50 Years Strong

what's nu?

SEPTEMBER 2026

Forward Into Fall



highlights

Council of the Federation
NSIENN Conference 2026
Summertime Celebrations

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

Highlights

ISSUE 170











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ON THE COVER

Taken in 2018, some of these fabululous nurses have since retired, but it's hard to retire such a great seasonal photo.

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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

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

The Long Game of Collective Bargaining

The majority of NSNU collective agreements expired nearly a year ago. That may sound like an urgent call to action, but if I've learned anything while serving as the Nurses' Union president, it's that moving too quickly can fail to accomplish a wide range of goals.

The process of bargaining is complicated; it involves multiple teams of qualified and dedicated individuals, all with their own set of priorities and intentions. Coordinating schedules is a monumental task. These factors make reaching an agreement, or achieving consensus, a marathon, not a sprint. Patience always trumps urgency at the negotiating table.

That said, our teams are prepared, they were selected a year ago, prior to the expiration of the agreements. Elected by NSNU members, these nurses represent their sectors, disciplines, regions and were chosen by you to voice your concerns. And, a bargaining conference was held last fall.

Typically, our acute care table bargains first, before the long term care and community care groups. One goal is to establish a wage pattern for our largest component, and other language that may benefit all members. Within acute care, our organizations bargain as a Council. Formed in April 2015, the Nova Scotia Council of Health Care Unions is a formal bargaining group that negotiates collective agreements for health care workers employed by Nova Scotia Health and the IWK Health Centre.

The broader Nova Scotia acute care system is split into four distinct, multi-union bargaining councils: Health Care, Nursing, Administrative Professionals, and Support Services. The unions, NSNU, NSGEU, CUPE and Unifor, collaborate in different configurations to lead each respective council. NSNU leads the Nursing Council.

In late July, NSNU and the other unions shared that the Council of Unions determined that, for this round of negotiations in the acute care sector, the Health Care Bargaining Unit (i.e. technologists, therapists, technicians, laboratory staff and more) will be the first to enter the process.

NSGEU, Unifor and CUPE form the Health Care Council, collectively representing approximately 9,800 health care workers in this bargaining unit, working in a wide variety of roles. Bargaining committee members from these unions will soon begin preparation for these negotiations.

Leading into nursing talks, the committees prepare in a number of ways, including gathering input from NSNU staff, members and employers. Member feedback is invaluable; it allows the teams to identify strengths and pain points in existing contracts. It is imperative to evaluate current contract provisions to better understand the lived experience nurses share on the job.

As we prepare, we look at other environmental factors – counterpart negotiations and settlements, government policies and actions, and, to some extent, public opinion.

I was recently invited to take part in the provincial government's committee to *Help Build Next Provincial Budget*. Along with eight others, I have been appointed to an independent advisory committee to attend the sessions and publicly report on what Nova Scotians have to say.

The fact that Nova Scotia is struggling with a record deficit of $1.24 billion in its 2026-27 provincial budget is not lost on organizations that rely on government for funding. For that reason, I accepted the opportunity to constructively engage in the consultative process to ensure nurses' voices are heard, rather than remaining on the sidelines.



Janet Hazelton
BScN RN, MPA, ICD.D

In a limited capacity, due to my Union commitments, I chose active participation in government and public discussions over being excluded from the decisions that impact health care. We must ensure that health care, and those working in the system, remain a top priority where investment is concerned.

In the coming months, NSNU will keep members apprised of Council negotiations via e-memos, newsletters and the website (**nsnu.ca**). We will reach out with updates and continue to do the "behind the scenes" work that readies us.

We thank you for your patience and assert that good things are often worth the wait. Quality takes time, effort, and experience.

For any bargaining-related comments or questions, contact **bargaining@nsnu.ca**.

Janet Hazelton
BScN RN, MPA, ICD.D

Nova Scotians Invited to Help Build Next Provincial Budget

Excerpted from NS Government News Release

Nova Scotians, just like you, are invited to help build their own provincial budget and share how they would build the next budget.

The Houston government is asking Nova Scotians to create and submit the 2027-28 budget they want to see at yourbudget.novascotia.ca. Nova Scotians will have the option to attend an in-person or virtual facilitated session this fall where they can learn about the budgeting process and the Province's financial position.

"Nova Scotia is at a pivotal moment. Demand for healthcare continues to grow. Infrastructure is aging. The cost of delivering services the public relies on like housing, education and seniors' care keeps on rising, and with affordability already stretched, raising taxes is not an option we're exploring," said Premier Tim Houston.

"As Bluenosers, we need to talk about the challenges we're facing, along with the opportunities ahead. This won't be a typical, town-hall style consultation. We'll give Nova Scotians the information they need to help build their own budget, one that reflects their priorities and shows us the trade-offs they're willing to make to support them."

Nova Scotians can sign up for an information session at yourbudget.novascotia.ca. An independent advisory committee has been appointed to attend the sessions and publicly report on what they hear from Nova Scotians. In-person sessions will strive to accommodate as many people as venues allow. Nova Scotians who want to attend are encouraged to register online for sessions in their area to secure a spot.

People who do not take part in a facilitated session can still share their budget ideas by submitting their own budget online, by emailing budget@novascotia.ca or by mail:

Department of Finance and Treasury Board,
Attention: Budget Engagement,
P.O. Box 187, Halifax, N.S., B3J 2N3.

CFNU's White Paper:
The Harsh Reality of a Reduced CHT Growth Rate

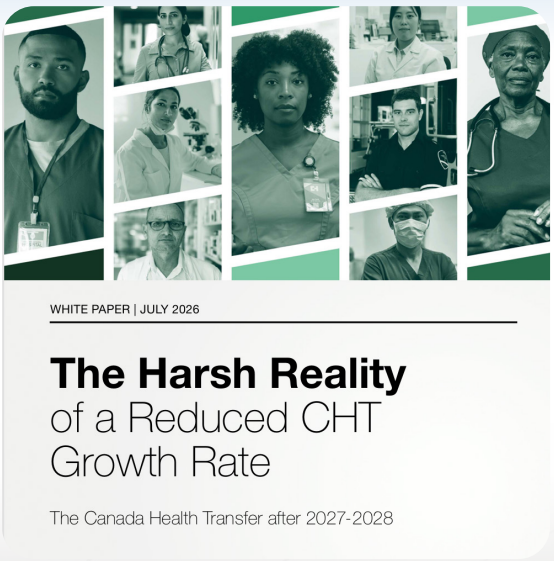
First presented to Premiers in attendance at a meeting with the CFNU during the Council of the Federation in July 2026, this white paper details how looming changes to the Canada Health Transfer (CHT) will result in significantly less health care funding for provinces and territories.

The paper provides an historic perspective of the CHT escalator, outlines the changes to come in 2027-2028, and analyses projections of the CHT escalator using current and upcoming policy changes.

Analysis found that with an average growth rate of 3.8% annually, the cumulative CHT will be $51.8 billion less over 10 years than if the escalator remained at 5% annual growth.

Key recommendations from the CFNU to Government:

1. That the Prime Minister's Office consult with health care stakeholders to prepare for a First Ministers' Meeting on the future demands of Canada's health care system.
2. That the Prime Minister convene a First Ministers' Meeting on health care in 2026, which would include provincial and territorial premiers and Indigenous leaders, to address the future of the Canada Health Transfer escalator, among other items.
3. These pan-Canadian discussions should focus on whether the CHT continue growing by at least 5% annually after 2027-2028, or Canada move toward restoring the previous 6% escalator, to ensure federal health funding keeps pace with long-term pressures facing provincial and territorial health systems.



To view or download the paper go to:
nursesunions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/CFNU-The-harsh-reality.pdf



Canada's nurses support premiers' call for federal leadership on health care funding

Nurse union leaders from across the country met with premiers in Charlottetown in July during the Council of the Federation (CoF) for a policy breakfast meeting focused on the economic impact of public health care and the need to address expiring federal funding agreements through collaboration among provincial, territorial and federal governments.

Provinces and territories are facing federal funding cliffs for key health care agreements on long-term care, home and community care, and mental health and addictions services to the tune of nearly $2 billion. There are currently no plans to continue this funding. These agreements fund services that help seniors, people with complex medical conditions, people leaving hospitals who need support at home, improvements to safety in long-term care homes, and more.

"Without this critical federal funding, access to care will only diminish. The end of these bilateral agreements does not have to mark a crushing end to much-needed health care projects. It's time for a First Ministers' Meeting dedicated to health care. Prime Minister Mark Carney must work with provinces and territories on a new framework that reflects the reality of the current system pressures," explained Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU).

Silas reiterated the importance of public health care funding to a strong Canadian economy, pointing to a finding from a recent CFNU report that shows that for every dollar the federal government spends on health, between $1.32 and $1.45 is generated in additional GDP after just one year.

"Canada does not need more austerity measures. We need sound investment into a public health care system that works for everyone and strengthens our economy. Nurses' unions are ready to work with the provincial, territorial and federal governments to protect public health care for today and future generations," Silas said.

CFNU counterpart representatives from across the country, including NSNU President Janet Hazelton, were in attendance for CoF.



Premier TIm Houston and
NSNU President Janet Hazelton

Council of the Federation
Charlottetown, 2026

Uniting Canada's Nurses from Coast to Coast to Coast

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) is proud to welcome nurses in Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut into its ranks, uniting nurses from coast to coast to coast.

"Nursing is a team sport where we are all stronger together. Uniting nurses from ocean to ocean to ocean is a big win for our profession, creating more room for collaboration over our shared challenges and goals. Working in solidarity across borders empowers nurses to push forward solutions for their own communities and for everyone in Canada," said Linda Silas, CFNU President.

More than 1,300 frontline nurses represented by the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) in the territories are now affiliated with the CFNU. This move brings nurses together in 12 of Canada's 13 provinces and territories.

It is essential that nurses work collectively across all provinces and territories to advocate for safe nurse-to-patient ratios, safe workplaces and strengthened public health care systems.

Across Canada, nurses have benefited from solidarity, strong collaboration and interconnectivity among nursing unions. This commitment between CFNU and PSAC strengthens that connection.

"I am proud to welcome Northern nurses into the largest movement of unionized nurses across North America," Silas said. "From the difficulties accessing care in rural and remote communities to the critical need for safe staffing mandates, our national solidarity makes us more powerful as we work toward the solutions that nurses in the North and across Canada need. Together, nurses are a powerful force."

CFNU's petition for federal tax credit for nurses reaches 22,364 signatures

Back in March, NSNU and our nurse-union counterparts across Canada started asking members to sign a parliamentary petition for the House of Commons to amend the *Income Tax Act* to create a refundable federal tax credit for nurses. The deadline was July 2026.

Given that Canada is still facing a persistent nursing shortage, driven in part by retention challenges, heavy workloads and the pressure of excessive overtime, we felt nurses could use a break.

The federal government introduced a refundable tax credit for personal support workers in the latest budget. This is the roadmap to give all nurses the tax break they deserve.

In just three months, the CFNU's parliamentary petition to create a refundable federal tax credit for nurses has received 22,364 signatures in support.

Thank you to everyone who joined our call to give nurses the break they deserve. Follow CFNU this fall on various social media platforms for updates on the petition.



NSIENN
CONFERENCE 2026

The **Nova Scotia Internationally Educated Nurses Conference** (NSIENN) welcomed nurses and health care representatives from across the province from July 23–24, 2026 in Halifax and was themed Re-Imagining IEN Integration in Nova Scotia and Beyond.

The attendees, who participated in person and virtually, were welcomed by The Honourable Michelle Thompson, Minister of Health and Wellness, followed by a keynote address by Dr. Leigh Chapman, Chief Nursing Officer of Canada.

A panel discussion titled **Policy Conversation: IEN Integration Beyond Licensure** featured NSNU president, Janet Hazelton; Annette Elliot Rose, Nova Scotia Health Chief Nurse Executive & Vice President, Clinical Performance & Professional Practice; Jennifer Best, Senior Director, Legislative Services and Deputy Registrar, NSNMR; and Ron Garcia, International and Campus Recruitment Lead, Shannex. They shared their views and ideas on a coordinated and collaborative approach to IEN integration.

NSNU's OH&S Advisor, Heather Matthews, provided a presentation on understanding occupational health and safety. Other NSNU reps in attendance included Donna Gillis, NSNU 1st VP, Natalie Nymark, VP IWK and Anne Boutilier, Central Vice-President, who managed NSNU's exhibit, fielding questions throughout the conference.

The event featured partner speeches, the annual NSIENN awards ceremony, research discussions, panel insights, and networking.

Congratulations to the organizers on this inaugural event.



NSNU PRESIDENT JANET HAZELTON IN PANEL DISCUSSION





BOARD MEMBERS ANNE BOUTILIER, DONNA GILLIS & NATALIE NYMARK

The Importance of Emergency Response Codes in Healthcare

Emergency response codes are an essential part of a safe, coordinated, and prepared healthcare environment. In healthcare, emergencies can develop quickly and require immediate action from staff across many roles. Codes provide a common language that helps staff recognize the type of emergency, understand the expected response, and act quickly to protect patients, clients, visitors, co-workers, and themselves.

Know Your Codes

Code Blue	Medical/Life-Threatening Emergency
Code Pink	Pediatric Medical Emergency
Code Red	Fire/Smoke
Code Green	Evacuation (may include precautionary)
Code Orange	External Disaster/Mass Casualty
Code Yellow	Missing Client/Patient
Code Brown	Hazardous Substance Spill/Release
Code Grey	External Air or Infrastructure Loss or System Failures
Code Black	Bomb Threat/Suspicious Package
Code White	Violent Person(s)/Situation
Code Silver	Person with a Weapon
Active Shooter (NSH)	Person with a Firearm

Clear Communication During High-Stress Events

During an emergency, confusion and delay can increase risk. Emergency codes reduce uncertainty by giving staff a short, recognizable signal that identifies the situation and prompts the appropriate response. A clearly announced code helps staff know whether they should prepare for evacuation, avoid an affected area, secure doors and windows, or call for police or other emergency support. This shared language supports faster decision-making when every second matters.

Protecting Patients, Clients, Visitors, and Staff

The main purpose of emergency codes is to protect people. For example, Code Blue and Code Pink focus on urgent medical response, while Code Red addresses fire and Code Green supports safe evacuation. Codes related to violence, weapon and bomb threats help staff limit exposure to danger and protect those who may not be able to protect themselves.

Supporting Role Clarity and Teamwork

Understanding your role and the role of others helps emergency response. Staff do not all perform the same tasks during an incident. Some may provide direct care, others may move people to safety, or communicate with leadership, while others may keep exits clear or prevent people from entering a hazardous area. Understanding everyone's role improves teamwork across departments and helps reduce duplication, missed steps, and unsafe actions.

Reducing Harm Through Training and Practice

Codes are most effective when they are reinforced through orientation, drills, refresher education, and realistic scenario-based training. Staff must know not only the name of each code, but also the immediate actions expected of them. For example, a fire response may include R.A.C.E. procedures, while a violent situation may require de-escalation, access control, calling for assistance, or moving people away from danger. Practice builds confidence and helps staff respond calmly and consistently under pressure. Consistency is especially important in organizations where staff may work in more than one department, site, or service area.

Building a Culture of Preparedness

Emergency response codes are more than announcements; they are part of an organization's safety culture. They remind staff that preparedness is a shared responsibility and that every employee has a role in preventing harm. When codes are well understood, regularly reviewed, and supported by leadership, they help create a workplace where emergencies are anticipated, risks are managed, and people know how to act when urgent situations arise. Preparedness depends on everyone knowing the codes, knowing their role, and being ready to respond.

NSFL Holds Fall Meeting at NSNU

September 15





On Tuesday, September 15th, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL) Executive Council met at the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union in Dartmouth – a who's who of labour leaders in our province.

These meetings are an opportunity for labour unions in Nova Scotia to share victories, troubleshoot challenges, and to plan the next steps for our movement in the coming months.

Highlights from the meeting included a presentation from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists on their campaign for a Federal apology for Canada's role in the trafficking of enslaved Africans, and discussions on how to ensure workers' voices are heard in the provincial government's upcoming budget consultation. Christine Saulnier, Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Nova Scotia, was on hand to provide that perspective.

NSNU's 1st VP Donna Gillis, and VP Long Term Care Glenda Sabine, represented the Nurses' Union during the session.

Those in attendance included the following:
ATU Local 508, Atlantic Academic Union, CUPW STTP, CUPE Nova Scotia, Cape Breton University Faculty Association (CBUFA), Halifax Typographical Union, International Association of Fire Fighters, IBEW Local 1928, IUOE NS Paramedics, Mount Saint Vincent University Faculty Association, Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, NSGEU, Nova Scotia Teachers Union, PSAC Atlantic / AFPC Atlantique, SMUFU, SEIU Local 2 Seafarers' International Union of Canada, UFCW Eastern Provinces Council United Steelworkers.

Let Your Light Shine

A Grieving Mother's Promise & Purpose



Mary Dawn Greenwood & Louann Link

September is widely observed as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, with World Suicide Prevention Day globally recognized on September 10, a day to focus on changing the narrative around suicide, removing stigma, and securing vital resources.

When suicide touches you and your family, the world can suddenly become very small and isolating. Unless you're a mom on a mission.

On August 1st, 2021, Jevon Patrick Link died by suicide, leaving family and friends to struggle with profound loss. In 2020, Jevon's mental health started to decline, according to his mom Louann Link, a nurse and member of the NSNU who noticed her son might be at risk. Tragically, her mother's instincts and nursing background confirmed her worst fear.

Like his dad, Jevon was a lobster fisherman on the south shore of Nova Scotia; the 27-year-old played golf and hockey, he was fun loving and well-liked. Over the course of a year, his behaviour changed prompting trips to see various healthcare professionals and interventions that came up woefully short. Louann's efforts to help Jevon were also limited by privacy laws that protect adult patient confidentiality.

Soon, the Link family understood their story is painfully common and that access to mental health care in Nova Scotia is critically lacking. This realization led Louann to channel her grief into activism. She built a community among coworkers, neighbours, family, and strangers—all united by a shared purpose to advocate for those navigating mental health challenges and suicide loss. She discovered and created a shared lifeline through, and for, countless others.

"At first, I was angry that the system failed Jevon, then I learned speaking up, reaching out and listening to others who might self-harm is effective and therapeutic. I'm still angry about wait times, especially on the south shore and other rural areas, however making these life connections can have a positive impact," says Louann.

In the beginning, Louann leaned into Roots of Hope Nova Scotia for information about suicide prevention and the life promotion initiatives, resources, partnerships, and community-led projects available across the province. She started hosting memorial golf and hockey tournaments, and other initiatives to raise money. She founded the Let your Light Shine Jevon Link Society to raise awareness and funds for people in need of private care.

The Society leads community wellness in southwestern Nova Scotia by training facilitators and delivering essential workshops, including safeTALK and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training or ASIST training certification.

SafeTALK is a half-day workshop that teaches people, including health care workers, to recognize the signs of suicide, talk about it openly, and connect individuals with life-saving support. ASIST is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid, teaching participants to recognize when someone may be experiencing suicidal ideation and work with them to ensure their immediate safety.

Through her advocacy and legacy building for Jevon, Louann has secured grants to cover training expenses, she presents her message to nursing students at the Nova Scotia Community College, she has accompanied families and individuals on doctor and hospital visits, and she's lobbied government for policy change. As part of a peer-led, grassroots advocacy organization created by mothers with lived experience supporting adult children with serious mental illness and addictions, Nova Scotia Moms for Compassionate and Collaborative Mental Health Care (NSMoms) pushed to amend the *Personal Health Information Act.*

On April 1, 2026, the amendment took effect, removing the requirement that the significant danger be "imminent," allowing healthcare professionals to consider disclosure earlier when they believe it may help avert or minimize danger.

Louann, a determined and seemingly tireless mom, has not been alone, finding healing and strength in the company of her husband and sons, her friends, her VON coworkers, and a community that's embraced her. Her dear friend Mary Dawn Greenwood, also an NSNU member, has been by her side every step of the way. Having raised sons who were childhood playmates and having worked alongside each other at Yarmouth Regional and the VON, they've formed a bond that's proven unbreakable, especially in difficult times.

"I have known Louann since the late 90s. Our shared compassion and empathy have allowed us to take this journey together. I would drop everything to be there for her," says Mary Dawn.

In the five years since Jevon's passing, their advocacy has evolved through experience and insight. They are now better equipped to recognize early signs of crisis, create safe spaces for others to speak out about a heavily stigmatized issue, and significantly expand community access to vital resources.

While Jevon's passing leaves lasting heartache, Louann finds comfort sitting peacefully on a bench dedicated to him at the golf course where he loved to play and in knowing she's making a difference.

If you or someone you know would like more information, contact any of the following resources:

9-8-8
SUICIDE CRISIS HELPLINE

1-800-307-1686
PEER SUPPORT TEL. SERVICE

902-422-4240
AVALON SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

2-1-1 *(24/7)*
CONFIDENTIAL INFO & REFERRAL SERVICE OF PROGRAMS ACROSS NS

1-855-922-1122
NS MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS INTAKE SERVICE

1-888-429-8167 *(24/7)*
NS MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS CRISIS LINE

JEVONLINKSOCIETY.CA

ROOTSOFHOPENS.COM

NOVASCOTIA.CMHA.CA

Researchers call for more support to prevent nurse suicide

Researchers at Laurentian University are calling for changes in the health care system after looking into rates of suicidal thinking among nurses in Canada.

Of 134 nurses interviewed for a recent study by the university, more than one in three reported experiencing suicidal thoughts. The study found particularly high rates among those who had been in the profession for less than five years, with 41 per cent reporting suicidal thoughts.

Nearly 30 per cent of participants reported taking medication for anxiety or depression, while just over 60 per cent said they were currently in counselling or had sought counselling in the past.

"When we started interviewing nurses, we realized this is systemic, it's endemic and it's not acceptable," said Roberta Heale, one of the researchers and a professor at Laurentian University's School of Nursing.

"The level of violence towards nurses, the level of difficulty in them getting any kind of help with overcoming the traumatic situations that they've witnessed and endured. No one should feel suicidal or have mental health issues because of their job."

The research was partly inspired by the death of Jordan Heffern, a registered nurse from Sudbury who died by suicide in 2024. She began working as a nurse in August of 2023. Thirteen months later, she died by suicide. Jordan was the victim of workplace violence and harassment as a student.

SOURCE: EXCERPTED FROM SEPTEMBER 2026 CBC REPORT

Labour Day 2026

On **September 7th**, Canadians celebrated Labour Day.

While many know Labour Day as the final long weekend of summer, its significance runs much deeper. It is an opportunity to recognize the generations of workers and union activists who fought for the rights and protections we benefit from today, and to recommit ourselves to the work that remains.

This year holds particular significance for the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union as we celebrate our 50th anniversary. For five decades, NSNU members have stood together to advocate for nurses, strengthen the profession and improve working conditions across Nova Scotia. The progress made over those 50 years did not happen on its own. It was achieved because nurses were willing to speak up, get involved and stand together.

We extend a special thank you to the nurses who continue that tradition today; our Local leaders, committee members, bargaining representatives, activists and members who continually use their voices to fight for nurses and for a stronger health-care system. We are proud of the generations of nurses who built this Union and grateful to those who continue to carry that work forward.

Labour Day events were held across the province, bringing activists and community members together for food, music, conversation and solidarity. These gatherings are an important reminder that the gains made by workers have always been built collectively.

Thank you to all nurses for the work you do every day, and a special thank you to those who spent Labour Day caring for Nova Scotians.

Celebrations of Pride

Participating in Pride is one of the ways the Nurses' Union demonstrates our ongoing support for the diversity of our membership. We celebrate our 2SLGBTQIA+ members and the valuable work they do for Nova Scotians each and every day. It is important that 2SLGBTQIA+ nurses are visible and that the profession is a safe and welcoming place for all. Just as important, nurses should know that their Union stands with them.

The NSNU proudly supports Pride celebrations across Nova Scotia each year. In June, Pride organizations in West Hants, Cumberland County, the Annapolis Valley and Truro hosted their annual celebrations. In July, festivities continued in Lunenburg and Halifax, while Cape Breton rounded out the summer with Pride events in August.

We are fortunate to have many Pride events organized across the province, providing wonderful opportunities to show our support for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and celebrate diversity. Through financial sponsorships and ongoing promotion, the NSNU is proud to contribute to Pride organizations across Nova Scotia. This includes our role as a Silver Sponsor of Halifax Pride, the largest 2SLGBTQIA+ festival in Atlantic Canada and one of the largest Pride celebrations in the country.

By backing these organizations and events, the NSNU is proud to stand alongside our 2SLGBTQIA+ members and help foster communities where everyone can feel seen, uplifted and celebrated.





HALIFAX PRIDE JULY 18

Ronald McDonald House® Maritimes

NSNU recently made a small financial contribution to Ronald McDonald House Maritimes to help Maritime families who need to travel to stay close to their ill or injured child at the IWK.

In Canada, two out of three families live outside a city with a children's hospital and must travel for treatment if their child is critically sick or injured. Ronald McDonald House bridges that gap, providing essential programs and services that remove barriers, strengthen families and promote healing when children need life-saving healthcare.

Ronald McDonald House Maritimes is the only House for the three provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Their new, larger, more modern facility opened in April of 2025, and serves 1,400 families per year, while also offering 10,000+ more nights of comfort and programming for families with sick children.

They support families travelling more than 40km for their child's medical care, regardless of their diagnosis, income, or length of stay. Individuals experiencing high-risk pregnancies are also eligible to stay. No family is ever turned away due to an inability to pay. For those that can, families are asked to contribute only $15 per night.

As a community-based organization, they work closely with local hospital partners to serve the country's most medically vulnerable children (top diagnoses are neonatal, cardiology & oncology). When children are sick or injured, the love and presence of their families can be a powerful – and underestimated – medicine.

The NSNU was happy to help this tremendous organization.



The *Indomitable* Vivian Breen



A nurse who works until age 83 demonstrates extraordinary dedication, deep clinical wisdom, and a profound personal calling to care for others. That nurse's name is Vivian Breen.

Vivian first retired in 2005 to care for her mother, but it didn't stick. She returned to work two months later as eager as a new hire. She recently gave retirement a second chance on August 29, 2026.

Born in 1943 in New Glasgow, Vivian was the oldest of thirteen children. As the eldest, she was naturally tasked with caring for her brothers and sisters — a responsibility that likely foreshadowed her longstanding career in a caring profession.

With some encouragement from a public health nurse who provided homecare to her mother after the birth of a younger sibling, she graduated from Camp Hill Hospital in 1963 and landed her first job at the Halifax Infirmary. That was short-lived but followed closely by a position at the old children's hospital (replaced by the IWK in 1970) where she worked in med-surg and poison control. She then spent time at the Cape Breton County Hospital before heading home to family and the familiarity of Pictou County.

A long-time NSNU activist and nursing advocate, she was initially drawn to the labour movement by the usual challenges - unfair wages, pension inequity, lack of representation, and an antiquated culture that undervalued nursing.

Like so many others, Vivian was nominated for positions within the Union, often without her full consent. Her first task was to organize Edward Mortimer Place (now Shiretown). She did so with the spy-like stealth of a covert operation, placing phone calls from pay phones and conducting union-talk in the shadows.



She now looks back fondly at early Annual General Meetings at Old Orchard Inn, connections with fellow LPNs, and working alongside numerous labour reps. Throughout her career she sometimes locked horns with the four NSNU presidents who served during her tenure — most notably, her favourite sparring partner, Janet Hazelton.

Known for her steely glare and expressive eyerolls, Vivian routinely commanded the floor at the Annual Meeting to deliver spirited arguments for the issues she championed. Those looks and Vivian's AGM deliberations were epic.

Above her union involvement, she was a nurse. She loved working in long term care and the attachments she formed with residents and their families. Giving voice to those who could no longer speak for themselves gave her deep purpose.

Vivian found deep fulfillment in being a licensed practical nurse and is proud of their current scope of practice. Her crowning glory came in 2018 when she received the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia Lifetime Achievement Award, just weeks into her battle with kidney cancer.

While one chapter closes for Vivian, an exciting new one is beginning. She enjoys cooking, baking, and knitting for her family, sharing a home with them on the very same street she herself grew up on. Her house is spotless, she's joined an exercise class, and now has more time to care for her ailing sister.

Vivian can take pride in her legacy, having shared both her immense union and nursing experience, and an intuitive wisdom that can't be taught in a classroom.

NSNU congratulates Vivian on her incredible career and this milestone. Her contributions to the Nurses' Union and the nursing profession are immeasurable.



In Memoriam

Celebrating the Life and Nursing Legacy of Ann Conway

Ann Conway was not only a fixture at NSNU events, she was an icon. She was greatly admired and embodied the core values of the nursing labour movement. She was a mentor and a union leader with a heart of gold.

Sadly, Ann Mary Conway, age 71, passed away suddenly on August 28, 2026.

Born in Plymouth, she was a graduate of East Pictou Rural High School and the Aberdeen Hospital School of Nursing, class of 1975.

She gave much of her life to her family, nursing, and her community. She was a steadfast member of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union where she held many positions at the Local level, on Standing Committees of the Union, and served as the Northern Region Representative on the Board of Directors. Ann was a lifetime Honorary Member of the NSNU and an active member of the Aberdeen Nursing Alumnae.

Our thoughts are with her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her. Her dedication to nursing, her love of family, and her caring spirit will remain a lasting part of the many lives she touched.

Ann will be sorely missed at NSNU functions and by her NSNU family.

NSNU Logo Copyright

Like any corporate or organizational logo, the NSNU logo is copyright protected and is registered as such.

The Nurses' Union logo is registered as a trademark, complete with brand standards, and has been since its creation in 2002. It is a part of the Nurses' Union identity and is a highly recognizable symbol in this province and beyond our borders.

Should a Local of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union wish to use the NSNU logo on merchandise, stationery, signage, etc., clearance and approval are required from the provincial office. Simply email **nsnu.office@nsnu.ca** with the specifics of your intended usage. Designated staff will assist you with the graphic application.

NSNU is proud to know that Locals wish to extend and display the union brand. The intent of clearance is to ensure usage adheres to our design and style guidelines.

Who doesn't love a **good deal**?

Your NSNU membership comes with more perks than you may realize!

The NSNU Members Only Discount List gives you access to exclusive offers from a variety of local businesses and service providers. Whether you're grabbing dinner, planning a night out, getting active, shopping local or looking for professional services, there are plenty of ways to make your membership pay off.

And the list keeps growing! New offers are added as they come in, so make a habit of checking back throughout the year to see what's new.

Simply visit the Discount List in the Members Only portal (login required) of nsnu.ca to browse participating businesses and see what's available.

Be sure to keep your NSNU member card or proof of employment handy when redeeming an offer, as some businesses may require validation. And don't be afraid to ask about other healthcare worker or nursing discounts: some businesses offer additional savings that may not be included on our list.

If you don't have an NSNU member card, contact the Union office at 902-469-1474 or nsnu.office@nsnu.ca.

Know of a great deal that isn't on our list? Let us know! We're happy to share discounts that could benefit your fellow NSNU members.

National Day of Action Calls for Urgent Action Against Two-Tier Health Care

SEPTEMBER 1

On September 1, health-care advocates across Canada took part in a National Day of Action, calling on the federal government to protect public health care and stop the spread of two-tier, American-style health care.

The demonstrations were held the day Alberta's *Health Statutes Amendment Act*, formerly Bill 11, came into effect. The legislation received Royal Assent on December 11, 2025, and allows physicians to practice in both the publicly funded and privately paid health-care systems. Alberta is the first province to introduce this type of dual-practice model.

Health coalitions and unions across the country are raising serious concerns that the legislation could undermine universal Medicare by allowing patients who can afford to pay privately to access care outside the public system.

The Nova Scotia Health Coalition (NSHC), alongside other provincial and national health-care advocates, is calling on the federal government to enforce the *Canada Health Act* and protect Canada's universal, single-payer public health-care system.

Concerns have also been raised that Alberta's approach could have consequences well beyond that province, particularly if similar models are adopted elsewhere in Canada.

"As bad as it is in Alberta, the threat of it in our small province is going to be absolutely devastating," said NSHC Provincial Coordinator Jennifer Benoit.

Rallies, information pickets and other demonstrations were held across the country as part of the National Day of Action. In Nova Scotia, advocates gathered outside MP Jaime Battiste's constituency office in Cape Breton, calling on MPs to send Prime Minister Mark Carney and Federal Health Minister Marjorie Michel a clear message: defend the *Canada Health Act* and Canada's public health-care system.

Advocates were united in their call to protect a health-care system where access is based on need, not wealth.



Third from left: Tracy d'Entremont (NSNU Western VP)



It takes a Village to give extraordinary kids a chance to be ordinary and nurses are a foundational part of that.

This past summer, NSNU once again partnered with Brigadoon Village to provide funding for nurses who helped care for kids attending Week 8 of camp from August 23-28th.

Brigadoon Village is the largest pediatric medical camp facility in Canada and offers more than 30 camp programs, each designed to accommodate a health condition or other life challenge. The nurse-volunteers helped ensure campers received care from qualified professionals while enjoying a worry-free camp experience. From managing medications and health plans to providing comfort, care and reassurance when needed, they made sure every camper could safely experience the magic of Brigadoon Village. NSNU has proudly supported this program for several years by providing an honorarium to these dedicated nurses.

Brigadoon Village thanks NSNU and our amazing members who volunteered at camp. NSNU thanks our dedicated nurses for giving their time, expertise and care to help make the magic of Brigadoon possible for these campers.

WEEK 8 at Brigadoon Village welcomed the following Campers:

CAMP BRAVEHEART
Heart Conditions

CAMP BRAINIAC
Neurosurgery Conditions

CAMP CLOTS-OF-FUN
Bleeding Disorders

CAMP TREASURE CHEST
Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Lung Conditions

YouTube

THIS IS WHAT YOU MAKE POSSIBLE – THANK YOU!

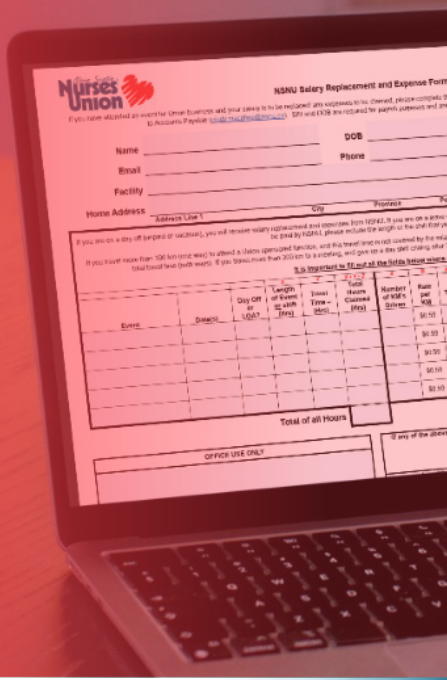
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When you need to access an NSNU form, agreement or application, please begin your search on our Forms & Guides page at **nsnu.ca/resources/forms-guides**, or visit the relevant section of our website.

Commonly used forms, such as the Salary & Expense Form, are available on the Forms & Guides page. Forms and documents related to specific events, such as the AGM and Eastern Labour School, will be posted on the event's webpage. Scholarship, grant and bursary applications can be found on their corresponding pages.

We strongly encourage members to avoid using Google or another search engine to locate NSNU forms. Although outdated documents/forms may no longer be active or accessible through our website, old versions can sometimes remain indexed in online search results. This means a Google search could lead you to an expired or incorrect form.

Accessing documents directly through an active page on the NSNU website helps ensure you are using the most current version available.



what's nu? snapshots



Susan Wallace-Blais, Pauline Whynot, Susan Oickle, Jeri Zinck, Lillian Fynes and Michelle Lowe

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Unable to attend our most recent Annual Meeting Banquet to receive her Honorary Membership award, Lillian Fynes was recently presented with the award by her fellow retired nurses from South Shore Regional Hospital.

The group meets every Monday night to play bridge, and in the months since the AGM, Lillian had nearly forgotten about the award. When her fellow nurses presented it to her at one of their weekly gatherings, she was genuinely surprised and very pleased to receive the honour.

A 50-YEAR MILESTONE

Sydney City Hospital's School of Nursing graduated these fine nurses 50 years ago! In September, these ladies gathered to reminisce, reconnect and celebrate five decades since they began their nursing careers. Thank you to Darlene Aucoin for sharing!





VON SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

VON Cape Breton Metro awarded two $500 scholarships to twins Deven and Dasha Navarole. Dasha will pursue her studies at Cape Breton University, while Deven is heading to Nova Scotia Community College.

Their mom, Nadine Navarole, is an active NSNU member and works with VON Cape Breton Metro. Congratulations to Deven and Dasha, and best of luck as they begin this exciting new chapter!

REMEMBERING MICHAELA WHYNOT



The nurses of VON Lunenburg would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of the NSNU Locals who made donations toward this beautiful memorial bench in honour of their friend and colleague, Michaela Whynot.

Michaela loved her nursing career with the VON in Lunenburg and was a valued member of the team. She is greatly missed.



Michaela Whynot, RN
1996-2024



VON HALIFAX CELEBRATES A LOCAL LEADER



On September 3rd, VON Halifax held a Local meeting at the NSNU office in Burnside.

They were pleased to have highly active Local member Karen Hall in attendance. Karen recently celebrated seven years with VON and was also the recipient of the 2026 IEN Award - an incredible and well-deserved achievement!

Karen brought her award to the meeting to share this wonderful accomplishment with her fellow members. Congratulations, Karen!

VALLEY NURSES STEP UP ON FLIGHT



When a fellow passenger lost consciousness 15 minutes into a flight to Toronto, three nurses from Kentville's Valley Regional Hospital, Abbie Loughran, Abby Dauphinee and Karlee McGuigan, sprang into action. Working in tight quarters with no tourniquet or medical tape, they relied on pure nursing ingenuity (including improvising with a hand-made tourniquet and duct tape) to start an IV, monitor vitals and keep the passenger stable until landing. Once paramedics took over in Ontario, the trio, bound for bachelorette festivities in Toronto, returned to their regularly scheduled fun-filled programming.

*Read the full story on **Nova Scotia Health** by following the QR code.*

VON CB METRO TAILGATE BBQ

VON Cape Breton Metro didn't let a rainy day ruin their plans! These VON Local leaders, along with their fully stocked trunk, were ready to give their colleagues a little boost with an end-of-summer tailgate BBQ.

Rain or shine, it was a great way to bring members together and enjoy a little summer spirit!









NSH SECURITY

In July, Janet Hazelton welcomed and met with new security officers hired by the NS Health Authority. Janet was invited by Dean Stienberg, NSH Director of Security, to speak to the new hires at their orientation. These special constables are fulltime, unionized staff with NSH. Most are retired police officers who are very experienced and trained.

ANNUAL ABERDEEN NSNU PICNIC

The Aberdeen Hospital Local held their third annual picnic at the end of August, bringing Aberdeen nurses and their families together for an afternoon of fun and connection. The little ones had plenty to enjoy, with a bounce house and face painting, while everyone could cool off with ice cream.

It was a wonderful way for members and their families to come together, enjoy some time outside of work and celebrate the strong sense of community within the Local.





Brew Good, Do Good



Every year, a Quebec company called Efficom creates the Nurse Planner for NSNU members, a free pocket calendar to track work schedules and a valuable resource for NSNU contacts and other information.

Efficom generates revenue to produce the calendar via advertising sales and provides NSNU with a generous contribution the Union then donates to various charitable and non-profit organizations.

In July, Efficom contacted The Church Brewing Company in Wolfville. At that time, they had already committed their donation/marketing budget to other causes.

That said, each month, through their **Brew Good, Do Good** program, they partner with a local non-profit organization. For every **Amen Brisket Melt - Brew Good, Do Good sandwich** sold, they donate $1, with all proceeds going to that month's featured organization.

This past August they chose the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union as their **August Brew Good, Do Good** recipient, raising $1276.00!

Like The Church Brewing Company, supporting the community is incredibly important to NSNU. The Nurses' Union will be donating the $1276.00 to Transition House Association of Nova Scotia.

Thank you to the good people at The Church Brewing Company of Wolfville.

LTD Appeals Application/Claim Review Process

Did you know NSNU offers support for nurses in the event their application for long term disability (LTD) has been denied?

LTD for members of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union (NSNU) is an income-replacement benefit plan that supports healthcare workers who cannot work for an extended period due to a non-work-related illness or injury.

The Plan provides security and stability to health care employees and their families. Plan members have the peace of mind of knowing that if they are unable to work due to illness or injury and their LTD application is approved, they will be supported with a monthly benefit to help cover living expenses and programs designed to help safely return to good health and the workplace.

Those currently in the LTD application/claim review process are encouraged to seek assistance. Given the difficulty in having new medical documentation accepted by the Dispute Resolution Authority after Claim Review, it's important that all nurses who have had their initial application denied are aware of various supports before any claim review period expires.

If you have been denied, contact your labour relations representative as soon as possible for information regarding how to access those resources.



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