

50
*Years
Strong*

what's
MAY **nu.?**



highlights

AGM Recap
NSNU Survey Results
National Nursing Week 2026

COURAGE TO *lead* • CONFIDENCE TO *challenge* • COMMITMENT TO *care*

Highlights



PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK

What's In Store for the NSNU?

FEATURES

- 6** CFNU NP Report
Retention & Recruitment
- 9** Solidarity in Action
Support for CUPE LTC
- 17** CLC Convention
We Build. We Care. We Fight.
- 21** School Health Partnership
Meet the Nurses
- 23** Nursing Dedication & Service
Theresa Dewar's Legacy
- 24** What's Nu Snapshots
NSNU Members in Action



Connect with us



150 GARLAND AVE.
DARTMOUTH, N.S.



FAX
1.902.466.6935



WEBSITE
NSNU.CA



PHONE
1.800 / 902.469.1474



EMAIL
NSNU.OFFICE@NSNU.CA
COMMUNICATIONS@NSNU.CA



MYNSNU APP
AVAILABLE IN APPLE APP
& GOOGLE PLAY STORES
OR AT NSNU.ITACIT.COM

Follow us



FACEBOOK
NOVA SCOTIA NURSES' UNION



INSTAGRAM
NSNURSESU



BLUESKY
NSNU.BSKY.SOCIAL



YOUTUBE
NSNURSESUNION

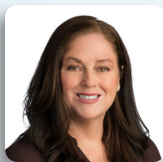
ON THE COVER

NSNU President Janet Hazelton welcomes members and guests to the 2026 Annual General Meeting in Truro.

Board of Directors



JANET HAZELTON
PRESIDENT
janet.hazelton@nsnu.ca



TRACY D'ENTREMONT
WESTERN VP
tracy.d'entremont@nsnu.ca



DONNA GILLIS
1ST VICE-PRESIDENT
donna.gillis@nsnu.ca



ALAINE HALLIDAY
VP LPNS
alaine.halliday@nsnu.ca



JAMIE STEWART
VP FINANCE
jamie.stewart@nsnu.ca



DUANA D'ENTREMONT
VP NPS
duana.d'entremont@nsnu.ca



LAURIE FORREST
EASTERN VP
laurie.forrest@nsnu.ca



GLENDA SABINE
VP LONG TERM CARE
glenda.sabine@nsnu.ca



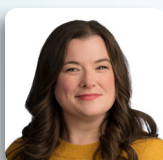
ANNE BOUTILIER
CENTRAL VP
anne.boutilier@nsnu.ca



KIM WILLIAMS
VP COMMUNITY CARE
kim.williams@nsnu.ca



DENISE ELMS
NORTHERN VP
denise.elms@nsnu.ca



NATALIE NYMARK
IWK VP
natalie.nymark@nsnu.ca

Land Acknowledgement

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union 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.



[NSNU.CA/INDIGENOUS-RESOURCE-CENTRE](https://nsnu.ca/indigenous-resource-centre)

Member Profiles

To update contact information and union status, go to nsnu.ca/MembersOnly (login credentials required) and locate **Update Profile Info**. This includes changes of names, addresses, emails, phone numbers, place of employment, work status and designations.

New members to the NSNU will continue to complete an online form located at nsnu.ca/education/orientation.

Locals are encouraged to remind new grads and new members to complete the form so they will receive notices, promotions and other information.

President's Notebook

What's In Store for the NSNU

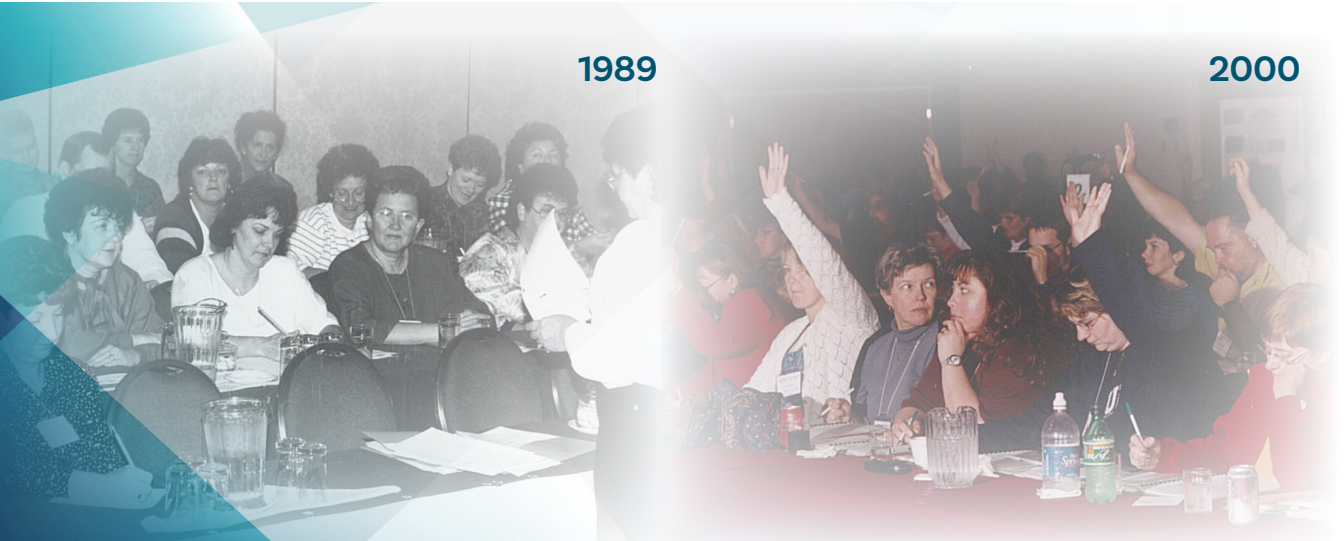
Television's top-rated Survivor, Hollywood's Reese Witherspoon and the NSNU all celebrate the big 5-0 this year. Considered the "halfway" point by some standards, the Nurses' Union sees this milestone as a point of reflection, pride and activation.

According to some authorities, turning 50 represents a significant shift from "building" to realization. It is viewed as a watershed moment that examines accumulated wisdom and accomplishment - a time to reassess priorities, embrace strengths and missteps, and build greater momentum. It is no time to rest on laurels.

In 2023, the Nova Scotia Council of Nursing negotiated numerous innovative and imperative articles contributing to one of the best collective agreements the Union had ever achieved. The Nursing Council was committed to negotiating contract language that improves work-life issues like violence in the workplace and nurse patient ratios (NPRs).

During that round of bargaining, the Council held a total of 29 face-to-face sessions with nurse representatives from all four unions and the employer group. It was historic in the way it approached the process, face-to-face and interest-based negotiations, and in its goals. While wages, benefits and other monetary incentives are crucial to recruitment and retention of nurses, so are the less tangible wins like funding and innovation for programs that promote and provide safer workplaces.

We know from countless surveys and consultation with nurses and other experts in the field that achieving safe nurse-patient ratios is a priority. Concerns about burn-out and unsafe practice aside, nurses want to provide the best care possible in order to achieve positive outcomes for patients and their families. That is not achievable when staffing is thin and patient demands are high. Ensuring that NPRs reach fruition sooner than later is paramount. Implementing legally mandated, safe



Janet Hazelton
BScN RN, MPA, ICD.D



patient-to-staff ratios to prevent burnout and ensure quality care is urgent.

Fueled by some very positive “first steps” in making workplaces safer, like AI weapons detection and other enhanced security measures, the NSNU will continue to fight for safer workspaces for all our members. We know the risks are high and sometimes different for our members in the community and in long term care. We aim to eradicate violence and aggression against nurses in acute care but also in all sectors of care. All nurses deserve to work free from harm at the hands of those in their care, and other unsafe working conditions.

These are only two of the goals the NSNU hopes to realize in the near future. There are countless others that require our attention and your input.

We will also strengthen our advocacy role as champions of Medicare.

At a time when other jurisdictions in Canada are promoting two-tiered healthcare, user-pay medical procedures, and private-for-profit business models, the NSNU will fight like a dog with a bone to protect our public system. We will be a loud and persistent voice for patients by lobbying for better, consistent care standards for everyone, regardless of income or background.

The NSNU’s short-term objectives will be scoped out at a Board of Directors summit in June when a new multi-year strategic plan is developed. A blueprint for the long-term is a lofty undertaking which will continue to be shaped and monitored by our diligent members at future annual meetings.

The first fifty years have been great, with much to celebrate and be proud of. The next 50 is something to look forward to.

Janet Hazelton
BScN RN, MPA, ICD.D





New nurse practitioner report highlights pressure points to retention and recruitment

Although the nurse practitioner workforce has doubled over the last decade, a new report released in April of this year from the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) reveals a growing strain in the profession.

In a study of more than 1,300 nurse practitioners from all provinces and territories, 37% of NPs expressed an intention to leave their position, with most pointing to inadequate compensation as the leading cause.

“When more than one in three NPs say they’re considering walking away from their position, we know that more must be done to support and retain this critical workforce. The 42 recommendations create a strong roadmap for governments, employers, nursing leaders, researchers and unions to help NPs thrive,” said Linda Silas, CFNU president.

Silas emphasized that 41% of nurse practitioners reported dissatisfaction with reward distribution – a combination of salary, paid time off and employer benefits. This figure is in line with findings from a 2018 report published by the CFNU, wherein 44% of NPs reported dissatisfaction with their overall compensation.

“Nearly 10 years has passed since we learned how dissatisfied nurse practitioners are with their compensation. Now provinces and territories are looking to nurse practitioners as a solution to the pressing need for primary health care, and retention has become more critical than ever,” Silas said.

The report ***Pressure Points: Strengthening and Retaining Canada’s Nurse Practitioner Workforce*** was led by Dr. Erin Ziegler, a nurse practitioner and associate professor with the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing at Toronto Metropolitan University, as part of a broader research team.

Key recommendations from the report include:

- 1 Create positive work environments by strengthening organizational support, reducing burnout, ensuring reasonable workloads and increasing NP participation in decision-making, professional development and research.
- 2 Modernize remuneration and funding models to ensure equitable, transparent and competitive compensation that reflects NP scope, workload and contributions across diverse practice settings.
- 3 Implement comprehensive health human resource planning, including workforce forecasting, transition-to-practice programs, mentorship for novice NPs and strategies to retain experienced practitioners.

“Investing in nurse practitioners through supportive work environments, fair compensation and strategic workforce planning is essential to sustaining Canada’s health care system. Addressing these issues will strengthen NP retention, enhance access to care, and ensure a resilient workforce capable of meeting the current and future needs of patients in Canada,” said Dr. Ziegler.

The report can be found at:
nursesunions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Pressure-points-Interactive.pdf

or scan
QR code:



*Canada needs
nurses.*

**You need a
tax break.**



Canada continues to face a persistent nursing shortage, driven in part by retention challenges, heavy workloads and the pressure of excessive overtime. That's why the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions is advocating for a new income tax incentive targeted to support nursing retention and recruitment.

In the most recent federal budget, the government introduced a refundable tax credit for personal support workers, recognizing the value of targeted federal tax measures in supporting frontline health care workers. A comparable federal tax credit for nurses would similarly acknowledge their contribution, strengthen retention, and support access to public health care services across Canada.

It's important to recognize that not all nurses share the same earning potential or opportunity, and some could be managing financial hardships. Even modest financial relief can make a meaningful difference. At the same time, the rising cost of living continues to place added financial strain on all Canadians.

Learn more about this proposed income tax credit and sign the CFNU's parliamentary petition at nsnu.ca/TaxBreakForNurses. This is the roadmap to give all nurses the tax break they deserve.

[nsnu.ca
/TaxBreakForNurses](https://nsnu.ca/TaxBreakForNurses)

*Learn more about the
proposed tax break for nurses*



Sign the Parliamentary Petition

*You'll need to take one more step
to make it official and validate
your signature in your email*

NSNU 2026 Membership Survey

WHAT WE HEARD FROM MEMBERS

Thank you to all members who participated in the 2026 NSNU Membership Survey. As the Nurses' Union marks its 50th year, the survey was an opportunity to reflect on the union's work, identify priorities, and share ideas for the future.

Responses came from members across the province and represented nurses from all sectors, designations, and career stages. The findings provide a valuable snapshot of how members are experiencing the union today, especially what they value, where they see opportunities for improvement, and what they want the NSNU to focus on in the years ahead.

The results show that members continue to value the NSNU as a strong voice for nurses. Important strengths identified in the survey were advocacy, protection of workplace rights, bargaining power, and support during workplace issues.

Members also provided thoughtful feedback on ways to improve. Key themes included stronger local engagement, practical union education, increased visibility, clear and timely communication, and continued attention to the diversity of nursing to ensure the NSNU's structures reflect today's nursing workforce.

Importantly, members shared their priorities for the years ahead. Staffing, workload, wages, retention, workplace safety, and strong advocacy remain central concerns. These are the issues that affect nurses every day, and they will continue to guide the Nurses' Union's work.

The survey highlighted the importance of member connection as well. Members want a clearer understanding of the union's work and more guidance on how to participate in meaningful ways. Nurses active in their union locals described the positive experience that connection brings and encouraged the NSNU to help extend that connection to more members.

The Nurses' Union will use the survey findings to inform strategic planning, strengthen services, support local engagement, and prepare for future challenges, including bargaining and ongoing health system pressures.

Thank you again to everyone who participated. Improvement is a continuous endeavour, and members are welcome to share additional feedback at any time. Your opinion matters and will help shape our next chapter.

2026 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: BY THE NUMBERS

794

nurses completed the survey

85%

rated overall satisfaction with the NSNU as 3 or higher

88%

would speak positively about the NSNU

87%

said being a member benefits them as a nurse

84%

knew members of their local executive

40%

attended a local meeting in the last two years

Bargaining Gains

(wages, staffing, workload, safety, retention) were overwhelmingly the most common future priority identified by nurses

Summary
of Results



***NSNU.CA/
MEMBERSURVEY2026***



Solidarity in Action

NSNU Supports CUPE Long-Term Care Workers

Thousands of CUPE long-term care members remain on strike across Nova Scotia, fighting for a fair contract, better wages, and improved working conditions.

NSNU members have already shown strong solidarity. Many have joined picket lines across the province – standing alongside workers, bringing coffee and supplies, and helping keep morale high. At our recent Annual General Meeting, NSNU Locals pledged more than \$10,000 in support of CUPE’s strike fund – a clear reflection of the collective commitment to supporting fellow health care workers.

NSNU President Janet Hazelton visited several CUPE picket lines to show her support and words of encouragement to striking workers - the people who

care for some of our most vulnerable seniors. Janet joins CUPE leadership and so many others in saying: it’s time to get back to the bargaining table!

We encourage our members to continue showing support for and amplifying the message of our brothers and sisters at CUPE NS. Consider attending rallies in your area. Visiting picket lines with coffee, food, or firewood is always appreciated. Members can also speak with their MLA to reinforce how vital long-term care workers are to residents and families. Messages of solidarity can also be shared through seniorcarematters.ca.

To stay informed and follow developments, visit CUPE Nova Scotia on Facebook.



AGM 2026



As the 50th Anniversary Annual General Meeting of the NSNU wrapped on April 16, close to 300 nurses in attendance over four days walked away with special memories, new connections, new information, and new perspectives. That is the goal of any conference, but this one was made even more memorable due to the milestone celebrations.

Participants caught a glimpse of the NSNU's humble beginnings, learning how the organization went from only 600 members in 1976 to well over 9000, fifty years later.

Members, students and guests were introduced to the builders who made that growth possible - the founders and the early pioneers of the Nurses' Union. Their stories, combined with a tremendous exhibit - **Step into Our Story** - illustrated through photos, documents and artifacts how building a union from a modest initiative into a powerful, collective voice for nurses is a challenging process defined by lows and highs, always inspired by a common goal.

Once again, President Janet Hazelton steered the event with her light-hearted but all-business approach to making everyone from the "first-timers" to the seasoned veterans feel welcomed, heard and informed.

The NSNU Board of Directors met on Sunday, April 12 as per usual, preparing for the conference but also tending to the agenda of a typical board meeting. While they met, staff began the grueling task of setting the stage for what was to come, preparing the meeting rooms, merchandise sales, exhibitor areas, registration and more.

On Monday, members registered, then gathered for regional, component, the IWK, and the 1st Time and 35 and Under meetings. The day-long events provide an opportunity for nurses, categorized by where they live and work, their designation, and their exposure to unionism, to discuss resolutions and prepare for the coming days.

MEMORABILIA EXHIBIT





BRIAN KNOCKWOOD

DAY ONE

Day 1 began with a land acknowledgement followed by drumming and a heartfelt song from Brian Knockwood, proud singer and knowledge keeper from the Mi'kmaq community of the Indian Brook First Nation. This introduction led to an Indigenous Apology presented by the NSNU Board of Directors, an admission of the harms First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples have endured within Canada's healthcare system.

On behalf of all our members, the NSNU Board apologized to Indigenous Peoples who suffered harm due to lack of health care, unethical care and lack of advocacy by nurses and ongoing racism in health care today. Recognizing that nurses were complicit by their silence and/or participation in the neglect, abuse, and suffering of Indigenous men, women and children, the NSNU commits to stand up for Indigenous Peoples' safety and inclusion.



Participants and the Board got down to business by presenting financial reports and the review of eight resolutions. The results of voting on resolutions presented on April 14 can be found at nsnu.ca/AGM2026.



nsnu.ca/AGM2026
Financial Reports, Resolutions, etc.



FINANCE COMMITTEE



CONSTITUTION/RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE



CAUCUS DISCUSSION

On Tuesday evening, the Glengarry Hotel transformed into a captivating Casino, complete with a piano bar, games, great food and merriment. By all accounts, this hospitality event was a hit. Members mingled, hedged their bets at popular Casino tables (no real \$ at play), were serenaded by the talented Carolyn Curry, had their images captured by caricaturist Don Pinsent, and were mystified by William Peterson's sleight of hand. A great evening was had by all.





JUSTIN HILTZ,
NSNU



FARRAH ALLEN-MACKAY
COLCHESTER FOOD NETWORK



PREMIER
TIM HOUSTON



DEAN STIENBERG
NSH DIRECTOR OF SECURITY



JENNIFER BENOIT
NSHC PROVINCIAL COORDINATOR

DAY TWO

Day 2, Wednesday April 15, President Hazelton offered an update on collective bargaining and welcomed numerous guest speakers from affiliate organizations. NSNU's Justin Hiltz, Research and Government Relations, provided an overview of the membership survey which can be found on page 8 of this newsletter.

Each year, members attending the AGM donate dignity items such as menstrual hygiene products and incontinence briefs for all ages. Farrah Allen-McKay, Executive Director of the Colchester Food Network accepted the items and will distribute these essentials to individuals and families in need. Thank you to our generous Locals and members for your continued support of this program.

A very familiar political figure stopped by to speak with nurses and engage in some friendly but meaningful banter with Janet Hazelton on the topics of nursing and health care. Premier Tim Houston took time from his busy schedule to address over 250 nurses assembled in Truro.

In light of the CUPE NS long term care workers who are currently on the picket line, NSNU Locals pledged over \$10,000 for their strike fund. Again, proving that NSNU members are generous, thoughtful and committed to solidarity.



Scholarships & Grants were awarded again this year at the close of Day 2. The recipients are as follows:

belairdirect Grant of **\$1000** awarded to **Mary Kathleen Muise**.

NSNU Continuing Education Scholarship of **\$2000** awarded to **Jennifer Greencorn**.

NSNU Degree/Diploma Scholarship of **\$2000** awarded to **Chloe Daigle**.

NSNU Delores Chase Scholarship, **\$2000** awarded to **Dawn Johnson**.

NSNU Family Scholarship, **\$2000** for a nursing degree program awarded to **Tylar Pitman** whose mom is **Stephanie Pitman**.

NSNU Family Scholarship, **\$2000** for the Licensed Practical Nursing Program awarded to **Karlee Rose** whose mom is **Kimberley Bugden**.

CFNU Annual Scholarship, **\$1000** awarded to **Tanya Condon**.

CFNU Indigenous Student Scholarship, **\$1000** awarded to **Adriana Pack**.

CFNU Kathleen Connors Bursary, **\$1000** for rural and remote nurses awarded to **Chanda MacDonald**.

Elizabeth and Brittany MacPherson Annual Scholarship, **\$1000** awarded to **April Crowe**.

Winnifred Kettleson General Labour Relations Scholarship, **\$1000** for a 1st time attendee to Eastern Labour School awarded to **Amanda Williams**.

Glenna Rowsell Scholarship for **Eastern Labour School** awarded to **Tanya Grant**.

Congratulations to our winners and we wish them the best in their studies.

Golden Banquet

Day 2 concluded with a spectacular Golden Banquet, honouring five decades of solidarity, advocacy and nursing excellence. The celebration welcomed past honorary members, guests, current members, staff and nursing students for a memorable evening recognizing the people who have helped shape the NSNU's proud history.

To mark our 50th Anniversary, those in attendance were invited to raise a glass of Benjamin Bridge's Sparkling NV Rosé for a celebratory toast. We extend our sincere thanks to Benjamin Bridge for their generous donation, which helped make this special moment possible.

The NSNU has a long tradition of recognizing the contributions of union activists. During the evening, we were proud to induct Lillian Fynes, Shirley Farrell (posthumous), Karen Green and Maria Langille as NSNU Lifetime Honorary Members – a fitting tribute to four exceptional union activists and committed nurses whose contributions continue to inspire future generations.



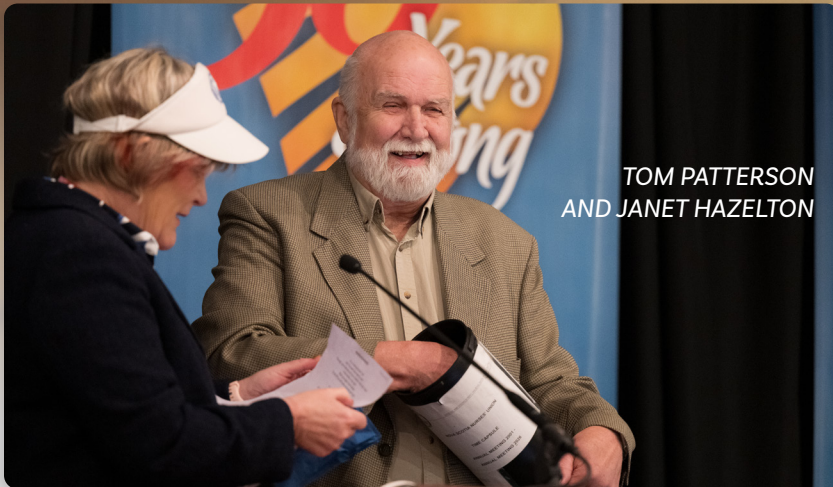
DAY THREE

On Day 3, April 16 we stepped back in time with the opening of a time capsule that was sealed with notes, NSNU items and documents in 2001. Janet Hazelton, and NSNU founder and former executive director, Tom Patterson opened the capsule revealing its contents. A new capsule will be sealed with current items on June 15, 2026, for the 2051 AGM attendees to reveal!

As is our custom, Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions spoke with her usual passion about nursing from a global, national and local outlook. Her experiences and expertise are enlightening and motivating. Representatives from the United Nurses of Alberta, the Ontario Nurses Association, BCNU, PEINU, NBNU and the Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador were on hand for a panel discussion moderated by Janet Hazelton on the subjects of nursing, labour, politics and health care. While the panelists brought their own unique perspectives and issues to the forefront, their commentary reminded NSNU members that many of our battles and struggles are the same.

Unfortunately, the Minister of Health and Wellness, The Honorable Michelle Thompson was ill, and unable to participate in the April 16th session.

The 2026 AGM closed with humour and humility, as Big Daddy Tazz, equal parts comedian and mental health advocate, delighted the crowd with his one-man show. A favourite with nurses across the country, Tazz tapped into the funny bits of nursing while sharing his personal journeys in the health care system and the care providers he has come to count on and greatly admire.



TOM PATTERSON
AND JANET HAZELTON



LINDA SILAS
CFNU



SIOBHAN VIPOND
CLC



NEB PANEL



BIG DADDY TAZZ



Once again, the NSNU held a charity draw on items donated by Locals, vendors and patrons of the NSNU. That function, along with two 50/50 draws culminated in a \$4000 donation split between The Marguerite Centre and Hope House, organizations that assist women in their addiction recovery.

The NSNU would like to thank the many organizations that contributed funds, in-kind donations for our various events and the charity draw. They include Benjamin Bridge, Keltic Quay, Pink Larkin, Burchell MacDougall, belairdirect, Advocate Printing, CTV and Keltic Clothing.

Thank You!



CHARLINE (L)
& LORI (R)



CONNECTIONS

The AGM is about connection; connection to the union and each other. Two very special, and long overdue connections were made at this year's AGM.

Schoolmates reunited at the NSNU's 2026 AGM. Charline Robicheau Saulnier, VON Yarmouth Local Treasurer and Lori Huskins, Local president at Depaul Hall sat together at the AGM, sharing time and conversation. Soon they realized they'd graduated together in 1984 from the now NSCC Akerley Campus. As they talked and reminisced, they exchanged class photos and reconnected after many years. Two old classmates reunited by chance, thanks to union activism.

The connections continued! After the Long Term Care Component meeting on April 13, an attendee, Rene Simms approached Board member and VP of LTC, Glenda Sabine to say she looked familiar, asking Glenda if she is from Newfoundland. Turns out, they're related.

Rene moved to Antigonish when she was sixteen. She was from Gaultois, a small, isolated community in Newfoundland where Glenda's father grew up. Rene's grandmother, Eva knit Christmas stockings for Glenda's husband, son and stepsons that she still cherishes.

Rene's grandmother and Glenda's mother were 1st cousins and good friends. Glenda's grandfather, Ambrose and Rene's great-grandmother, Myrtle were siblings. Glenda's mother's name is Myrtle and Rene's second name is Myrtle, both named after Glenda's grandfather's sister.

True Maritime stories. Reconnected, all thanks to the NSNU AGM.

GLEND A (L)
& RENE (R)



CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS 31ST CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

MAY 11-15

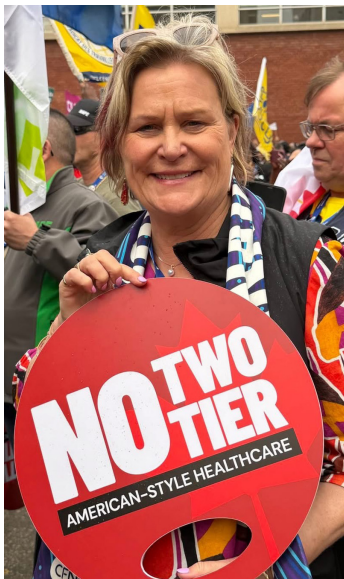
An NSNU delegation of twenty enthusiastic nurses travelled to Winnipeg, along with thousands of delegates across Canada, for the Canadian Labour Congress' 31st Constitutional Convention.

Ahead of the convention, taking place May 11-15th, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions hosted a meeting with nurse delegates on Sunday, May 10th. The meeting welcomed nurse members from across the country to participate in dialogue about the coming week and issues impacting health care and the nursing profession.

NSNU members had front-row seats to all the action at the Convention, participating in important sessions, animated debate, and a rally where thousands of workers took to the streets to say NO to Two-Tier American-Style Healthcare in Canada.

The Canadian Labour Congress Convention is about building on progress and shaping what comes next. It's about building a better future by protecting jobs and tackling urgent challenges - demanding truly universal health care, strong public services, and affordability for working families.

We build, we care, and we fight for everyone!





**BC NURSES'
UNION**

NPR Conference

In March, NSNU president Janet Hazelton was a guest at BCNU's two-day conference on *Ratios Save Lives: From Policy to Practice*. That meeting welcomed more than 200 of BCNU's members to Vancouver for their 2026 professional practice conference.

Speakers included academic experts who shared evidence on the significant positive impacts of minimum nurse-to-patient ratios (NPRs), alongside new BC data highlighting why they are so urgently needed to support healthier nurses and safer patient care.

Guests from nursing unions in Australia, the United States and across Canada (including NSNU's Janet Hazelton) spoke about their jurisdictions' experiences fighting for, implementing and defending ratios.

An afternoon panel featured BCNU members sharing their firsthand experiences and challenges on units where ratios have already been activated. BC's Provincial Chief Nursing Officer Kerry Morrison and BCNU president Adriane Gear presented an update on ratio implementation in that province.

The conference aimed to build on BC's progress in implementing minimum NPRs. BCNU is leading the way for safe staffing standards. Nova Scotia was the second province in the country, behind BC, to have collective agreement language addressing ratios.





BC NURSES' UNION

Convention & Rally

More than 1,100 nurses gathered in Vancouver from April 28-30th for BCNU's 2026 Convention. NSNU President Janet Hazelton attended the convention alongside nursing union leaders from across the country, showing solidarity to BCNU members as they prepared for the next stage in their fight for a fair contract.

This Convention came at a critical time for BCNU members. After months of negotiations, BCNU's bargaining committee declared an impasse and stepped away from the bargaining table as talks stalled on key issues including wages, benefits, workload, and workplace safety. In response, members were called to participate in a province-wide strike vote, between May 8 and 11.

A strong strike mandate is one of the most powerful tools union members have during collective bargaining. It sends a clear message that nurses are united and prepared to take action if meaningful progress is not made at the table. Often, the prospect of job action and the real consequences attached to it are enough to bring employers back to negotiations and help move bargaining forward.

BCNU reported an incredible turnout during the voting process, demonstrating the deep engagement and commitment of members across the province.

That solidarity was on full display during the convention's final day, when more than 550 nurses gathered for a rally and march through downtown Vancouver. Nurses called for respect and safer working conditions. A powerful public demonstration ahead of the strike vote results.

In the end, over 50,000 BC nurses delivered one of the strongest strike mandates in recent memory, with a resounding 98.2% voting YES.

We congratulate BCNU on sending a loud and clear message to the employer: nurses are united, organized, and ready to fight for better patient care, safer working conditions, and respect for the nursing profession.



Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training

It's a sad and often disturbing reality for healthcare professionals, a part of the job that no one should accept or consider routine. Violence in the workplace, whether intentional or incidental, should not be par for the course, but it is. And, until such time that there are stronger deterrents, nurses and others must be prepared.

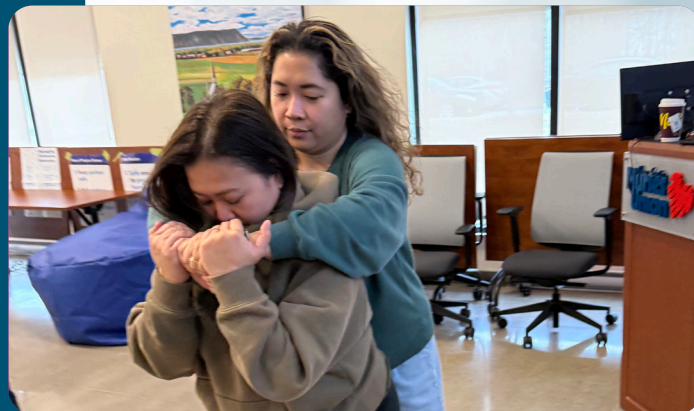
NSNU's Occupational Health and Safety Advisor, Heather Matthews champions and participates in Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NVC) training resulting from the Safety and Innovation Fund negotiated during the last round of bargaining. One such session took place at the NSNU in mid-March with OH&S staff from the IWK. NVC is a training program developed to help professionals safely manage challenging behaviors. It focuses on de-escalation, prevention, and intervention strategies commonly used by staff in healthcare, education, policing and other services.

The goal is to empower staff to intervene safely and non-harmfully when managing disruptive or aggressive behavior, focusing on verbal and nonverbal techniques to calm individuals and prevent escalation. The practice prioritizes the care, welfare, and security of both staff and individuals in distress.

When necessary, safe, non-restrictive or restrictive physical interventions must be utilized. This IWK group learned practical self-defense tactics and the use of specialized therapeutic bean bag chairs - single-seat safety pods that are effective in calming the nervous system and decreasing anxiety. They are designed to provide a "cocooning" effect that helps regulate emotions and nervous system stress. The pods are being used throughout the province to safely provide care and treatment for patients.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton took part in a portion of the sessions, volunteering to be restrained in one of the pods. A fitness buff with remarkable core strength, Janet struggled to resist and then "escape" the pod's comfortable confinement. The pod molds to the body, reducing the urge for physical aggression.

To learn more about innovative and effective OH&S strategies or to speak with Heather Matthews, email safety@nsnu.ca.





Meet the School Health Partnership Nurses of Nova Scotia

This year's Nursing Week theme was **The Power of Nurses to Transform Health** and highlighted the profound impact nurses have in shaping healthcare innovation and patient-centered care. A group of Nova Scotia Nurses' Union members who are helping to transform care and making a meaningful difference in the lives of families are School Health Partnership (SHP) nurses.

In Nova Scotia, an Inclusive Education Policy is in place to ensure that all school-aged children have access to an equitable and high-quality education. This includes identifying and eliminating barriers that interfere with students' well-being and achievement, and delivering supports that help students belong, be safe, access common learning environments, and feel welcome in all aspects of their daily school experience.

The power of SHP Nurses to transform health lies in their unique practice area, serving to bridge gaps between the daily health needs and considerations of students in school environments. With a broad understanding of the health and education systems, the SHP nurse supports school staff to provide necessary healthcare tasks to support students' inclusion in an educational setting. The SHP nurse facilitates any necessary teaching or training for school staff so they can appropriately support the student.

The SHP Program is made up of 23 Registered Nurses across the province. Every public/French school in Nova Scotia has access to a SHP Nurse. SHP Nurses are not located in schools and do not provide direct nursing care.

In their role, SHP Nurses:

- **Coordinate** resources to enable students to attend school
- **Advise** on the need for school-based health services and evidence-informed practices
- **Develop** Plans of Care, teaching resources and tools

- **Educate** school staff to perform or help with healthcare tasks as outlined in the Plans of Care and create safe, accessible, and equitable environments. They support staff training and professional development.
- **Facilitate** program planning for students with healthcare needs
- **Liaise** with families, school staff, healthcare partners, and community groups

The SHP Program was established in 2008 and with its success, has expanded and grown over the years to better meet the needs of students in Nova Scotia. It is an integrated partnership between:

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD)-Inclusive Education Policy
- Regional Centres for Education (RCEs)
- Conseil Scolaire Acadian Provincial (CSAP)
- Nova Scotia Health (NSH)
- IWK Health (IWK)

Feedback from families who have been supported by SHP has been positive. Benefits of the program highlighted in feedback include the impact of their child's inclusion at school and feeling reassured about the management of their children's health conditions in the school setting.

If you think the SHP program could help ensure your patients' health and safety by transitioning back to school, or will soon start attending school, here is what you can do:

- Speak with the family about this program
- Encourage families to ask school administrators to send a referral to the SHP program
- Visit the library.nshealth.ca for more information
- Reach out to the SHP Clinical Practice Leaders; they can connect families with the SHP Nurse who would assist with returning to school with a medical change. Their contact information can be found on the library services page.

Nurse Takes Pulse of Rural Health

Modified from a March 2026 Nova Scotia Health article by Amanda Hewlett

As a registered nurse in Sheet Harbour, a community about 120 kilometres east of the city of Halifax, Laura Homans Crowell quickly found her passion for rural nursing, where caring for patients often means caring for an entire community.

While some people find their calling later in life, Laura's was clear from the start. "I knew I wanted to be a nurse when I was about four years old," she says. Today, that childhood dream has grown into a career rooted in rural healthcare.

Even on the most challenging days, it's the impact of that work that stays with her. "I've never left work feeling like I didn't help somebody," Laura says. "In rural nursing, they're not just a patient in a bed," she says. "You really get to spend the time and give the attention to the person as a whole."

It was during her nursing education, while completing a placement in Sheet Harbour, she first discovered the deep sense of purpose that comes with rural nursing. Growing up in a small community helped her understand how factors like income, access to services and social supports can shape people's health; something she now sees reflected in her work every day.

In addition to her work with patients, she is deeply involved in mentoring and supporting the next generation of nurses. She is currently mentoring both a nursing student and an internationally educated nurse, viewing this role as a chance to share her enthusiasm for rural healthcare practice.

Her leadership extends throughout the hospital and the community. As a Nova Scotia Nurses' Union representative (Local president and chief shop steward for Central Zone), she believes strongly in nurses supporting one another.

Laura's commitment to service doesn't stop when her hospital shift ends. Laura also volunteers with the local fire department as a medical first responder, another way she supports her home community.

Through her work with the fire service, she has helped lead medical training and is currently working on initiatives to bring additional AEDs to the area; improving emergency preparedness for communities along the Eastern Shore. She is currently exploring funding opportunities in her role as medical first responder at the Oyster Pond Volunteer Fire Department for AED Save Stations. This would expand access beyond the existing unit in Musquodoboit Harbour.

Advocacy is one of the most meaningful parts of Laura's nursing career and volunteer work. Whether she is mentoring a new nurse, helping a patient navigate the healthcare system, or responding to an emergency call, Laura sees each role as part of the same larger purpose.



Nursing Dedication & Service

Modified from a 2020 article by Kimberly K. Dickson, BA, BEd

Theresa Dewar's work at Glen Haven Manor as an LPN was her life's calling. Theresa began working at the long-term care facility in New Glasgow more than 46 years ago as a young graduate of the Nova Scotia Community College and she never looked back. Theresa is described by her colleagues, residents and management alike as a dedicated nursing professional and health care leader of the highest standard who has made an undeniable and indelible mark on the quality of care delivered at Glen Haven for close to five decades.

Known with great admiration for her knowledge and work ethic, Theresa recently hung up her scrubs, surrendering to all that retirement has to offer a well-deserving nurse with an exceptional track record.

She was committed to her place of employment during work hours and on her days off. She volunteered to take residents to appointments and was a faithful attendee at Glen Haven events, spending extra time with residents. Residents responded warmly to Theresa's expertise and down-to-earth manner.

In retirement, she will be remembered as a loyal, steadfast nurse as well as a motivating team player. She was a mentor to generations of younger nurses and a team builder within Glen Haven. In addition to providing outstanding and individualized quality care, Theresa built lasting relationships with residents, families and colleagues across the entire organization.

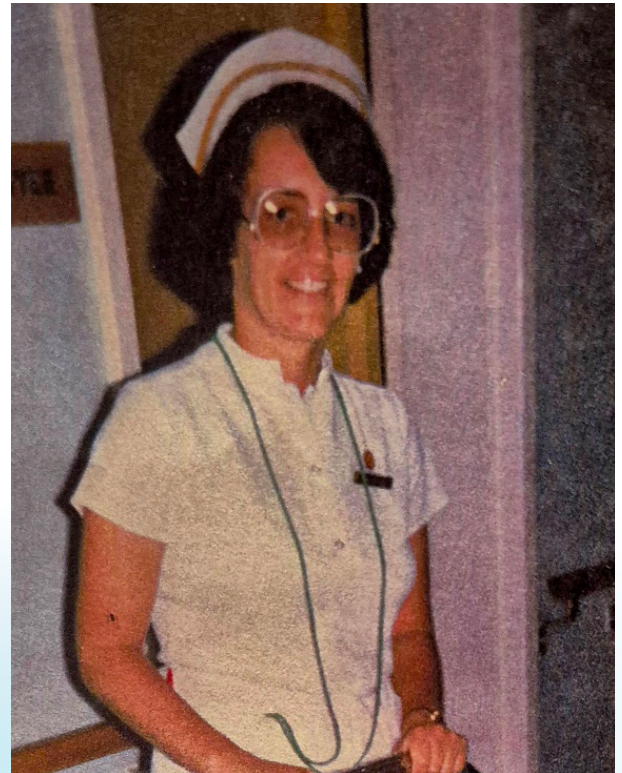
Throughout her career she shared her expertise willingly and supportively while continuously taking part in professional development, adapting to changes in her scope of practice. She took great pride in her work and was collaborative and fun-loving. Often referred to as a perfect mentor to new nurses, she was humble, honest, and forthright.

Despite her leadership role, Theresa never sought the limelight and was admired for not only her knowledge and skill, but also for her calm manner, dry wit and ability to get the job done no matter what challenges or demands came her way. She was always there for the residents of Glen Haven with an unwavering integrity, devoted to filling their lives with good health, dignity and happiness. And, when needed, she was there to make their final days easier.

In the spring of 2018, at a ceremony held in Dartmouth, Theresa was presented with a provincial Award of Excellence from the former College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia. The honour is conferred to LPNs for their exceptional competence and contributions to the advancement of the profession of practical nursing and health care.

The NSNU wishes Theresa a very long, happy, and healthy retirement that rewards her with well-deserved rest, relaxation, and joy for her decades of dedication and compassion.

Theresa Dewar



what's nu? snapshots



ADDRESSING FUTURE NURSES

On National Nurses Day, May 12th, NSNU President Janet Hazelton met virtually with NSCC practical nursing students from across the province - Strait Area, Lunenburg, Sydney Waterfront and Pictou campuses.

Janet values the opportunity to connect with the next generation of nurses and highlight the vital role they will play in patient care and the future of healthcare in Nova Scotia. She shared insights on the evolving healthcare landscape, the importance of advocacy, and the many resources and supports the NSNU provides to members.

ACTION FOR HEALTH

Monday, March 16th marked the National Day of Action for Public Health Care. More than 20 organizations across Canada, including the NS Health Coalition, issued an open letter to federal officials regarding Alberta's Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (No. 2). The statement warned this legislation enables a two-tier healthcare system, undermines the principles of Medicare, and sets a dangerous precedent for other provinces if this bill is not challenged.

The Coalition held a news conference that day welcoming labour leaders, including Janet Hazelton, and members of the NSHC Board of Directors to show support for our public healthcare system.



WELCOME TO CANADA, ORTIZES

AGM attendees were pleased to hear from Steve and Matt Ortiz, registered nurses from Florida who recently relocated to New Glasgow to continue their careers in healthcare. Matt and Steve spoke about finding a welcoming community and a healthcare system that feels fundamentally different from what they experienced in the United States - both as nurses and as patients.



NSNU LRR SUPPORTS LTC

NSNU labour relations representative Angela McKenna (left) stopped by Bissett Court to drop off a treat and show her support for CUPE’s long term care workers who are currently on strike. CUPE workers like Shirley (right) have been on strike since April 13th.

WELL-DESERVED RELAXATION

Have you taken your NSNU 50th Anniversary towel to the beach yet? From the Annual Meeting all the way to the Dominican Republic, NSNU member Tammy Dupuis proudly showed off her NSNU towel while enjoying some sunshine at her resort getaway.



We hope many of you get the chance to relax by the water and bring your NSNU spirit along with you this summer!

STACY CROSSES THE FINISH LINE IN BOSTON

We would like to extend congratulations to Stacy Elliot on her incredible achievement, completing yet another marathon. Stacy, RN and Clinical Nurse Educator for the Eastern Zone, recently participated in the prestigious Boston Marathon on April 20th, joining thousands of runners from around the globe in one of the most iconic marathons in the world.

Her dedication, perseverance and accomplishment are truly inspiring.



share your local updates:
send to communications@nsnu.ca



Day of Mourning

April 28, 2026

In April, we pause to remember those who have lost their lives or been seriously injured because of their work.

First Vice-President of the NSNU, Donna Gillis was humbled to spend the evening of April 28th surrounded by others listening and remembering the workers and families impacted by workplace injuries.

While a Day for Mourning, it is also a commitment to *fight for the living* by strengthening health and safety regulations.

In 2025, 22 Nova Scotians died at work or because of their work as reported by the Workers Compensation Board of Nova Scotia.



NSNU SEGMENT MAY 11TH

On May 11th, CTV Your Morning Atlantic featured Stephanie Tsicos in conversation with NSNU President Janet Hazelton and one of the founders of the NSNU, Tom Patterson.

Together, they reflected on the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union's 50th Anniversary, National Nursing Week and the future of the organization. The discussion highlighted the important role nurses continue to play in shaping healthcare across the province, while also looking ahead to the future of the profession and the union's ongoing commitment to supporting members.

If you missed the segment, you can watch it on our YouTube channel by scanning the QR code provided.



Nellie's story

Nellie's Clean, the North Vancouver-based eco-friendly cleaning brand popular in many households, was inspired by a real person, a nurse named Nellie.

Nellie, the mother of company founder James Roberts, was from the Canadian prairies and widely known for her practical, "green" approach to life and cleanliness, which she practiced long before it was popular. She believed in keeping things simple, honest, and effective. She rejected having a dozen different chemical cleaners under the kitchen sink, opting instead for simplicity, sustainability and purity – a philosophy she often attributed to her nursing background.

Her method for cleaning often involved natural techniques, such as using newspapers with water and vinegar to clean windows, an approach rooted in practicality.

The brand now offers a variety of cleaning products, with its flagship product, Laundry Soda, being a key example of the "simple" ethos: High Power, Low Volume. The formulas are eco-friendly, biodegradable, and free of toxins, phosphates, and artificial fragrances, making it safe for sensitive skin. The products are made in Canada, often using Canadian ingredients like soda ash sourced locally.

Nellie passed away in 1999, but her principles of simplicity and eco-conscious living inspired her son, James Roberts, to create the brand in her honour.

Yet another nurse to turn wellness and caring into a lasting, healthy legacy.



NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

As another National Nursing Week wraps up, we want to express our appreciation for our members' unwavering commitment to patient care.

The theme, **The Power of Nurses to Transform Health** highlights the incredible role nurses play in shaping health care, driving innovation and advocating for patient wellbeing.

As the NSNU marks its 50th Anniversary this year, National Nursing Week offers a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the positive transformations nurses have made across our province. For five decades, NSNU members have stood together to advance the nursing profession, improve working conditions, advocate for public health care, and push for the resources needed to provide safe, high-quality care to Nova Scotians.

As always, National Nursing Week content is available on our website at nsnu.ca/NNW2026. Here, you will find our Nursing Week commercial, a message from Janet Hazelton and more. The commercial was made available on streaming services, digital platforms, social media, Cineplex theatres, and traditional broadcast media for viewing.

Maintaining a strong and trusted public presence is important for the NSNU, not only during National Nursing Week, but year-round. This kind of visibility helps remind Nova Scotians of the critical role nurses play in our health-care system and reinforces the message that when nurses are supported and cared for through strong advocacy and representation, they are better able to provide safe, high-quality care to patients.

Each year, we are also pleased to share the Nursing Week celebrations organized by our many Locals on social media. Thank you to everyone who took the time to plan and host these gatherings, and to those who shared photos and moments with us. These celebrations not only recognize and appreciate nurses, but also showcase the pride, professionalism, and solidarity that exists within our Union.



IWK HEALTH CENTRE



LILLIAN FRASER
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL



ABERDEEN HOSPITAL



VALLEY
REGIONAL HOSPITAL



EASTERN ZONE



COLCHESTER
REGIONAL HOSPITAL



STRAIT RICHMOND
HOSPITAL



DYKELAND LODGE



YARMOUTH VON

Just for the nurses.

Get a quote, get a \$10 coffee card.

Ends June 30th.

belairdirect.
home insurance



Scan the QR code or call
1 833 583.3301 to get your price.



Return undeliverable Canadian copies to:
Nova Scotia Nurses' Union
150 Garland Avenue, Dartmouth, NS B3B 0A7

