, and victories from the past year.

Over the course of our meetings, delegates and observers will hear from Linda Silas, the president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, friends from affiliate organizations, and political officials. We're hopeful Premier Houston and/or the Minister of Health and Wellness, Michelle Thompson will be on site to hear our concerns, take our questions, and provide answers.

Once again, we are welcoming nursing students from campuses across the province, and NSNU members from close to 100 of our 124 locals, representing all three sectors.

There are many opportunities to meet with colleagues, both socially and while during union business, in Truro, Nova Scotia's Hub.

More information is available on the Members Only portal of nsnu.ca/AGM2024. Content is being added weekly to the AGM pages. E-memos will also be sent to table officers to ensure everyone is prepared and apprised of any changes and our ongoing preparations.



Dates, times and details to note:

- **Registration for the AGM/Education Day opens on February 27 and closes on March 27** registration is by Local.
- For those attending only the May 8 Education Day there is a separate registration form with Eventbrite. That link will be located at nsnu.ca/AGM2024.
- No group meals will be served at the Glengarry on Sunday, May 5.
- **Regional and Component Meetings** will take place on Sunday, May 5 beginning at 12:00 pm, concluding at 4:00 pm.
- The **Hospitality Event** will take at on Monday, May 6 starting at 6:30 pm at Belly Up BBQ & Grill on Robie St., Truro.
- Please bring your door prizes directly to the Hospitality Night event, ready to go. Do not leave them with NSNU or the venue staff. We will be selling 50/50 tickets at the event in aid of our charities. We are hopeful that there will be karaoke.
- The **Charity Draw** is still an important activity at the AGM. Locals are asked to donate items and buy tickets in support of Marguerite Centre and Hope House. Items are to be left with NSNU staff at registration by end of day May 6.
- The theme for the banquet is **Denim and Diamonds Country Glitz Dance 'N Hoedown**. Come as your favourite Country persona to enjoy a laidback, rootin' tootin' evening.
- **NSNU merchandise** will be sold in the MacLeod Rooms. The NSNU accepts credit and debit card payments.
- Deadline for Scholarship submissions **March 22**.
- Please consider donating **menstrual health products** for our Truro Food Bank drive – every bit helps. The deadline to donate is noon, **May 7**.
- **Keltic Clothing** will be onsite at the Glengarry Hotel from May 6-8 to sell uniforms and accessories.



7 REASONS TO ATTEND THE NSNU AGM

#1

Take part in debates about health care, policy, governance and solidarity

Discussion at the AGM affects policy changes, amendments to the constitution, plans and projects of the Union.

#2

Hear from inspiring and informed speakers

Sharing their insights on issues that matter to nurses and workers, guest speakers provide a break from the rigours of the business aspect of the AGM.

This year, we'll have comedic and motivational speakers that are sure to relate to our members.

#3

Share your voice on a ballot or at the mic

Members can speak on issues that are important to them. This includes supporting or offering perspective on a resolution, asking questions, etc.

#4

Hear firsthand about the work being done by NSNU and across the country

The AGM allows the NSNU president to address members regarding the Union's achievements over the past year, as well as plans for the future. Members also participate in regional and component meetings to receive targeted updates from their Board representatives.

Attendees also hear from nurse leaders across Canada, receiving updates on the issues in their provinces. CFNU President Linda Silas will also attend, speaking on the work being done federally to improve the lives of nurses.

#5

Expand your nursing network

One of the best things about the AGM is the comradery between nurses from Sydney to Yarmouth and everywhere in between. Activists and newcomers from across the province come together to participate. In addition to meeting new people, the AGM provides great opportunities to strengthen bonds with your colleagues.

#6

Gain awareness of the labour movement

The AGM often serves as an education on the issues facing workers, and the efforts of unions and other labour organizations. Representatives from the Canadian Labour Congress, N.S. Federation of Labour and the N.S. Health Coalition are familiar faces at our event, providing updates on important issues and the meaningful work being done in our communities and beyond.

#7

Earn practice premium points

NSNU Members who participate in the AGM and Education Day are eligible to collect Premium Points. Attendees are provided with certificates that can be submitted to their employer.

Please refer to your contract for details on how to accrue and submit your premium points.

Education Day 2024

On Wednesday, May 8th, NSNU will present an Education Day event that's informative, enlightening and entertaining!

Although the Education Day Committee is still rounding out the full agenda, they are happy to share that the day will again include an **Open Forum** to allow members the opportunity to speak openly about challenges and successes they're experiencing.

An Open Forum kickstarted the 2023 education sessions, a segment that members greatly valued according to the event evaluations. Offering this platform captures your invaluable feedback, recommendations, and passion for the nursing profession.

The Committee has also allotted time for a panel discussion on **Internationally Educated Nurses**, a topic that is timely and critical to nursing practice. As more details about the panel are confirmed, NSNU staff will update the Education Day agenda found at nsnu.ca/AGM2024.

The day will end on a very high note with our keynote presentation from **Martha Chaves**, an extraordinary comedian and presenter who also performed at the 2023 CFNU Biennium in Charlottetown.



Martha Chaves

Martha Chaves is a Nicaraguan-Canadian comedian, actress, activist and playwright. She is a regular in the comedy circuits in Canada, the United States and Latin America, at Just for Laughs and other major festivals, and on CBC Radio.

Since coming out around 2009, Chaves has advocated for the LGBT community, has become known for her comedic take on politics in Canada and is an activist for various anti-bullying initiatives.

While shining a spotlight on important issues, Martha will make it her mission to make us laugh.

This event is open to members attending the full AGM (register via your local executive) and for those interested in attending only the Education Day gathering (\$50 registration at nsnu.ca/AGM2024 using the Eventbrite link).





National Nursing Week 2024 During NSNU's Annual Meeting

NSNU Locals are reminded that National Nursing week (NNW) will take place the same week as the 47th Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union. This hasn't happened in many years.

This is a unique opportunity for nurses to be together in large numbers for both occasions - the AGM and NNW. It also means we must be doubly prepared.

When the Nurses' Union selected the week of May 6 to host the AGM, CNA had declared the week of May 13th to celebrate nurses. That changed in late 2023, too late for NSNU to significantly alter our plans.

In light of this discovery, NSNU is asking Locals to think ahead for merchandise orders as staff will be busy preparing for the AGM and happily accommodating NNW requests. If possible, we ask that you place merchandise orders before April 26th. By late March, the nsnu.ca/merchandise webpage will be updated with new inventory for viewing.

NSNU accounting staff will ensure that the NNW cheques are sent several weeks prior to May 6th. Although CNA has not yet announced the theme for Nursing Week, we're sure it will blend seamlessly with the events NSNU has organized for the annual meeting.



DESIGNATION CHANGE?

The NSNU often sends communiques to segments of our membership. Depending on the news of the day, bargaining updates and other issues of selective importance, it may be necessary to reach just LPNs, RNs or NPs at any given time.

If you have changed your designation, we ask that you please contact the NSNU to update our records so you receive all communications relevant to you. It is also important for us to know if you have changed employers or facilities, as we often segment messaging according to the area and sector in which nurses work.

In general, we need you to tell us about any pertinent changes to your nursing practice.

To update your designation, or any other relevant contact information, please scan the QR code with your device.

**UPDATE MEMBER
INFORMATION**



ARE YOU RECEIVING NSNU EMAILS?

Campaigner is the secure email service that enables the NSNU to share information with members all at once, or with specific groups of members, in an efficient and timely manner.

If you have not been receiving our NSNU emails, there are a few possible reasons.

Lately, our communications team has been seeing a large portion of soft bounces for members. If an email soft bounces, the email is not successfully delivered to a member due to temporary server issues or full inboxes.

To ensure you receive email communications, here are tips on how to avoid soft bounces:

- **Open NSNU emails:** Even if the subject line is not of interest to you, opening these emails shows your email platform that they are not unwanted
- **Keep your inbox organized:** Delete unwanted emails, unsubscribe from unnecessary mailing lists, and regularly empty your spam folder
- **Check your email settings:** Make sure your email account is not set up to automatically mark emails from us (nsnu.office@nsnu.ca) as spam or junk
- **Whitelist our email address:** Add our email address to your contacts or address book to ensure that our emails are not marked as spam
- **Contact your email service provider:** If you continue to experience soft bounces, contact your email service provider for assistance

Alternatively, many members are unsubscribed to our Campaigner email messages.

Often, when a member reaches out looking for missing emails – they have unknowingly unsubscribed to our emails. If you believe you have unsubscribed and would like to opt in to NSNU’s emails again, you will need to go through the resubscription process:

1. Visit the following link, or scan the QR code
<https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/Public/Form.aspx?fid=1003060&ac=9k10>
2. Fill in your information, and standby for a confirmation email
 - If you have not received your confirmation email, check your **spam/junk folder**
 - This email may take **a few minutes** to arrive
3. Follow the link in your confirmation email to complete the subscription process



Using Personal Email Addresses

In an effort to ensure deliverability of our Campaigner e-memos to members, we are asking members to use their personal email addresses, rather than work or school emails.

Update your email address, as well as other member information **by following the QR code on page 10** of this newsletter.

Bargaining Concludes for VON and LTC

In late 2023, the teams assembled for VON and LTC negotiations concluded bargaining with two distinct and progressive agreements for those categories of nurses.

Both agreements received significant support. VON members voted 87 per cent in favour of a five-year contract that will see improvements in wages, premiums, occupational health and safety, and work-life balance.

Long-term care members voted 98 per cent in favour of their five-year contract. This new agreement also features important gains.

Various language improvements were achieved during this round of negotiations thanks to the advocacy and dedication of the bargaining teams. Aside from a competitive wage package that should help retain nurses and potentially recruit nurses to these sectors, these agreements address many of the challenges VON and LTC members are confronted with daily.

We thank those who participated in the ratification process and extend our gratitude to members for their continued dedication to the nursing profession and the those in their care.

Your bargaining committees appreciate the support you have shown throughout this process. They include:

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



LTC PNC Member Representatives

Vice-President Long Term Care, Glenda Sabine

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

Community Care PNC Member Representatives

Vice-President Community Care, Kim Williams

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



PLEASE NOTE: The review and signing of collective agreements can be a painstaking process, which is necessary to ensure accuracy. We thank you for your patience during this phase. As is common practice, the timing of retroactive pay is addressed by your employers.

SAFE HOURS SAVE LIVES

Heart disease, drowsy driving & patient safety: study reveals grim impact of nurse fatigue

A report release in January 2024 by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) and its counterparts, sheds light on the dire impact excessively long working hours has on nurses and their patients. **Safe Hours Save Lives** reveals a critical need to address nurse fatigue and outlines key recommendations to mitigate fatigue-related risks.

While this information is alarming, sadly it is not news to nurses on the frontline.

“Nurses are working more overtime than ever before, enduring shifts as long as 24 hours, as they try to meet the needs of their patients amidst a crisis-level staffing shortage,” explained Linda Silas, CFNU president.

The report, authored by researcher Dr. Heather Scott-Marshall, examined three outcomes of occupational fatigue: risks associated with patient safety, risks of workplace conflicts and lateral violence, and risks posed to nurses’ overall health and well-being.

“Fatigue is not only associated with long-term health risks such as heart disease and diabetes; research also shows that the effects of fatigue are similar to those of alcohol intoxication,” explained Scott-Marshall. “In safety-sensitive industries, this means that fatigue poses a significant safety risk. Pilots, for example, are subject to regulations that limit their on-duty period to a maximum of 13 hours. No such safeguards exist for nurses in Canada.”

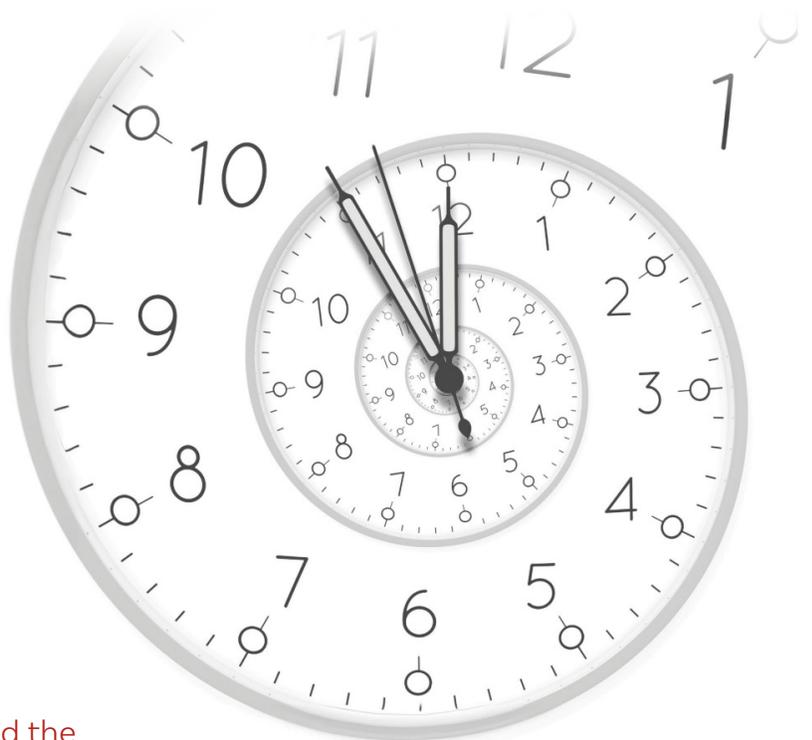
Fatigue is also linked to work-related injuries in nurses, costing our health care system nearly a billion dollars annually. Troublingly, there is a growing body of evidence linking fatigue to safety incidents in health care.

“You’re working with all these meds, and yet you can’t even drive yourself home... you don’t even know if your car is moving toward the middle of the road,” shared one nurse interviewed as a part of the study.

Safe Hours Save Lives outlines key recommendations to reduce fatigue-related risks, including:

- Stopping the practice of mandating nurses to work overtime.
- Establishing legislation and regulatory limits on consecutive work hours for nurses.
- Adopting international standards for managing risks related to fatigue, including measures such as designated napping spaces, fresh food for nurses on extended or overnight shifts, and providing nurses’ transportation home post-shift.
- Employer implementation of formal fatigue risk management programs.

“Fatigue has real consequences, and we must cultivate environments that support the safety of nurses and their patients which is just as important as the safety of pilots and passengers,” said Silas. “Today, nurses are pushing for fatigue to have accountability, making nurse and patient safety a fundamental obligation. We owe it to our nurses and our patients. It’s a matter of safety and respect.”



Find the full report on CFNU’s website, nursesunions.ca

Partnership to Improve Healthcare

A three-year, \$355-million agreement was signed on January 10th to help ensure Nova Scotians get the care they need, faster, with new funding from the federal government.

According to the both levels of government, the funds are earmarked to help increase access to primary, mental health and addictions care, support healthcare workers and allow the system to add more cutting-edge technology that offers better, faster care.

Mark Holland, federal Minister of Health said, “Universal public healthcare is a priority and a point of pride for Canadians. Canadians are counting on us to work together to address the ongoing challenges we are experiencing within our healthcare systems. This agreement and action plan, which reflects Nova Scotia’s priorities, is one more step in the right direction and will help to expand access to care across the province.”

The agreement focuses on four shared health priorities that will help improve healthcare for Nova Scotians, including:

- expanding access to family health services, including in rural and remote areas
- supporting healthcare workers and reducing backlogs
- improving access to publicly funded mental health and addictions services
- modernizing health systems with data and digital tools.

“We’re well on our way in implementing Action for Health, our road map for transforming healthcare in Nova Scotia, and changes across the system are making meaningful impacts on the front lines and beyond,” said Health and Wellness Minister Michelle Thompson. “We’re actively building the healthcare system all Nova Scotians need and deserve, and we are pleased the federal government shares our vision and will provide some additional funding to support us in our work.”

Action for Health, launched in April 2022, is the Province’s strategic plan to improve healthcare. Nova Scotians have access to regularly updated data that measures progress on improving the province’s healthcare system for patients and providers.

To learn more about Action for Health go to novascotia.ca/actionforhealth.



THANS



Donation

On November 27th, NSNU President Janet Hazelton presented Ann de Ste Croix, Provincial Coordinator of the Transition House of Nova Scotia (THANS) with a generous **\$14,000 donation** on behalf of our membership. We are proud to be a continued supporter of THANS, an umbrella association with shelters that provide support and services to women and children experiencing violence across Nova Scotia.

Meaningful donations like this would not be possible without support from Efficom (Nurses’ Planner Production House) and Johnson Insurance/belairect. These corporations are long-time supporters of the NSNU and allow us to make contributions to worthwhile causes year-round. These mutually-beneficial relationships allow us to support our charitable endeavors.

This donation will directly support Nova Scotian women and children by allowing these shelters to purchase much-needed items, including clothing, bedding, baby items, cleaning supplies and gift cards to grocery stores - making a real difference in their daily lives.

Spreading awareness of the services provided by THANS is an important way to support the work that they do. You can learn more about the services offered, and what THANS stands for at thans.ca.



AI Revolution

How Artificial Intelligence is Rapidly Affecting Our Work & Personal Lives

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is growing rapidly and has already begun to affect our work and personal lives. From self-driving cars to virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa, AI is revolutionizing the way we live our daily lives. These AI-powered technologies have the potential to make our lives a lot easier and more convenient, though they raise some concerns about privacy, security and accuracy.

This rapid growth of AI has the potential to bring significant benefits, such as improved efficiency, accuracy and cost savings.

As AI systems become more advanced, they are increasingly being integrated into many different industries, including healthcare.

The AI healthcare market was valued at \$11 billion in 2021 and is projected to be worth \$187 billion in 2030. This massive increase means we will likely see considerable change in how medical providers, hospitals, pharmaceutical and biotechnical companies, and others in the healthcare industry operate.

AI has the potential to transform healthcare delivery, increasing analytical output beyond what health human resources can supply. For instance, AI algorithms are analyzing medical imaging data to identify early signs of diseases like cancer, often with greater accuracy than humans, and at a lower cost. This allows for earlier, more effective treatment, easing a strain on the healthcare system and potentially saving millions of lives.

However, it also presents risks, including job displacement, privacy concerns and potential misuse.

One of the most significant impacts of AI is its effect on the job market. As AI systems become more advanced, it will displace jobs in some industries but also create new job opportunities in others.

Like anything, AI is only as valuable and reliable as the sum of its components. If data is indiscriminately sourced from the internet – a pool of contradictory and sometimes inaccurate information – that's a problem. The internet remains a landscape of disinformation mixed with factual content.

There is evidence of biases and misguided perspectives infiltrating AI necessitating the development of algorithms to uncover bias, including falsehoods, racial or gender discrimination.

Ensuring that AI has a proper place in society, business, healthcare and other fields, public policy and oversight are extremely important.

It's critical to develop regulations and safeguards that address ethical issues. Legal and ethical implications remain "uncharted territory," making individuals and organizations vulnerable.

Consent and data ownership are susceptible to corruption until accountability and consequences are solidly formulated.

At the Nurses' Union, we are keeping a close eye on AI technologies and preparing ourselves to use this technology to our advantage. We are aware of the risks and are taking steps to mitigate any.

Remembering Winnie

The NSNU is sad to say a former NSNU president and staffer, Winnifred “Winnie” (Nelson) Kettleson – 87, passed away on December 29, 2023, at Colchester East Hants Health Centre, Truro.

Winnie was born in Innisfree, Alberta, and graduated nursing from Archer Memorial Hospital, Lamont, Alberta. She did a post grad in Operating Technique and Management at Vancouver General Hospital and subsequently worked in Lamont, Elk Point, Hinton, Wetaskwin and Fort McMurray. In 1971 she moved to Nova Scotia and worked for nine years in the OR at Colchester Hospital.

She always considered herself “first and foremost a proud member of the nursing profession”. She served as President of Nova Scotia Nurses’ Union for two terms before taking on the staff role of Labour Relations Representatives.

In 1980, she was chosen to attend the prestigious HRH Duke of Edinburgh Commonwealth Study Conference and came away with remarkable leadership skills as well as a broadened sense of critical global issues. She honed those leadership skills over the years and served as advisor to many colleagues and Board members who gained from her wisdom, experience and devotion to excellence and integrity.

She negotiated over sixty collective agreements during her work as an LRR for NSNU. She was an active member of many Boards, associated with Canadian Nurses Association (having served two terms as Board member), Registered Nurses Association of Nova Scotia and Dalhousie University. She was also made a lifetime Honorary Member of the NSNU.



Winnie’s NSNU nickname became “1-800-Winnie” for the sound advice and support she provided. Winnie always made a point of challenging members to think and read and work out answers and solutions. Many nurses who have served in leadership roles have her to thank.

She played a key role in the union and was involved in activities such as organizing, education, strategic planning, preparation for AGMs and campaigns. She acted as advisor to past Boards on constitutional and orientation issues and served the often-thankless task of parliamentarian.

She was a remarkable woman who made such a difference along the way.

The NSNU extends deep and sincere condolences to Winnie’s family and friends at this time of great loss.



Jean Candy Winnie Kettleson Leanne MacMillan Carol O’Neill
Former NSNU Former NSNU Former NSNU
Executive Director Legal Counsel LRR

One of Nova Scotia's newest nurses is a former refugee

CBC NEWS 2023

Agnes Lomoro carefully places a stethoscope on the chest of an 85-year-old patient she's checking in on.

It's a job she has dreamed of since she was a child growing up in South Sudan – where she had no access to health care – but one that seemed out of reach, with a civil war forcing her to flee to Kenya, where she lived as a refugee.



Lomoro arrived in Nova Scotia in 2021 under a federal program for skilled refugees, initially working as a continuing care assistant.

Two years later, she upgraded her skills and passed her final NCLEX-RN exam to gain her license.

The 29-year-old is now taking care of patients in the surgery unit of the Aberdeen Hospital in New Glasgow, where she has been training as part of a bridging pathway program introduced by Nova Scotia Health.

Going to work on the unit – where part of her work involves monitoring patients who are recovering from surgeries such as hip replacements – is a challenge she looks forward to every day, considering her journey.

“I hadn't imagined that I could be where I'm right now,” she said, “coming from a place of not having any hope for what your future would look like.”

HELPING ADDRESS STAFFING CHALLENGES

Lomoro earned a nursing degree in Kenya, but her refugee status got in the way of working there.

She got the chance to move to Canada under the Economic Mobility and Pathways Pilot Program to work as a continuing care worker, which she took with the goal of upgrading her skills.



She earned her nursing credentials in Nova Scotia at a critical time, as the health-care system faces major staffing concerns.

“We have a number of vacancies and with the influx of [internationally educated nurses], we've been able to fill many of these vacancies,” said Leah Heighton, who is health services manager of the medical inpatient unit at Aberdeen Hospital. “It's so wonderful, we're so happy to have her with us at the Aberdeen.”

The additional hires have addressed some staff shortages and allowed other nurses to take time off, she said, “which has really helped to boost staff morale and it's certainly improved patient care as well.”

'WE HAVE REDUCED THOSE BARRIERS'

Lomoro, who is now a permanent resident of Canada, was one of 15 internationally trained and educated nurses who enrolled in the pilot bridging program last fall.

“Ten have taken the exam and all 10 have passed and about eight of them are already employed in Nova Scotia Health,” said Tara Sampalli, the department's senior director of implementation science and global health systems planning.

The success rate demonstrates that those in the program already have transferable qualifications from other countries, she said.

Lomoro gives a lot of credit to Nova Scotia Health for providing her the opportunities to build her career.

Now she has bigger goals. She's thinking about doing her masters degree, as well as considering continuing her training to become a nurse practitioner.

what's nu? with members

To share what you or your Local is up to, send a photo and description to nsnu.office@nsnu.ca



Aberdeen Hospital
Medicine Inpatient Unit



Antigonish VON



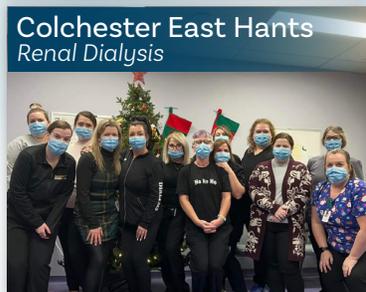
Cape Breton VON



Cape Breton Regional
Renal Dialysis



Colchester East Hants
VON



Colchester East Hants
Renal Dialysis



Cumberland Regional
Operating Room



DePaul Hall



Dartmouth General
3 West



Digby VON



Halifax VON



Inverness Consolidated
Oncology-Hematology



Maplestone



Queens VON



Sagewood



St. Martha's Regional



Valley Regional Hospital
Endoscopy



VON Cumberland



VON Lunenburg

View more of these holiday celebrations on our social media pages!

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

From dinners to DIY's, donations and dancing, several NSNU locals had the opportunity to gather for a celebration during the holiday season. These nurses surely brought the holiday cheer and we would like to extend a big thank you to all members who shared!

Giving & Sharing



Tammy Jones
VON Halifax, Local President

In early December, Halifax VON Local President Tammy Jones was inspired by a colleague from her local, Chrissy Cashin, to donate blood for the first time. It is typically more difficult for Canadian Blood Services to recruit donors during the month of December, so it is a great idea to fit in a donation before the holiday season. Thank you to Tammy and Chrissy for sharing and inspiring others to donate!



Chrissy Cashin
VON Halifax



Janet Hazelton
NSNU President

Kelly Currier
Feed Nova Scotia

On December 21st, NSNU President Janet Hazelton presented a cheque to Kelly Currier of Feed Nova Scotia. The donation was made on behalf of NSNU members, the Board of Directors, and staff.

The NSNU is pleased to be a long-time supporter of Feed Nova Scotia, as they support their 140 member agencies in addressing food insecurity and enacting long-term solutions to hunger and poverty in Nova Scotia.

Members at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital gave generously over the holidays, making five \$1000 donations to their local food banks.

With the increased costs of goods and services, groceries, gasoline, housing, home heating, medications and so much more, these donations will be impactful for many Cape Bretoners.



Laura Lee Sharpe, RN (Right)
Presents cheque to the Glace Bay Foodbank

In January, NSNU President Janet Hazelton was invited to address students enrolled in the LPN program at NSCC's Cumberland Campus and the senior nursing students at Dalhousie's Yarmouth Campus. It is always a pleasure for Janet to meet nursing students, share her experiences, and answer questions while connecting with the next generation of nurses.

With 20 years of experience at the helm of the NSNU, Janet shares her perspectives on the realities of nursing, the importance of union involvement and discusses professional practice concerns. She enjoys creating a dialogue with future nurses, taking questions, and

inspiring them. Many of these students will become members of the NSNU when they graduate and begin their careers, and we are excited to have them.

Thank you for welcoming Janet into your classrooms, both in person and virtually.



NSCC Cumberland Campus: LPN Program



Dalhousie School of Nursing: Yarmouth

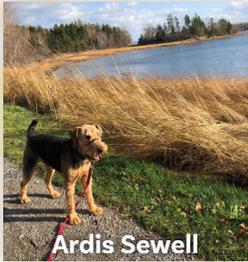
Fall Photo Contest 2023



Alice Cormier



Amy Lockhart



Ardis Sewell



Cathy Murphy



Chelsea Connolly



Chloe Daigle



Abbey Flinn



Allana Ivany



Amy Rideout



Anne Kendall



Ashley Highfield



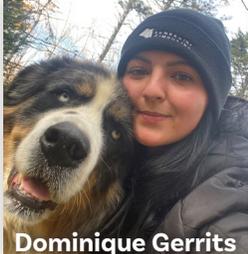
Chelsey Livingstone



Connie d'Entremont



Deanna Doucette



Dominique Gerrits



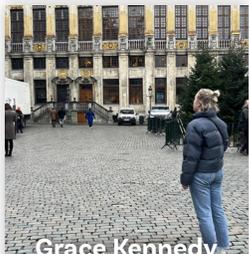
Dorothy Smith



Emily Sutherland



Emmi Champion



Grace Kennedy



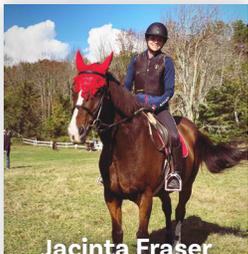
Haley MacIntyre



Hannah MacKinnon



Holly MacNutt



Jacinta Fraser



Jackie MacArthur



Deljo K Joy



Gracie Critchley



Gudrum Müller-Both



Heather Brander



Jen Rossetti



Jenny Hines



Jennifer Boudreau



Jessica Plummer



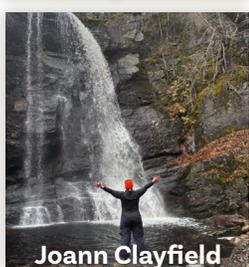
Jillyan Kaizer



Joan Forgeron



Joanah Eloisa Sigue



Joann Clayfield

To view these entries in a larger format, as well as entries for our past Photo Contests, please visit nsnu.ca/escape

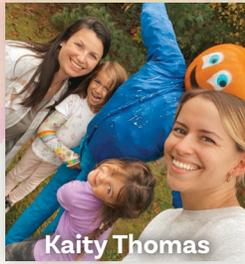
Entries



Jolene Gouchie



Julie Redden



Kaity Thomas



Kelly Gilby



Kenzie Vincent



Kimberly Shaw



Julie Osinkowski



Kim Theriault



Leah Thompkins



Lenora Brace



Marc Santos



Margaret Wunch



Kirsten MacDonald



Krista Parker



Lori Harris



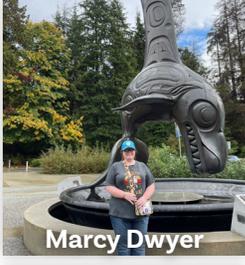
Madelyn Bitas



Magen Martin



Maggie McInnis



Marcy Dwyer



MaryAnne Carew



Mdar Librinca



Melissa McKinley



Monique Bullen



Nancy Thompson



Nicole Scullion



Pamela Carrier



Robin Whooten



Shawna MacFarlane



Shelly MacDonald



Tia Manzer



Tony Leudy



Nicole Guildford



Royland Cabrerros



Sarah Crawford



Vera Casanova



Zoraida Dunphy

and the winner is...



Congratulations!
Shawna MacFarlane

LPN, Dartmouth General Hospital

Shawna's escape is biking the trails around our beautiful province!

Pictured, Shawna is on a section of the Harvest Moon Trailway, connecting Kentville to Wolfville.

Escape: A Place to Unwind

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union's Escape Page is a section of our website that is designed to provide our hardworking nurses with resources to decompress from their demanding work. To keep the content fresh and engaging, we update the page seasonally. This winter, we've added a variety of icy activities to help you escape Jack Frost's chill.

In addition to the regular Escape Page content, which includes mental health resources and year-round activities, we've added fun indoor and outdoor activities, events in Nova Scotia this winter, and other seasonal tips. If you prefer to stay warm and unwind indoors, you can take a virtual tour of snowy landscapes from the comfort of your home.

Our Escape Page also features the NSNU Photo Contests, which allow members to share their escapes, whether it's hiking, cooking, or cuddling with their furry friends. Here, you can check out past contest galleries and keep an eye out for upcoming contests.

We encourage our members to visit the Escape Page regularly for new content seasonally. Whether you're an outdoor adventurer or a homebody, the Escape Page has something for everyone.

NSNU Scholarships

The NSNU is pleased to offer members and their families scholarship and bursary opportunities.

By navigating the **Resources & Education** tab of the NSNU website, members can find application forms as well as descriptions and eligibility information for each annual NSNU scholarship. Information and applications for scholarships and grants offered by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and others can be found here as well.

Successful applicants will be chosen by the Education Committee using a blind selection process and notified at the completion of the NSNU Annual General Meeting, on Tuesday, May 7th.

Scholarship & grant applications are due by March 22, 2024.

Annual Union Scholarships

DOLORES CHASE SCHOLARSHIP \$2000

This scholarship is awarded to a Member enrolled in a Nursing degree program.

NURSING DEGREE/DIPLOMA SCHOLARSHIP \$2000

This scholarship is awarded to a Member enrolled in a Nursing degree or diploma program.

CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP VALUED UP TO A MAXIMUM OF \$2000

This scholarship is awarded to a Member enrolled in an educational program. The value granted will be determined by the Education Committee and will depend upon the cost of the certificate program.

ELIZABETH & BRITTANY MACPHERSON SCHOLARSHIP \$1000

This scholarship has been established in memory of Elizabeth and her daughter Brittany MacPherson who tragically lost their lives to domestic violence. Elizabeth was a Registered Nurse with the Victorian Order of Nurses and was very proud of her daughter's accomplishments as a graduate of Saint Mary's University with a Bachelors degree of Psychology. Funding for this scholarship is provided by the NSNU VON Colchester-East Hants Local.

The scholarship is awarded to a resident of Colchester or East Hants enrolled in a nursing degree program. Preference will be given to single parents.

ANNUAL FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP \$2000 EACH

Two Family Scholarships will be awarded to a family member of an NSNU member who is enrolled in a nursing program. Criteria can be found at nsnu.ca/resources/education/scholarships/nsnu.

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