

what's nu?

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2025

Nova Scotia
**Nurses
Union**



Highlights

Value of a Union

Empowering IENs

Health Ministers Meeting

TOGETHER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH CARE

COURAGE TO LEAD • CONFIDENCE TO CHALLENGE • COMMITMENT TO CARE

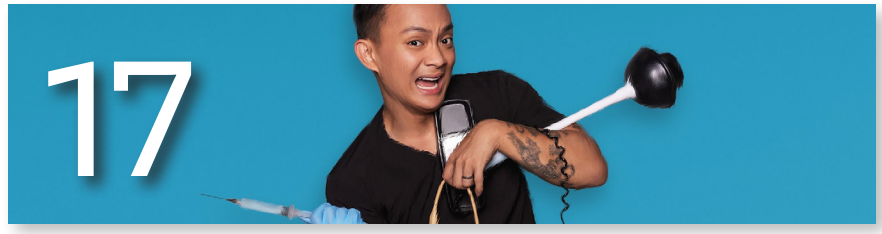
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Contact

LOCATION

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-  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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Union Dues

If you work at more than one facility represented by NSNU 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 RNs** and **\$21.48 for LPNs**) 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**.

Updating Info

To add or change your member information, the NSNU asks that you **fill out the online 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 two weeks for your information to be updated.

Please use a personal email address, not an email address associated with your place of employment or educational institution.



Land Acknowledgement

The NSNU sits on and operates in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and unceded territories of the Mi'kmaq.

As settlers and visitors of Nova Scotia we acknowledge the importance of these lands, which we call home. We are all Treaty People.

We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility to improve relationships between nations, to work towards healing the wounds of colonialism and to improve our own understanding of local Indigenous Peoples and their cultures.

We honour and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent. We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

President's Notebook

Renewed Commitment Required to Prevent & Address Workplace Violence

In 2007, NSNU, NSGEU, CUPE and NSTU launched our *Workplace Violence: It's Not Part of the Job* campaign, challenging employers and the government to act on this escalating problem.

In the decade that followed this campaign, nurses were among the most likely professionals to become victims of workplace violence. Each year, more than 1000 Canadian nurses on average were hurt severely enough to miss work. That's more than police and firefighters combined.

As many of you may recall, in 2016, a heavily armed individual managed to easily enter the emergency department of the Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in Middleton, in the Annapolis Valley. At that time, the provincial government stressed the importance of ensuring that hospitals have a level of safety equivalent to that of schools. This incident prompted the Nurses' Union to again launch an anti-violence campaign in 2017, calling attention to the growing prevalence of workplace violence, especially within the healthcare sector.



2007



2017

In late January 2025, almost two decades after NSNU and other unions successfully lobbied for regulations to help protect workers from workplace violence, harassment and abuse, I found myself speaking with media, employers and the Department of Health and Wellness about the need for stronger security measures at healthcare facilities.

Following a violent knife attack at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre (QEII) on January 29th where three staff members sustained injuries, the debate was reignited.

The QEII is not an exception. NSNU members are subjected to inappropriate, aggressive and sometimes criminal behaviours at facilities and workplaces across the province.

Janet Hazelton
BScN RN, MPA, ICD.D



Halifax Infirmary, 2025

In 2023, the Nova Scotia Council of Nursing Unions negotiated a Letter of Commitment to Review Workplace Violence Policies and Procedures within the acute care collective agreement. That includes a general review of the existing workplace violence prevention policies and a commitment to provide ongoing education to nurses regarding the requirement for all incidents of workplace violence and near-miss events to be reported through organizational incident reporting systems.

NSNU's Occupational Health and Safety Advisor, Heather Matthews will be leading the charge with other members of the Committee to put resources and policies in place to address this growing concern. In fact, nine out of ten nurses surveyed last year said they had experienced violence on the job.

As I have stated publicly, well-trained security personnel must always be present in hospitals to handle violent situations. Private agency employees contracted to do this work lack consistent training and integration within care teams. This complicates patient care and creates uncertainty amongst staff, especially nurses.

It is easy to put this issue and our demands in perspective. To attend a Mooseheads game, you can't have a knife in your pocket, but you can walk into any of our facilities with a weapon, not just a knife. Metal detectors in hospitals are essential, as much for the safety of patients as for the safety of employees.

Nova Scotia Health interim president and CEO Karen Oldfield supports purchasing handheld metal detectors for use in Nova Scotia emergency departments.

Last year, the Manitoba health authority adopted a weapons detection system using artificial intelligence at the entrance to the Winnipeg Health Sciences Centre, the province's largest hospital, after a series of violent incidents.

Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) congratulated Nova Scotia Health Minister Michelle Thompson for addressing the issue of workplace safety, one of the talking points at the January 30th meeting with provincial health ministers in Halifax.

In 2021, the federal government responded to calls for help from the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian Nurses' Association (CNA) and the CFNU with legislation that made it illegal to use threats and bullying to stop a health worker from providing care to patients.

All three organizations and unions within Nova Scotia continue to urge the public to respect these laws and call on public safety and law enforcement officials to enforce them. Without consequences the threat of violence against healthcare workers will not end.



NURSES AND DOCTORS PUSH HEALTH MINISTERS TO FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING OUR PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

Protect patients, protect health professionals, protect public health care

Nurse union leaders from across the country joined Canada’s health ministers in Halifax on January 30th for a policy discussion with allied health organizations focused on supporting health care workers for the future of public health care.

“This is a critical moment for health care in Canada. Nurses and doctors know this, they see it on the front lines delivering care every day. That’s why organizations representing our country’s health professionals came together to deliver a message to Canada’s health ministers: protect patients, protect health professionals, protect public health care,” said Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU).

The Canadian Medical Association, Canadian Nurses Association and the College of Family Physicians of Canada joined the CFNU at the policy briefing with opening remarks from Minister of Health Mark Holland and Nova Scotia Minister of Health and Wellness Michelle Thompson.

Canada’s nurse union leaders urged provincial and territorial health ministers to sign onto pharmacare agreements with the federal government and embrace the inclusion of nurse practitioners as a critical solution for growing primary care access.

The CFNU is calling on provinces and territories to prepare now for the inclusion of nurse practitioners under the *Canada Health Act* by:

- » Ensuring funding mechanisms align with the inclusion of NPs in insured services
- » Expanding training programs and recruitment initiatives to grow the NP workforce

“ We are on track to enhance our public health care system through life-saving universal coverage for prescription medications, and steps closer to ensuring everyone in Canada has access to primary care,” said Silas. “With meaningful collaboration, we can end the health human resources crisis and support strong implementation of these much-needed expansions of public health care. Canadians are counting on decision makers at all levels of governments to ensure everyone has access to the care they need when they need it.” ”



NSNU President Janet Hazelton and The Honourable Minister of Health & Wellness Michelle Thompson



Government of Canada signs pharmacare agreements with PEI, Manitoba and BC

No one should have to choose between paying for prescription drugs and putting food on the table. That's why the Government of Canada and some provinces have taken action to improve universal access to free medications allowing Canadians can get the medication they need, regardless of their ability to pay.

In early 2025 Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and British Columbia inked deals worth over \$900 million in federal investment to improve access to medications.

Through these historic agreements the Government of Canada will provide funding over four years for universal coverage to a range of contraceptives and diabetes medications for residents of these provinces, at little to no direct cost to them. The funding from these agreements will also improve access to diabetes devices and supplies.

The agreements support the reproductive freedom of Canadians and provides access to essential medications

to reduce their risk of serious health complications and improve their quality of life.

BC and Manitoba will enhance pharmacare coverage by providing free hormone replacement therapy to treat menopausal symptoms. This additional coverage is a significant step toward improving health care for women and gender diverse people throughout their lifetimes.

PEI residents will begin to receive coverage on May 1, 2025, Manitoba in June 2025, while BC's program will commence March 2026.

In addition, the Government of Canada will provide funding to improve access to drugs for rare diseases, early diagnosis, and screening, to support provinces in providing access under the National Strategy for Drugs for Rare Diseases.

These are important steps forward to improve health equity, affordability and health outcomes for Canadians.

PEI's new \$30M pharmacare deal will cover diabetes medication, birth control

Island is 3rd province to sign up; the deal comes into effect on May 1

[Gwyneth Egan](#) · CBC News · Posted: Mar 07, 2025

Manitoba 1st province to strike pharmacare deal with federal government

Province will receive \$219M to cover medications for diabetes, birth control and other conditions

[Arturo Chang](#) · CBC News · Posted: Feb 27, 2025 12:40 PM AST | Last Updated: February 27

B.C. becomes next province to formalize pharmacare agreement with Ottawa

HEALTH REPORTER
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CANADIAN NURSING STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2025

Together for Tomorrow: Driving Change for More Inclusive Healthcare

Over 200 student nurses and nursing leaders from across Canada gathered in Halifax from January 30th through February 1st for an inspiring and transformative nursing student conference centred on shaping a more inclusive and equitable healthcare future.

This event, designed specifically for Canadian nursing students, explored innovative approaches, actionable insights, and meaningful dialogues to empower the next generation of nursing professionals. Featuring various national and provincial nursing leaders, speakers and interactive sessions, the conference focused on four pivotal pillars of the CNSA mission statement to drive impactful change.

The conference was a unique opportunity to connect with like-minded peers, gain valuable knowledge, and participate in discussions that will shape the future of healthcare in Canada. These four pillars will empower nursing students to lead with compassion, knowledge, and purpose, ensuring that tomorrow's healthcare is inclusive, equitable, and resilient.

While attending the CNSA event, leaders from MNU, NSNU, NBNU RNUNL, PEINU, ONA, and BCNU participated in a panel discussion allowing inquisitive students to ask questions and provide their perspectives as newcomers to the profession.

The CFNU, NSNU and other counterparts were happy to support the efforts of the organizers and welcome students from across the country to Nova Scotia.

THE CNSA PILLARS

1. Supporting Quality Nursing Education and Entry to Practice; and Be a Trusted and Reliable Source of Information for Canadian Nursing Students
2. Advocate for the Increased Incorporation of Indigenous Health and Social Policies, as so listed in the following actions, within Nursing context and profession
3. Promote Social Justice as it Relates to Gender, Sexuality, Anti-Oppression, and Anti-Racism
4. Support the Enactment of Measures that Improve Nursing Commitment to the Advancement of Climate Health in Nursing Practice



Janet Hazelton, NSNU President and clinical nurse educators Angelina Comeau, NSGEU and Donna Gillis, NSNU 1st VP at NSH's Interprofessional Practice & Learning Exhibit, CNSA, 2025



FIRST NATIONAL NURSING STUDENT SURVEY FINDS FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO CONTINUE IN NURSING

Support nursing students

Canadian-made solutions to our health staffing crisis

More than a quarter of nursing students say they've considered leaving their nursing program due to financial difficulties, according to the first national survey of nursing students.

"Nursing students are an important part of Canada's recruitment efforts to stabilize the health workforce crisis, yet many students consider leaving the profession before they've even started. By not supporting our students better, governments are undermining critical recruitment efforts," explains Linda Silas, president of the CFNU.

Paying students for mandatory hours worked in clinical placements is a way governments can provide much needed relief to students.

Eyasu Yakob is a fourth-year nursing student and past president of the Canadian Nursing Students' Association. Yakob will have worked more than 1,400 hours of unpaid work in clinical placements by the end of the program.

"Students in male-dominated fields receive compensation throughout their training, while nursing students, in a critically needed and highly skilled profession, are left struggling," said Yakob.

The survey revealed that nursing students overwhelmingly want to find full-time work in their home province, with many intending to practice at the bedside – a positive finding for provinces and territories with student-focused recruitment efforts.

"Students see the crisis in care, and they are actively working to help. It's our job, as unions, employers and governments, to break down barriers for students to practice," said Silas. "Together, we can ensure that full-time nursing jobs are the most attractive and rewarding jobs in our communities."

The Canada-wide survey of 3,571 nursing students was conducted by Viewpoints Research from late October to late November 2024.



*For detailed information about survey findings,
scan the QR code with your device's camera*



CANADIAN FEDERATION
OF NURSES UNIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS TO EMPOWER IENS IN CANADA TO PRACTICE

As governments look to internationally educated nurses (IENs) to address Canada's nursing shortage, a new report is calling for policy changes to better support IENs joining the profession once they're in the country. Despite the sacrifices IENs make to relocate their lives and families to Canada, only 42% of those who are employed as nurses.

The report, *Bolstering Pathways to Practice: Empowering Internationally Educated Nurses in Canada*, was authored by Dr. Makini McGuire-Brown in partnership with the CFNU and World Education Services (WES) and released on February 19, 2025.

"Internationally educated nurses are a key component of our governments' plans to address the nursing crisis in Canada. Yet tens of thousands of IENs currently living in Canada are not working in the profession," said Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU).

The report includes detailed recommendations for a standardized route to licensure for IENs across Canada, wrap-around supports for IENs and effective workplace integration.

CFNU partnered with WES to understand what the key barriers have been for IENs living in Canada, who have been unable to become registered in a timely manner. Workshops and feedback sessions with IENs across the country were key to forming the basis of the nuanced recommendations in this report.

Silas emphasized the urgent need to dismantle the barriers to practice that IENs currently living in Canada are facing.

"All workers, be they domestically trained or internationally trained, deserve to be treated with dignity and respect," said Silas. "Support for successful integration is the respect nurses need and deserve when they've uprooted their lives and moved countries to practice. Together, we need to clear pathways for IENs to practice and, in turn, ease the pressure in nursing across the country."

CFNU greatly appreciates the insights of our IEN advisory committee, comprised of Angela Crawford from BCNU, Marierose Acero from SUN, Baljinder Singh from NSNU, as well as very valuable insights from Donna Gillis, NSNU 1st Vice-President and a clinical nurse educator who helps onboard IENs in Nova Scotia.

FULL REPORT
& EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY





B.C. nurses rally for workplace safety and staffing reforms

Hundreds of nurses rallied in Vancouver on February 27th, calling for better working conditions, increased staffing, and safer workplaces as negotiations for a new contract with B.C.'s health employers are about to begin.

The rally, organized by the B.C. Nurses' Union (BCNU) saw nurses from across the province march through downtown streets and gather outside the Vancouver Art Gallery, where union president Adriane Gear highlighted the challenges facing nurses. Gear says violence in healthcare settings has reached alarming levels.

On average, 26 nurses a month in B.C. suffer a violent injury at work, according to the union.

The nurses' rally is part of a larger push by the BCNU to establish key priorities ahead of collective bargaining. BCNU's current contract between nurses and provincial health employers expires on March 31, 2025.

The union president is calling on the province to invest in rural and remote staffing incentives, minimum nurse-to-patient ratios, and the use of trained relational security officers to manage violent incidents in health-care facilities.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton was in B.C. to participate in BCNU's bargaining conference, lend her expertise on the topic of joint benefits trust plans and attend the rally.



The background of the top section of the page features a large, 3D-style sign for an "EMERGENCY" department. The letters are light pink and mounted on a white ledge against a light-colored wall.

First Internal Travel Nurse Program

Registered nurses can now apply to participate in the province's first internal travel nurse program. The pilot program will create a Nova Scotia Health travel nurse team to be deployed to emergency departments.

The new program will hire 20 to 30 full-time registered nurses and offer internal and external candidates an opportunity to grow their skills and experience, travel and work in different areas. It is a joint effort of the Province, Nova Scotia Health and the Nova Scotia Council of Nursing Unions (NSCNU).

"Since before the pandemic, nurses' unions have been calling on the Province to reduce its reliance on agency nurses. This announcement is a step in the right direction, one that provides structure, support and stability for those interested in working in this area of nursing and for Nova Scotians who require care," says Janet Hazelton, Chair, Nova Scotia Council of Nursing Unions, and President, Nova Scotia Nurses' Union.

Internal candidates will receive a 15% pay increase and continue to accrue pension and seniority and maintain their benefits with Nova Scotia Health.

In 2023, the NSCNU negotiated an acute care agreement that included the creation of a Joint Working Committee related to Internal Travel Nurses parties. The aim is to reduce and work towards eliminating the dependence and use of external travel agencies and establish an internal travel nurse resource/agency.

The joint working group was tasked to develop a viable employment model to employ internal travel nurses, create a compensation model and framework that will attract and retain internal travel nurses and address union jurisdiction for internal travel nurses that travel within the province.

Source: Government of Nova Scotia News Release, February 27, 2025

NATIONAL NURSING WEEK 2025

The Power of Nurses to Transform Health

Mark your calendars! National Nursing Week (NNW) takes place from **May 12-18, 2025**, serving as an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the hard work and dedication of nurses across Canada and the world.

The theme, **The Power of Nurses to Transform Health**, recognizes the remarkable impact that nurses have in shaping health care, driving innovation and advocating for patient care. Nurses not only play a crucial role in directly impacting the lives of patients, but also in advocating for their own working conditions and labour rights. Through union activism, nurses have historically

worked to ensure that their voices are heard, not just in providing quality care, but in shaping the policies that impact their daily lives.

Nurses aren't just fighting for their own well-being - they're pushing for a better healthcare system that ultimately benefits all Canadians.

Throughout NNW and beyond, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union celebrates our nurses and their commitment to improving the health and well-being of Nova Scotians.

VON PENSION PLAN

In late January 2025, after many years in dispute, Arbitrator William Kaplan ruled that VON is required to make significant pension improvements for plan members.

In 2020, the unions involved filed grievances seeking VON's compliance to institute significant pension improvements for plan members dating back to 2006. It has taken the unions nearly twenty years to get these benefit cuts reversed. Six unions in two provinces pooled their resources over this time period to achieve this important win.

The improvements to the plan apply only to active employees, retirees who are collecting a VON pension, and former employees who will collect a VON pension at retirement. Former employees who withdrew their pension from the plan when they left employment no longer have an entitlement to benefits from the plan and will not receive pension increases resulting from the award.

The improvements delivered under this award mean nurses employed by VON are earning a pension that is more in line with healthcare industry standards.

While work on implementing the award is in progress, we remind members that the process will not be immediate. Arbitrator Kaplan and the unions will remain engaged to ensure there is no undue delay. VON will continue to communicate with members and the unions as often as required.

We are deeply thankful to our members for their solidarity and patience throughout this especially complicated grievance. We are thankful to you for the important work you do every day.

In solidarity, NSNU, NSGEU, ONA, CUPE, SEIU Healthcare and OPSEU/SEFPO represent more than 1,600 active members of the VON Canada Pension Plan in Nova Scotia and Ontario.

CNA will offer the following during National Nursing Week:

Monday, May 12, 1pm AST:

The Role of Nurses in Indigenous Health Care

Tuesday, May 13, 1pm AST:

The Power of Nurses to Transform Our Health, Our Future & Our Planet

Thursday, May 15, 1pm AST:

AI & Nursing

Friday May 16:

The Power of Nurses to Transform: A Fireside Chat with Nursing Leaders

Registration details coming soon. Check CNA's Facebook for more. Please note that these times and dates are subject to change.



***As always, send us your #NNW2025
Celebrations to communications@nsnu.ca!***



THE VALUE OF A UNION



The nursing workforce is the largest of all the healthcare professions - the backbone of the healthcare system. Embraced by a union, a nurse's voice is amplified many times over, increasing its influence and ability to transform.

Unions **unite** and empower members, **advocate** for appropriate working terms and conditions, and **defend** workers.

Unions **negotiate** from a position of respect so workers earn a good living, have job security and work life balance.

Why do I need a union like NSNU?

Unionism is about community. The Nurses' Union provides that environment, and services that are unique to nurses. Our staff, many of whom are nurses, offer expertise and support on issues they understand and relate to. Having a union on your side means you're never alone when navigating your career obligations and employee rights.

Union representatives, like your Board of Directors, are the spokespeople who channel your concerns to the public, media, government, regulatory body, employers and other organizations to resolve issues and secure your standing in the workforce.

What are the benefits of collective bargaining?

Skilled representatives of the union lead negotiations on behalf of members. The NSNU employs staff who conduct research on labour and healthcare related issues that inform negotiations. Staff have in-depth knowledge of interpreting contract language and enforcing collective agreements. Teamwork between staff and your Board of Directors ensures your best interests are the primary consideration.

Collective agreements give agency to all workers and consistent protection from arbitrary management practices.

What does Union Solidarity mean?

Unions exist within a network of like-minded organizations that uplift each other and build momentum on common goals. Together, the labour movement has achieved great things including the minimum wage, maximum working hours, paid holidays and leaves, equal pay for work of equal value as well as anti-discrimination laws.

Do union workers get higher wages?

Workers who are union members earn higher wages than non-union workers. The difference is even greater for women and people of colour.

Do union workers receive better benefits?

Union workers are more likely than their non-union counterparts to have access to health care and pension benefits, LTD, and LOA. Unions are responsible for securing and improving maternity, paternity, shared parental and carer leave for countless workers.

If I'm injured or sick, what provisions are available to me?

Workers who may become sick or injured on or away from the job have options. An accommodation offers working conditions customized to meet an employee's specific needs. While sick time, short or long-term disability, provides coverage for more serious illnesses or injuries.

Is a unionized workplace safer?

Yes and no. Union representatives ensure that workers are trained in occupational health and safety measures to deal with issues ranging from stress and mental health issues to hazardous substances, while also presenting their coworkers' health and safety interests to management. A safe work environment is a shared responsibility between unions, employers and employees. We must all do our part. One lapse in judgement or responsibility could result in harm. However, there are consequences and accountability provisions in place within a unionized work environment. Unions strongly recommend safe hours of work and champion safe staffing initiatives.



If I have a work problem, does the union offer legal services and advice?

In situations such as disciplinary and grievance hearings, your union representative can give you expert advice, support and representation from start to finish. Unions have legal teams who ensure you are treated fairly, free of charge. Your union is there for you whether the problem pertains to employment contracts, harassment, layoffs, pensions or discrimination.

What mechanisms are in place to ensure I have a say in union matters?

Your vote and input matter. The majority of members must vote to approve an agreement before it can be ratified or accepted as a contract. Members can also determine who speaks for their Local, region, sector and designation. Locals select Table Officers and Shop Stewards who represent their views in management meetings and at provincial union gatherings, similar to parliamentary representation.

Participating in NSNU and CFNU polls and surveys ensure your opinions and feedback contribute to union dialogue and decision making. Unions are democratic entities that encourage engagement and participation.

The labour movement was built by people with ideas and ideals, a passion for fairness and a conviction for improving workers' everyday lives.

Unions harmonize diverse voices. Unions strive to elevate the working experience, standard of living and recognition of not just their members, but of all who labour.

At a time when unions are under attack and the world is divided, let's remain united.

NSNU thanks our incredible members for their commitment to nursing and for placing your trust in the union movement.

I'm a mid-career nurse. What does a Union membership provide for me?

A good collective agreement offers something for everyone. For younger nurses there are leaves to raise a family, mobility, career advancement and educational offerings (including labour education), and the ability to accumulate pensionable earnings at an early age. For mid-to-late career nurses there's scheduling flexibility, stable wages, and family leaves for life's unexpected events. And for late career nurses there can be accommodations, mentoring and preceptor roles, the promise of a guaranteed retirement income and peace of mind.

What else does the Union offer?

NSNU offers scholarships, bursaries and grants for nurses and their family members, and for Locals. The Nurses' Union fights for social justice causes (pharmacare, 2SLGBTQIA+ community, racialized workers, the impacts of climate change, food insecurity, war torn regions, the determinants of health, programs and shelters for women and children fleeing violence and addiction, natural disasters, and Medicare) and encourages nurses to mobilize on issues, demonstrating the inspiring compassion and courage of the profession. By getting involved you help advance patient care and the nursing experience.

#BETTERTOGETHER



IWD 2025

Accelerate Action!

On March 7th, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour observed its 10th anniversary, celebrating International Women's Day (IWD) with its trademark breakfast. The NSFL Women's Committee, including Donna Gillis, NSNU's 1st Vice President and Natalie Nymark, VP IWK, offered an informative and impactful agenda to mark the occasion.

The IWD breakfast included a panel discussion addressing gender-based violence. Since 1990, seventy-five women in Nova Scotia have been murdered by an intimate partner - seven of those IPV deaths occurred since October 2024. These are alarming and shameful statistics.

Attendees at the sold-out event heard from policing representatives, a sexual assault nurse educator (SANE) and survivor, a relative of a high-profile victim, and the project coordinator from the Immigrant Migrant Women's Association of Halifax who reminded the audience that immigrant and migrant women are highly susceptible to discrimination, isolation and sexual violence.

The closing message came from Jennifer Spencer, NP who talked about the Adult Comfort Promise which empowers women to speak up to change the culture of pain and suffering in women's health.

This year, The NSFL Women's Committee conferred two Bread and Roses awards. The Sister of the Year Award celebrates a union sister who has proven their dedication to the trade union movement and the advancement of women's voices. The 2025 recipient is NSGEU member, Donna MacGregor. The first ever New Sister of the Year Award, which recognizes a sister who's new to union activism and her contributions to the labour movement was also presented. That distinction went to NSTU member, Eileen Hiltz. Congratulations to both Donna and Eileen.

Thank you to the Women's Committee and NSFL staff for a very successful event.



NSNU Members & Staff at NSFL IWD Breakfast 2025



More Funding for THANS

On March 7th, 2025 the Nova Scotia government announced it is taking action to address the epidemic of intimate partner violence with a new \$23.7-million funding commitment to transition houses. This investment includes \$17.9 million over four years to stabilize operations at ten transition houses. Government parties worked with the Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (THANS) to ensure this new funding commitment would meet the needs of its members over the next several years.

The government is providing an additional \$1.9 million in project-based funding to association members to advance initiatives that prevent or address gender-based violence. This is part of \$5.8 million in new project-based funding for the sector.

"This investment is a vital step toward providing safety, shelter and support to women and children experiencing violence. This funding brings much-needed stability to meet the growing demand for services. We appreciate the province's recognition of the essential role transition houses and other community organizations play in responding to and preventing intimate partner violence, and to strengthen support for survivors," says Ann de Ste. Croix, Executive Director, Transition House Association of Nova Scotia

Annually, the NSNU provides a lumpsum financial contribution to THANS to support the important work they do within our communities.

To learn more about Transition House Association of Nova Scotia go to thans.ca.

A Dose of Humour

How Nurse John Became a Viral Voice for Nurses



Nursing stands out as one of the most fulfilling, yet demanding professions in health care. In the face of ongoing challenges and heavy workloads, one nurse has used social media to highlight the highs and lows of the profession, fostering a sense of community among nurses across North America and beyond – John Dela Cruz, a Filipino-Canadian registered nurse and social media influencer known as @Nurse.Johnn.

Nurse John began his nursing career during the peak of the pandemic, a period marked by unprecedented stress and anxiety for healthcare workers. At the same time, his unexpected rise to fame was sparked by a video he accidentally shared on TikTok, which resonated with viewers and launched him into the spotlight.

Since then, John has used his platform to highlight the underappreciated work of nurses, providing a voice for healthcare professionals and comfort for those who feel unheard. His rise to fame as a social media influencer showcases his unique talent for merging humour with reality in a way that deeply connects with both nurses and the broader public.

Transitioning from medical-surgical nursing to the fast-paced emergency department has equipped John with a wealth of experiences. His relatable content and skits

reflect the dual nature of nursing—where intense pressure meets profound gratitude from patients. John’s ability to find humour amidst the chaos of healthcare has made him beloved by millions, particularly among nurses who see their own struggles mirrored in his work.

In addition to his rising fame on social media, his North American stand-up comedy tour, “The Short Staffed Tour,” and his top-rated weekly podcast, “I Beg Your Pardon,” have made him a household name in nursing.

Beyond the laughs, Nurse John uses his platform to address serious issues affecting the nursing profession. He frequently participates in media discussions to address critical issues like the nurse staffing crisis and working conditions. John remains committed to the profession, establishing himself as a trusted voice in the conversation surrounding healthcare reform.

His work continues to inspire and uplift nurses around the world, serving as a reminder of the impact one individual can have. Nurse John’s story illustrates that even in the most demanding of professions, there is always room for joy, laughter and meaningful change.

FIND HIM AT @Nurse.Johnn

Upcoming Board Meetings

Thursday, **May 22**

Wednesday, **June 25**

Friday, **August 29**

Friday, **September 26**

Friday, **October 27**

Wednesday, **November 26**

All members of the Nurses’ Union may attend meetings of the Board of Directors at their own expense, as non-voting observers if they have notified the office of the Nurses’ Union at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting (or less if mutually agreed by the Board) they wish to attend. Contact debbie.grady@nsnu.ca to inquire.

7 Reasons **48th AGM**

TO GET EXCITED ABOUT

There are plenty of reasons to look forward to the upcoming **NSNU 48th Annual General Meeting**, happening **April 14-17** at the Best Western Glengarry Hotel in Truro.

1 **Important Debates About Representation, Workplace Violence, Public Health Care and More!**

The AGM is where key decisions are made on resolutions that affect the future direction of the Union. Members are encouraged to stand up and share their views on complex issues to help inform the Union's position going forward. The discussions can impact everything from policy changes to constitutional amendments, projects of the union and much more.

2 **Inspiring and Informative Guest Speakers**

The NSNU AGM and Education Day features speakers from diverse backgrounds, sharing their insights on issues that matter to nurses and other workers. Guest speakers provide a break from the rigours of the business aspect of the AGM, while offering unique perspectives on issues that are relatable to many.

We are looking forward to several guest speakers this year, including nurse-comedian Zabrina Douglas, financial expert Jim Yih, employee-wellness expert JD Gilmour, CFNU President Linda Silas, Minister of Health and Wellness Michelle Thompson and others.

3 **Using Your Voice**

Throughout the AGM, members are encouraged to speak on issues that are important to them. This can include supporting or offering a different perspective on resolutions, asking questions, and sharing personal stories with relation to the topic at hand.

Many of the members who attend the AGM will come as voting delegates. Voting delegates represent the opinion of their Local as they vote on resolutions and elect union leadership.

4 **Learning From Others**

The AGM provides a venue for the NSNU president to address members about the work that has been done by the Union over the past year, and discuss some of the issues the Union plans to tackle over the next several months. Members also participate in regional and component meetings where they'll hear targeted updates from their reps on the Board of Directors.



PARK'N FLY



GIFT CERTIFICATE WINNER!

The lucky winner of the NSNU **Park'N Fly Certificate** is **Jamie Ferns**.

This Park'N Fly certificate offers complimentary parking for up to eight days at Halifax Standfield International Airport and **Park'N Fly**.

Jamie is a registered nurse working at Colchester East Hants Health Centre. Congrats Jamie!

Over 350 NSNU members entered the **Park'N Fly** draw which closed on January 31st.

Park'N Fly offers discounts to all members. For more information on this and other NSNU member discounts go to nsnu.ca/MembersOnly. You will require your login credentials (username and password) to access this webpage.



5 Strengthening Your Professional Network

The AGM is a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow nurses from across Nova Scotia. Whether you're a newcomer or an experienced activist, you'll build your network, make new friends, and deepen your relationships with colleagues. This camaraderie is one of the highlights of the event.

6 Expanding Your Knowledge of Labour Rights

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 and the Nova Scotia Health Coalition are familiar faces at our event, taking time out of their busy schedules to provide updates on important issues and share the inspiring work being done in our communities and beyond.

7 Earning Practice Premium Points

Each year, members are eligible to earn up to \$1700 by submitting their Practice Premium Points and Leadership Premium Points. Points can be earned by participating in educational endeavours outside of work, like taking a course, attending a lunch and learn, participating in workshops, doing committee work, and attending the NSNU AGM and Education Day. Members who participate in the AGM and Education Day are eligible to collect Premium Points. Attendees will receive certificates that can be submitted to their employer. Please refer to your contract for details on how to accrue and submit your premium points.

If you can't attend in person, don't worry - resolutions and other important documents are available on the AGM webpage at nsnu.ca/AGM2025, so you can stay up-to-date. You can also follow along on social media as the event unfolds.

Tech Troubleshooting

Troubleshooting is a catchy way to say problem-solving in the world of technology. When you come across issues with a website, software or your device, there are several steps you can take to identify and solve the problem.

Due to the online nature of many NSNU resources, communications and forms, we have created a dedicated space on nsnu.ca to help members troubleshoot issues they may encounter on the web.

For instance, if you are having trouble logging into your NSNU account or a specific page on nsnu.ca, try accessing it through a private or "incognito" browser. Learn how to access a private browser, how to clean your cache, and more at: nsnu.ca/troubleshooting.

When simple troubleshooting efforts are not successful, please notify NSNU. This will allow us to remedy the issue as quickly and efficiently as possible.

what's **nu?** with members + other nurses

NEB Meetings in Ottawa

From February 3-6th, NSNU President Janet Hazelton, 1st Vice President Donna Gillis and NSNU Executive Director Chris Albrecht participated in meetings of the National Executive Board (NEB) of the CFNU.

Comprised almost entirely of nurses, the NEB conducts face-to-face meetings twice a year - working to improve the working lives of nurses, strategizing and acting to improve nursing workplaces and address issues that impact the health of all Canadians.



IWD Rally in NYC

While attending the 69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, Janet Hazelton spent International Women's Day in New York City. Alongside leaders from our nursing counterparts, they demonstrated the strength and solidarity of Canada's nurses at the #IWD2025 rally!

African Heritage Month Events

As a member of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour's Anti-Racism and Human Rights Committee, NSNU's Central Vice-President Anne Boutilier (pictured centre, in pink) attended the African Heritage Month Gala in Halifax on February 22nd - a sold-out celebration of the rich culture and heritage of the black community in Nova Scotia.

The committee also attended *Freedom Swell*, a documentary on the North Preston Surf School and a Q&A with the producer LeMeia Riddick, held at the Bus Stop Theatre.



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

Engaging with Future Nurses

NSNU President Janet Hazelton had the opportunity to visit Truro's NSCC campus and meet virtually with practical nursing students at NSCC's Strait and Burridge campuses.

During these sessions, Janet covered a range of topics including professional practice concerns, the significance of union involvement, the realities of nursing, and other workplace issues.

These meetings play an important role in students' education - allowing for open conversation while addressing their concerns, Janet not only aids in their academic journey, but also prepares them for the challenges they may face in their future nursing profession.

Janet enjoys creating a dialogue with aspiring nurses, many of whom will become members of the NSNU as they graduate and begin their careers.



Generations of Nursing

We're thrilled to feature Kailey Taylor, LPN (2024), and her mom, Amy Taylor, RN (since 1997). This dynamic duo can be found working alongside one another at the Annapolis Valley Community Health Centre.

Kailey's path to nursing was inspired by her mom's unwavering dedication to the profession, and together they share a passion for making a difference in the lives of their patients.

As we approach Mother's Day, we want to honour the many mother-child duos across Nova Scotia. If you have a similar story, we invite you to share it with NSNU! Let's celebrate the generations of nurses who inspire and support each other every day.

We also look forward to recognizing dads on Father's Day, which is just around the corner. Please feel free to send us those stories as well!

 SEND TO communications@nsnu.ca

The Critical Role of Nurses

Social Media Misinformation & Health

The increasing spread of misinformation, disinformation and malinformation on social media platforms is a growing concern, particularly when it comes to public health and well-being.

In recent years, social media has become a dominant source of news and information for many people. However, the rapid spread of false or misleading content can have serious consequences, especially when it pertains to critical issues like health, politics and global events.

A major concern with the growing amount of misleading content on social media is the potential to undermine trust in credible sources. When people are exposed to conflicting or inaccurate information, they may become skeptical about the reliability of what they encounter, which can lead to confusion and poor decision-making, especially in areas such as health.

For nurses, who are trusted professionals and vital sources of accurate health information, the rise of misinformation presents a significant challenge. As frontline healthcare providers, nurses often interact with patients who turn to social media for guidance on health matters. With so much inaccurate and potentially harmful information circulating online, nurses must be vigilant in helping their patients navigate these platforms and make informed decisions.

In particular, nurses should be prepared to counteract the spread of false health information, whether it concerns vaccines, treatments or general medical advice. The role of healthcare professionals has expanded beyond the clinical setting to include education in the digital realm. By equipping patients with reliable, evidence-based information, nurses can help prevent the dangerous effects of misinformation, particularly when it comes to public health crises, such as pandemics or immunization campaigns.

Encouraging patients to question sources, fact-check claims, and be skeptical of sensational headlines can empower them to make more informed choices. Given that social media platforms are often designed to prioritize sensational or emotional content which can fuel misinformation, nurses can remind their patients to seek out trusted, authoritative sources like medical organizations and healthcare providers.

By remaining vigilant, educating themselves on the risks of digital misinformation, and actively engaging in conversations about the importance of reliable health information, nurses can help curb the harmful effects of false content and maintain trust in public health.

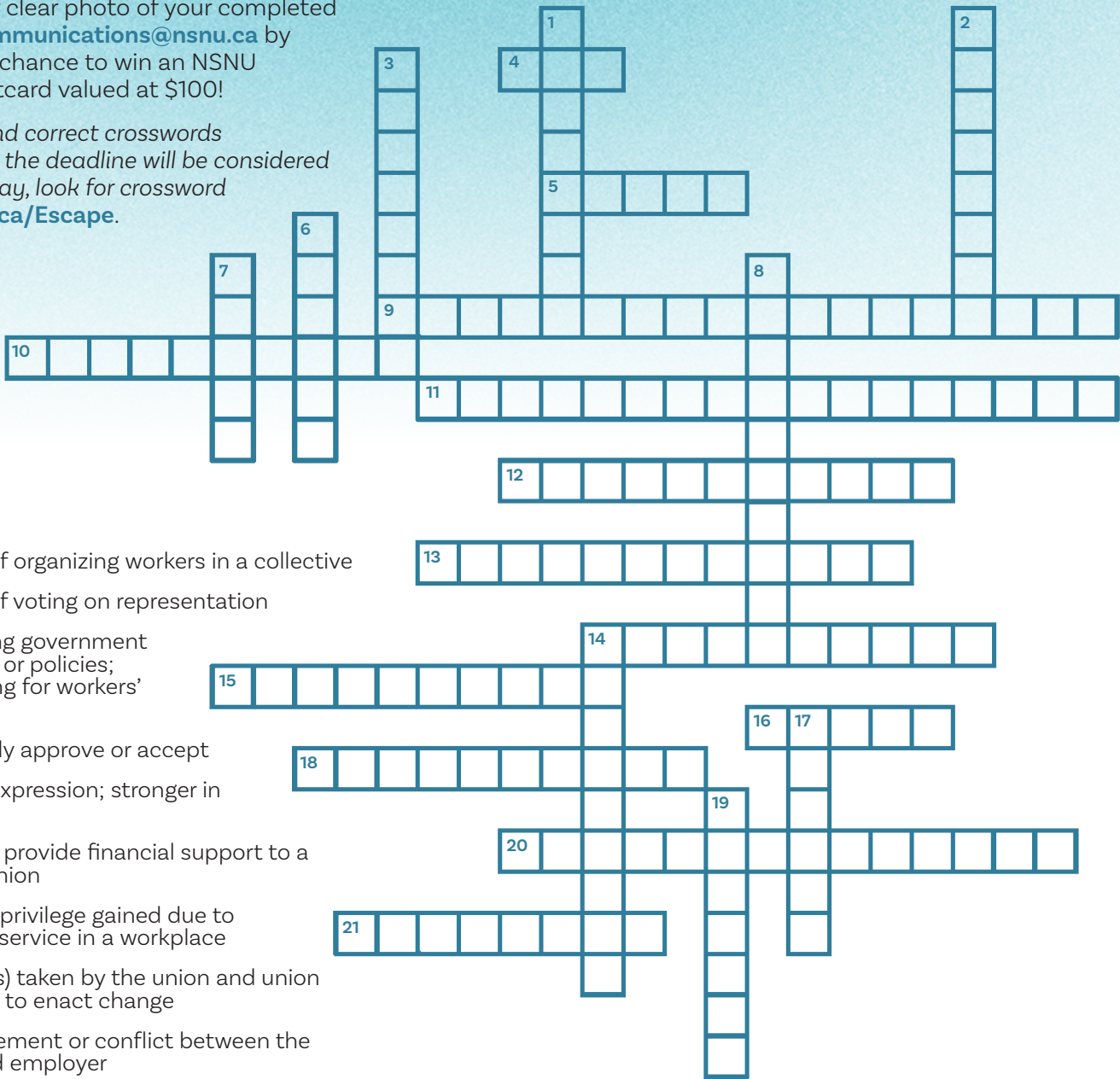


NURSES' UNION CROSSWORD

Union Vocabulary Edition

Submit a scan or clear photo of your completed crossword to communications@nsnu.ca by **April 30** for your chance to win an NSNU Nurses' Nook giftcard valued at \$100!

Only complete and correct crosswords submitted before the deadline will be considered for the draw. In May, look for crossword answers at nsnu.ca/Escape.



DOWN

1. Process of organizing workers in a collective
2. Process of voting on representation
3. Influencing government decisions or policies; advocating for workers' rights
6. To formally approve or accept
7. A verbal expression; stronger in numbers
8. Money to provide financial support to a striking union
14. Status or privilege gained due to length of service in a workplace
17. Measure(s) taken by the union and union members to enact change
19. A disagreement or conflict between the union and employer

ACROSS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. National professional voice for nurses in Canada 5. Healthcare provider who focuses on the health needs of an individual; rhymes with purse 9. Advanced practice nurses who diagnose and treat medical conditions 10. Process of negotiating terms/conditions between the union and employer 11. Number of patients assigned to each nurse 12. Elected officer of a Local who represents workers in discussions with the employer 13. Principle of providing equal access to quality healthcare for all | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Unity among workers or union members 15. A physical line formed by striking workers during a labour dispute 16. A gathering of union members or supporters to demonstrate solidarity 18. Safeguards such as job security, legal representation, and health and safety provisions 20. A subsection of union members 21. The collective power of union members |
|--|---|

It pays to be a member!



Nova Scotia Nurses' Union members can receive exclusive home and car insurance savings and enhanced coverages.



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