Registered Nurses' Union
Newfoundland & Labrador

ANNUAL REPORT 2019–2020

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Vision. Strategy. Collaboration. Commitment.

This is what lies behind each decision and action by your union.

To say it's been quite a year is an understatement. Year of the Nurse. Snowmageddon. Global pandemic.

When the World Health Organization deemed 2020 "Year of the Nurse and Midwife," I don't think they envisioned the world would be combating the devastating COVID-19 virus.

But in many ways there couldn't be a better year to dedicate to nursing. This year marks the 200th birthday of Florence Nightingale. I think our beloved nursing pioneer is looking down with immense pride on the role nursing providers have played during the global crisis.

You have been the front line of defense - the centre piece keeping patients safe. This moment in time will not be forgotten. Registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and essential workers around the world will be remembered for bravely stepping up to combat COVID-19.

This year also holds a special place for me because it is my last full year as your president.

I am pleased to present the Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland and Labrador (RNU) 2019-20 Annual Report - my very last annual report.

I've always strongly supported this review process. We conduct research with our members and the public to see if we are meeting our goals. We track progress through data collection.

I am a big believer in research and data. Knowledge is power. Knowing how you feel and what causes you grief is what motivates us every day at RNU.

It's been a tough year. On top of continuing to struggle with inadequate staffing, you are dealing with new challenges as a result of COVID-19.

Since the start of the pandemic, our team has been working tirelessly to support you and keep you safe.

We've also been working hard this year to address staffing and violence in the workplace, while continuing to deliver core services to members. This work will continue.

Your new board of directors is eager and ready. In January, Vice President Yvette Coffey will take over as president. Yvette, the board, our staff and volunteers, will continue our advocacy work for better staffing and safer workplaces. A new strategic plan will be developed and priorities will be set to help improve working conditions.

When I look back over my career, I'm proud of the accomplishments our union has achieved. Your salaries have grown 113 per cent since I began my presidency in 1996.

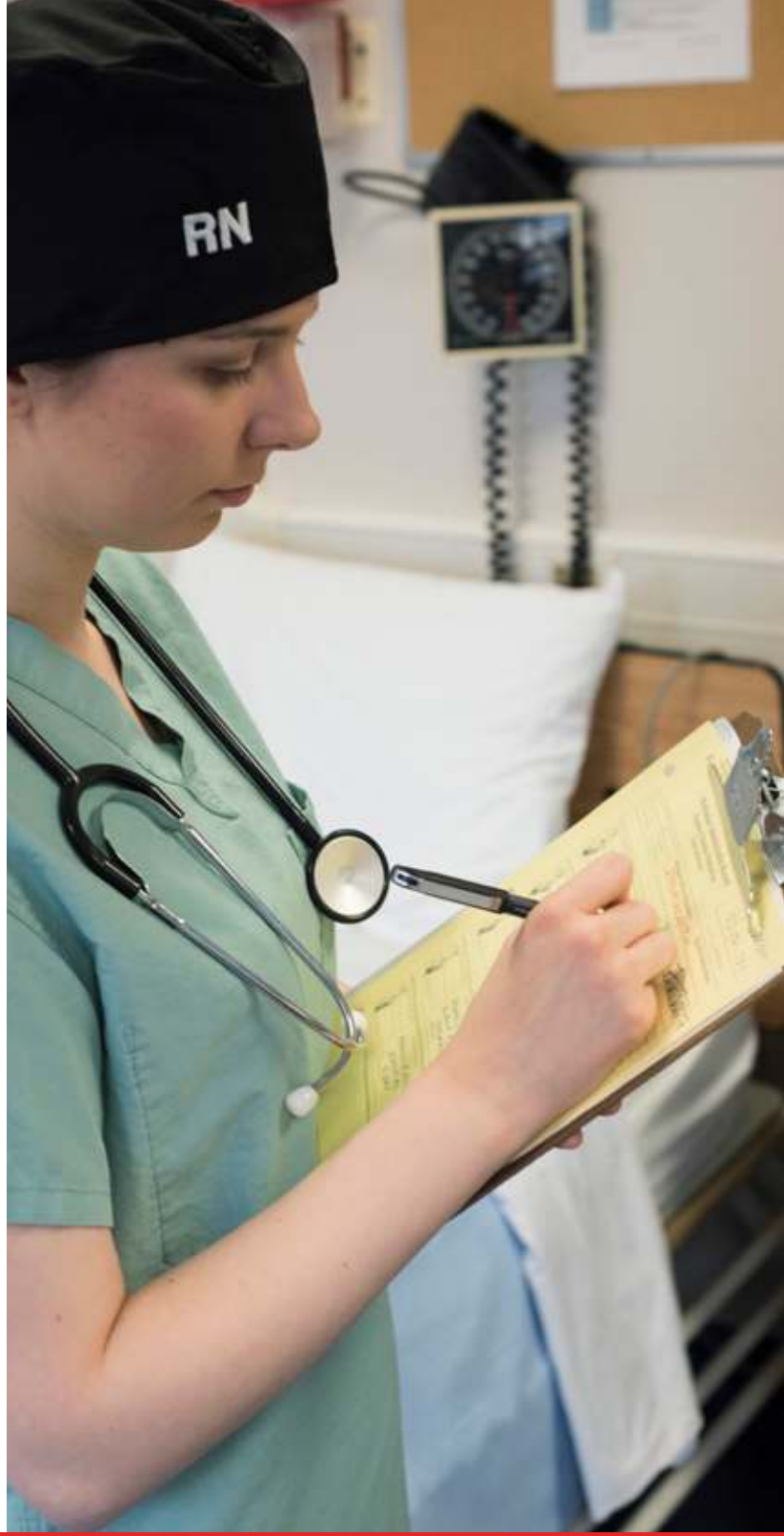
There have been many wins to celebrate – Core Staffing Review, new grievance resolution language, pension security, strike avoidance in 2009, the Clarity Project and more. Our union remains a fierce defender of public health care and a staunch advocate for patients.

I have so many emotions as I prepare to retire. One of the biggest is pride. Pride in my union and in my profession. It truly has been an honour to serve and represent you as president.

In solidarity,

Debbie

Debbie Forward, RN
President, Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador



OUR VISION

The Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador (RNU):

Is a membership driven, proactive and democratic union, sensitive and responsive to ever changing needs in an evolving health care system.

Maintains mutual trust, respect, support and understanding while valuing diversity and creativity.

Is dedicated to providing an environment conducive to participation, learning and personal growth.

Advocates for a high quality, publicly funded health care system in partnership with the public, communities and health care professionals.

OUR OBJECTIVES

As a union, RNU's primary objectives are:

The advancement of the social, economic and general welfare of its members.

The promotion of the education of its members in all matters relating to their social and economic welfare.

The promotion of the highest standards of health care.

The promotion of unity within the nursing profession and other allied fields through cooperation with, and support of, other organizations sharing these objectives.

THE RNU BALANCED SCORECARD

The Balanced Scorecard is a tool used by organizations to effectively measure success and to ensure activities support the vision and strategy of the organization. We use the Balanced Scorecard to confirm that we are effectively meeting the needs of our members. We focus our efforts on five key areas, called Perspectives, and direct our activities and decisions toward the issues that are most important to you.

Our five Perspectives are:

CHAMPION REGISTERED NURSES' NEEDS

We exist to meet the needs of you, the registered nurse. Your opinion on how well we are achieving this is vital.

EXCEL AT SERVICE

We constantly strive to provide you with the best services in the best possible way.

ADVOCATE HEALTH CARE

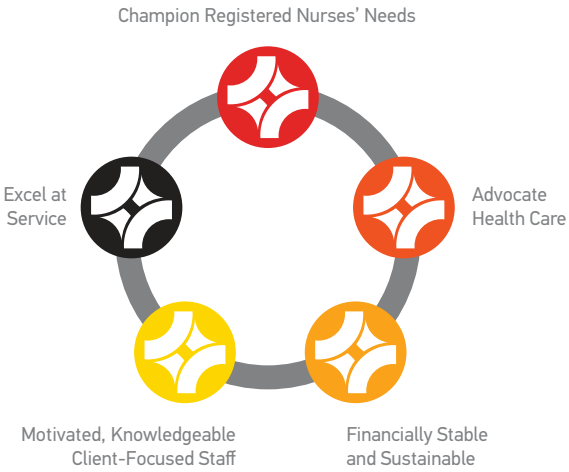
Our ability to influence critical issues in health care is part of our mission.

MOTIVATED, KNOWLEDGEABLE, CLIENT-FOCUSED STAFF

We recognize our responsibility, as an employer, to treat our staff the way we expect you to be treated in your workplace.

FINANCIALLY STABLE AND SUSTAINABLE

We must be constantly diligent in the stewardship of your dues.



To achieve our five Perspectives, we have set numerous specific and measurable targets. Each target, called a Key Performance Indicator (KPI), is directly aligned with at least one of our five Perspectives.

At the end of every fiscal year (July 31), we conduct a survey with our members, volunteers, staff and the public. Along with other data and information gathered from RNU staff, the survey results help determine how well we are doing on each KPI. That information is outlined each year in our annual report.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

PRESIDENT
Debbie Forward, RN
RNU

VICE-PRESIDENT
Yvette Coffey, RN
DR. H. BLISS MURPHY CANCER CARE CENTRE

SECRETARY, TREASURER
Tony Moores, RN
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE

REGION 1 (BRANCH 14, 15)
Ashley Jones, RN
CAPTAIN WILLIAM JACKMAN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

REGION 2 (BRANCH 13, 18, 26, 50, 51)
Gina Elliot, RN
CHARLES S. CURTIS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

REGION 3 (BRANCH 11, 40, 41)
Mike Fagan, RN
COMMUNITY HEALTH, WESTERN HEALTH

REGION 4 (BRANCH 12, 23, 24, 46)
Christa Philpott, RN
SIR THOMAS RODDICK HOSPITAL

REGION 5 (BRANCH 9, 32, 33, 38, 43, 45)
Brenda Dicks, RN
COMMUNITY HEALTH, CENTRAL HEALTH

REGION 6 (BRANCH 8, 17, 25, 42)
Deneka Pottle, RN
JAMES PATON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

REGION 7 (BRANCH 10, 20, 21, 30, 36)
Mark Alyward, NP
BONAVISTA PENNINSULA HEALTH CENTRE

REGION 8 (BRANCH 16, 28, 29)
Niki Parsons, RN
CARBONEAR GENERAL HOSPITAL

REGION 9 (BRANCH 4, 31, 44, 48, 49)
Miranda O'Driscoll, RN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES

REGION 9 (BRANCH 2, 3)
Kim Parsons, RN
JANEWAY CHILDREN'S HEALTH & REHABILITATION CENTRE

REGION 9 (BRANCH 5, 34, 35, 37, 47)
Rosalie Gillis, RN
ST. CLARE'S MERCY HOSPITAL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (EX-OFFICIO)
John Vivian, QC
RNU

The 2018-20 RNU Board of Directors. The Board, which is made up of RNs and NPs from across the province, develops and manages policies, sets the strategic direction for the organization and governs RNU between biennial conventions.

OUR VOLUNTEERS MAKE OUR UNION STRONG. LEADERS, ADVOCATES, AND CHANGE-MAKERS.

2019 Council of Presidents Meeting

RNU delegates at the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour Convention.

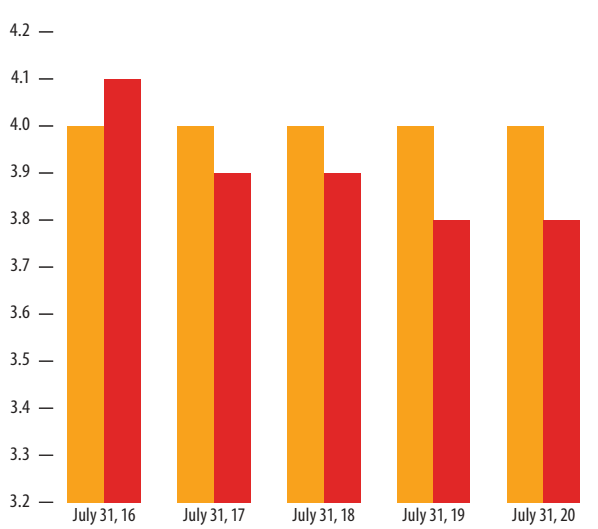
PERSPECTIVE: CHAMPION MEMBERS' NEEDS

Meeting the needs of registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) is our most important function as a union. Each year, we measure overall satisfaction by our members to help gauge how well we are doing.

KPI OVERALL SATISFACTION

GOAL: To achieve an overall union performance rating by members of 4.0 out of 5.0.

OVERALL UNION PERFORMANCE
Rating on a scale of 1 to 5 by members



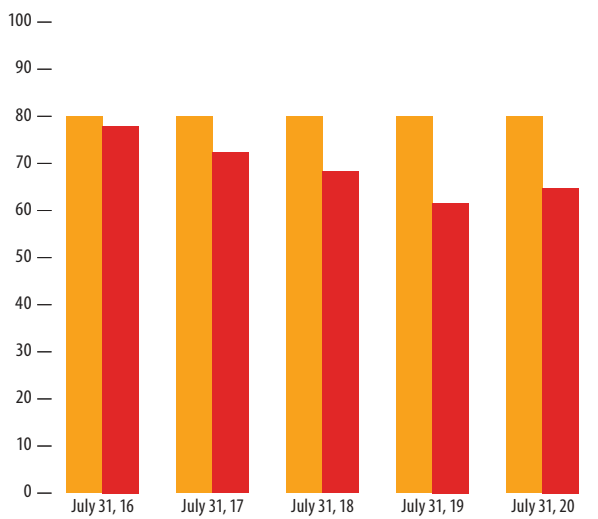
Our overall performance rating has remained consistent over the last three years and remains slightly below our goal rating of 4.0. Members continue to express a positive overall opinion of RNU, as can be seen in the following survey results:

- Presenting Professional Image to the Public – 94% Agree
- Strong Advocate or Voice for RNs – 75% Agree
- Effective Leadership – 74% Agree
- Responsive to Member Needs – 67% Agree

While our overall performance rating remains consistent and strong, we know there is work to do. Workload and staffing issues continue to have a great impact on our members. We also know you would like to see improvements in compensation. RNU will develop a new three-year strategic plan in 2021. We will continue to listen to and consult our members and ensure this plan focuses on your needs and expectations.

GOAL: To have 80% of members rate the overall union performance as high (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5).

OVERALL UNION PERFORMANCE
% of members who rate it as high



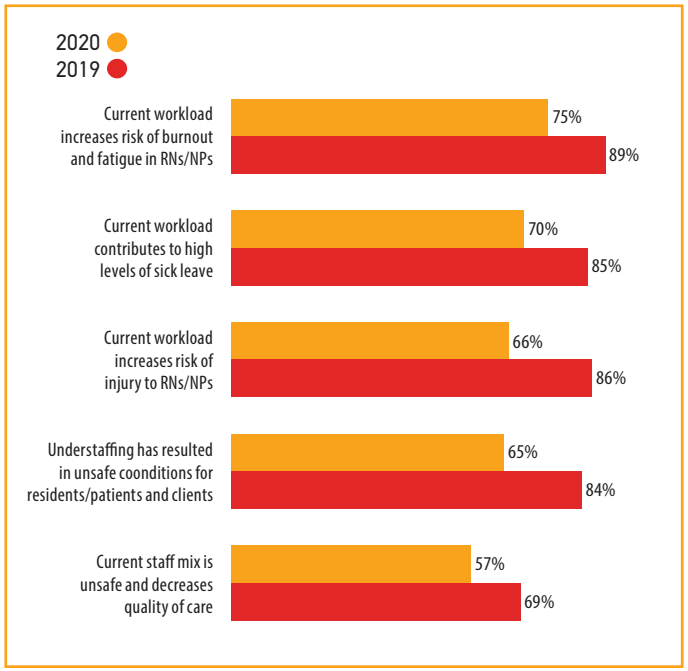
RNU's overall performance rose slightly in 2020, with 65% of members giving a high 4 or 5 rating on a 5-point scale.

- 25% of members gave a neutral 3 rating
- 10% of members gave a low 1 or 2 rating

Members with low satisfaction gave the following reasons: a lack of support for members, issues with contract negotiations, and dissatisfaction with pay.

We also believe working conditions contribute to your satisfaction with RNU. While this chart shows improvement from 2019, challenges related to staffing and workload continue to cause concern.

PERCEPTIONS ON CURRENT WORKLOAD (2019 VS 2020)
% RATING 4 OR 5 ON A 5-POINT SCALE



Our commitment to advocate for better working conditions for our members is unwavering. We'll keep working tirelessly to address concerns and advocate for change.

As outlined over the next pages, we continue to move forward initiatives that we believe are a step in the right direction. As well, we will develop a new three-year strategic plan and a public awareness campaign in 2021 as part of our efforts to affect real change in your workplace.

Staffing Initiatives

A core staffing review to assess the workload of registered nurses is set to begin following years of advocacy by RNU. In January, we were successful in having government expand this review to include a rural site. The following sites will be reviewed: Labrador South Health Centre, Forteau, St. Luke's Home, St. John's; James Paton Memorial Hospital, Gander; Medicine and Surgery Program, Health Sciences Centre, St. John's; and Community Health Sites in Corner Brook.

A request for proposal (RFP) is being issued by the provincial government to select an external consultant to conduct the core staffing review. It is anticipated work will begin in the new year. This will be the first review of staff in over 18 years.

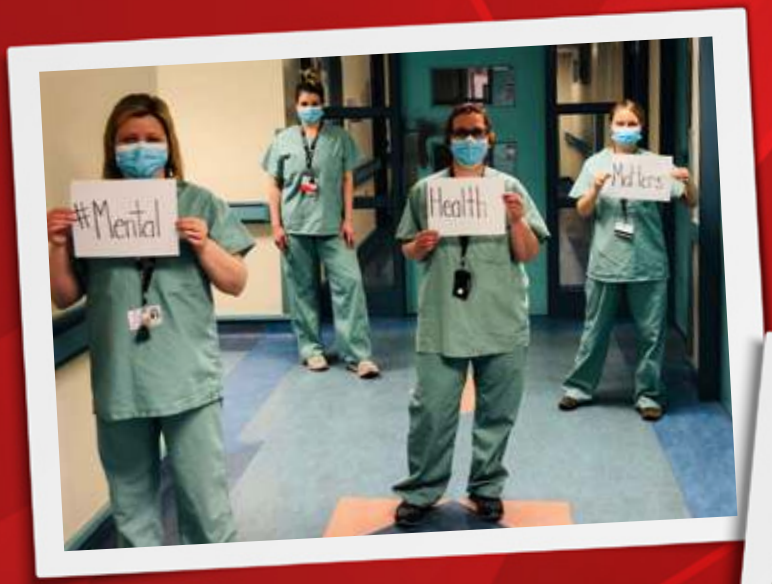
Work to introduce an acuity-based staffing model also continues. A vendor has been chosen to implement a workforce management system for the regional health authorities. This system will transition all staff scheduling to an integrated, online model. This is a multi-year project designed to shift to a staffing model based on the real-time needs of patients.

Contract Extension

This spring members voted to extend our collective agreement until June 30, 2022. With uncertainty regarding the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the financial challenges facing our province, extending our contract provides stability and security for RNU members. The extension, which passed with strong support (85.6% of members voted yes), included a 4% wage increase.

Your board of directors is already looking ahead to the next round of collective bargaining. Strategic discussions are ongoing and we will keep you updated regarding bargaining preparations on *myRNU*.

ON THE FRONT LINE: KEEPING US SAFE AND HEALTHY, NOT JUST DURING COVID-19, BUT EVERY DAY.



Pandemic Response

The COVID-19 pandemic consumed our office for much of 2020. We worked hard and long to keep you safe. And continue to do so.

Our labour relations team responded to a record number of inquiries from registered nurses and nurse practitioners. Activity in the *myRNU* discussion forum skyrocketed with almost 600 posts in just three months. Weekly Facebook Lives sessions by President Debbie Forward, member emails and frequent *myRNU* posts helped keep you connected and informed. Our social media channels saw record levels of engagement with members and the public.

Our work centred around your health and safety. President Debbie Forward and our team were the driving force behind advocacy efforts to keep health care workers safe in Newfoundland and Labrador.

RNU pushed for the precautionary principle to be followed and was the driving force that secured a joint statement on personal protective equipment (PPE) with the provincial government, regional health authorities and other public sector unions.

Since day one, we've argued for the highest levels of protection. While we were successful in having government agree that health care workers are best positioned to determine appropriate PPE through a point-of-care risk assessment, our work continues on this front as we work to ensure all employers follow and abide by the joint statement on PPE.

We called for transparency regarding PPE supplies and worked with other unions to keep pressure on government regarding PPE inventory. Your president and executive director met regularly with the department of health, regional health authorities, Minister Haggie and others. We were the first and loudest voice in provincial news calling out government and employers when they failed to listen or provide the protection health care workers needed.

We also worked to make sure you felt support from your community. We shone a light on nursing health heroes on the front lines by sharing your pictures on social media, collecting video messages from leaders in our community, and coordinating weekly Sunday night "Cheer for Health Heroes & Essential Workers."

Nationally, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) has been steadfast in their advocacy to protect health care workers. CFNU has demanded that governments, employers and public health agencies follow the precautionary principle. Linda Silas, CFNU President, has been meeting regularly with the federal minister of health and the Public Health Agency of Canada. CFNU also launched an independent investigation into Canada's failure to properly protect health care workers. The results of the investigation, which was led by Mario Possamai, former senior advisor to the SARS Commission, provide a road map for governments to follow as we continue to face COVID-19.

Violence in the Workplace

Our calls to address violence in health care have been loud and persistent. In 2019, RNU successfully negotiated a provincial violence prevention forum during collective bargaining.

The forum was held in January and marked the first coming together of key stakeholders to tackle this critical issue. Approximately 80 participants attended the forum organized by RNU, the Office for the Status of Women and the Department of Health and Community Services. Three registered nurses told firsthand accounts of violence at work. Leaders from the provincial government, the regional health authorities, health care unions, Memorial University's School of Nursing, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police shared information and took part in round table discussions.

RNU is now working with government and the Senior Joint Quality Work Life Committee to move forward recommendations coming out of this forum.

Clarity Project

Promoting the role and value of registered nurses and nurse practitioners remains at the heart of everything we do.

The Clarity Project focuses on promoting, protecting and recognizing RNs and NPs.

Our polling shows members believe this work is important and we must continue to create clarity around roles for nursing providers.

Our research shows the public understand your value to health care, but remain confused about the various nursing providers – how the roles differ and the range in levels of care.

We continue to encourage members to identify themselves as an RN or NP.

Recent polling shows members identify themselves as:

- 53% as a registered nurse
- 27% as nurses
- 15% use the terms registered nurse and nurse interchangeably
- 100% of NPs introduce themselves as 'nurse practitioners'

These measures are largely in line with last year.

Members also do the following to stand out at work:

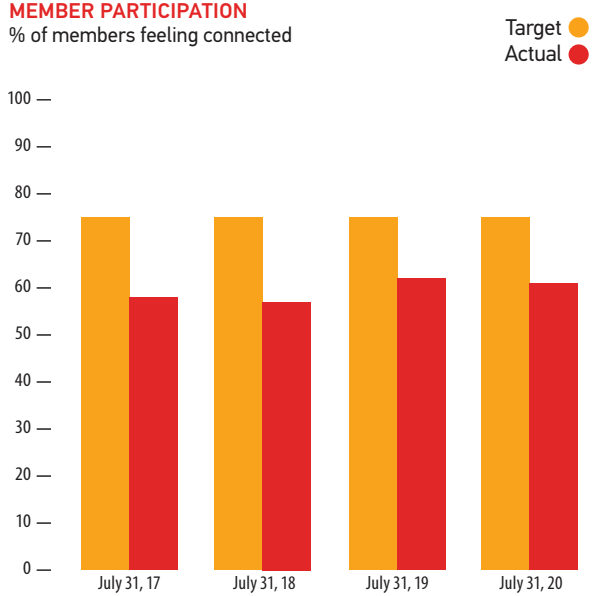
- 69% wear some component of the RN uniform (black and white scrubs, white coat or RN scrub hat)
- 53% wear a RN/NP lanyard
- 45% wear a RN/NP pin

A sizable segment of our members now wear all black. We asked members what they thought of changing the identifying uniform colours of RNs and NPs. Fifty-eight per cent of members support changing the uniform colours to black tops and black bottoms. The RNU Board of Directors will discuss this finding as we prepare our 2021 Clarity Project Plan.

KPI MEMBER PARTICIPATION

GOAL: To have 75% of members feel connected to RNU.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION
% of members feeling connected



It's important for our members to feel connected to their union – to the priorities we set and to the work we do on your behalf. In line with last year, 61% of members report they feel connected to RNU.

Members said they feel connected because of strong communications including email, social media, and newsletters (28%), and the *myRNU* app (14%).

The majority of members who do not feel connected to RNU were not able to explain why they feel this way. Some members cited we need to be more active in the workplace and advocate and enforce existing rules.

Eighty-one per cent of members who are not engaged are interested in building a better connection with RNU. We need to capitalize on this interest and find ways to better engage and connect the membership.

Engagement on Digital, Traditional and Social Media:

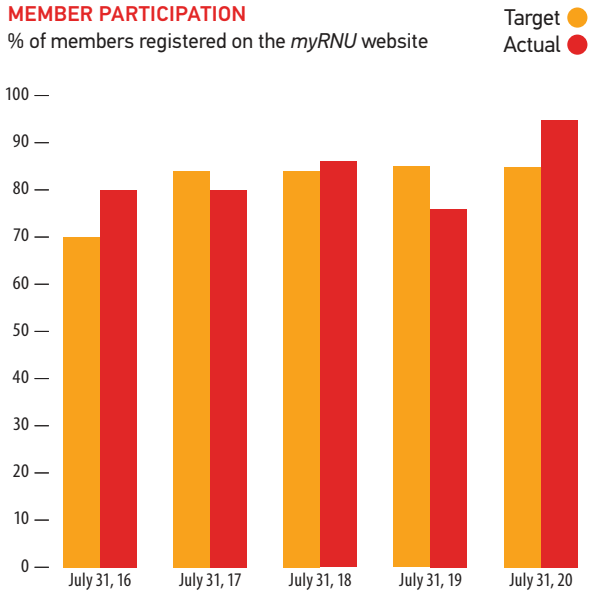
- 100% read email from the RNU
- 94% saw RNU in the news
- 90% saw one of our ads
- 89% saw a post from RNU on social media
- 86% read the *In Touch* newsletter
- 76% watched a Facebook Live with RNU President

One-on-One or Face-to-Face engagement:

- 48% contacted a member of the branch executive
- 44% attended a union or branch meeting
- 41% contacted a shop steward
- 41% contacted a Labour Relations Officer
- 22% contacted a regional representative/member of the board of directors
- 17% posted on the *myRNU* discussion forum
- 16% contacted an RNU executive board member (such as the Provincial President/VP/Treasurer)

GOAL: To have 85% of members registered on the *myRNU* website.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION
% of members registered on the *myRNU* website



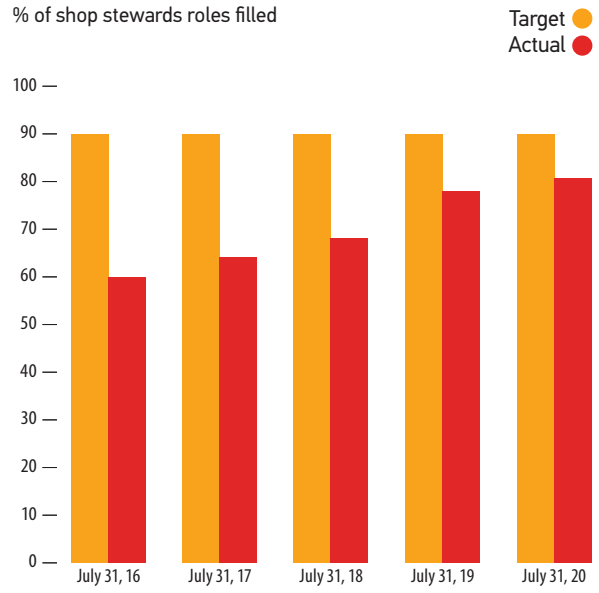
2020 saw a big jump in the number of members registered for our member only website, *myRNU*.

Our records show that 5,055 members have a *myRNU* account. This vital communications tools offers a way to share information and communicate directly and privately with members and volunteers.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a big driver behind our increase in new account registrations. Nearly 300 members created accounts over the last six months.

GOAL: To have 90% of shop stewards roles filled.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION
% of shop stewards roles filled

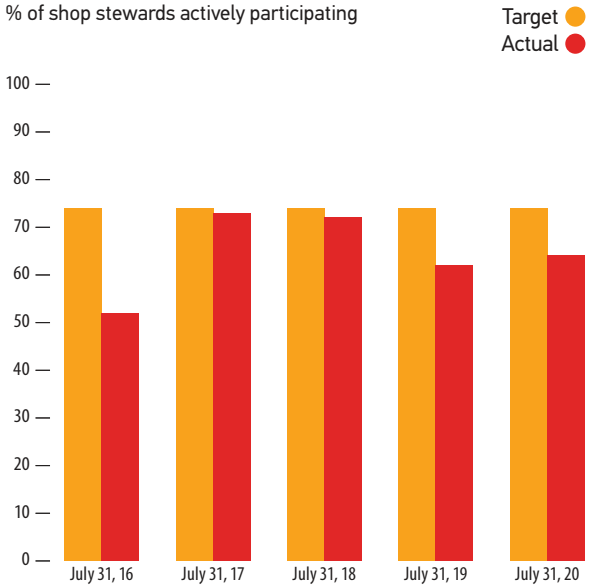


Shop stewards are liaisons between members and their employers. They provide guidance to members in matters relating to the collective agreement and assist in resolving workplace issues. This year, 81% of shop steward positions were filled. The good work being done at the branch level to encourage union participation and to mentor representatives is reflected in this number.

GOAL: To have 75% of shop stewards actively participating.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION

% of shop stewards actively participating



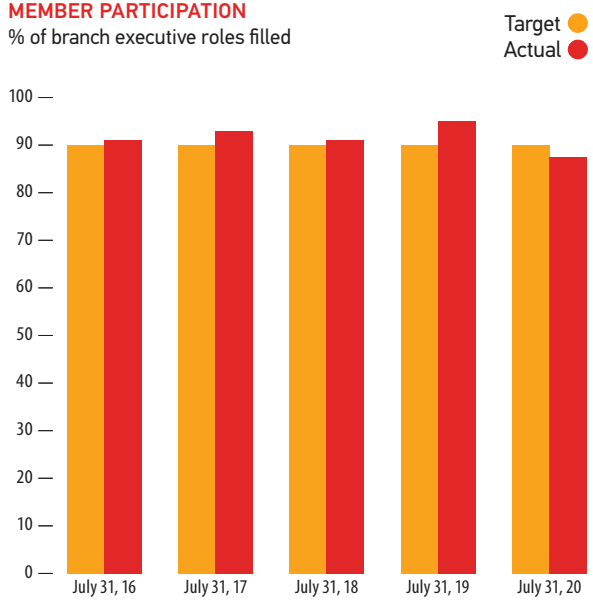
Shop stewards offer essential support to members in the workplace. Measuring the percentage of shop stewards who are active in their role is a valuable indicator of our union performance in the workplace.

This year, 64% of shop stewards reported they were active in their role. This number is under where we'd like it to be. Our goal is to help volunteers be confident and active in their role. This means ensuring shop stewards get the right tools and supports. It is also important for branch presidents to delegate duties to shop stewards where possible to encourage their participation.

GOAL: To have 90% of branch executive roles filled.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION

% of branch executive roles filled



Branch executives play a significant role in our union. They work at the employer level to address issues impacting our members, as well as patients, residents and clients. Monitoring the number of filled branch executive roles is an indicator of a strong union presence in the workplace. This year 88% of branch executive roles were filled.

SHOWING RN/NP PRIDE

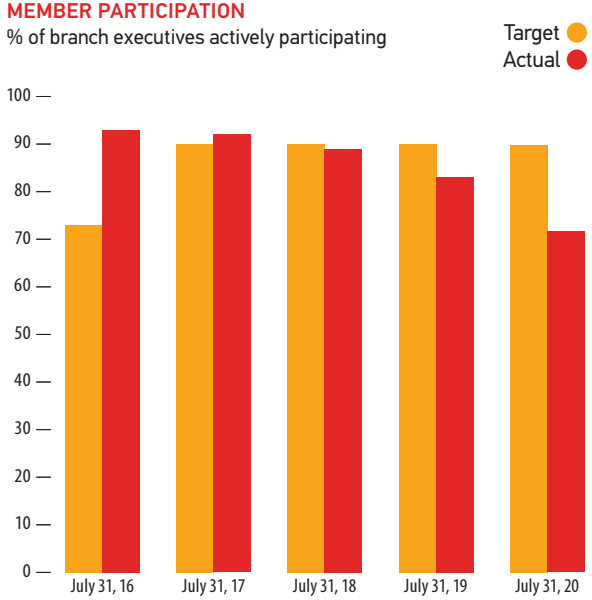
During the state of emergency in January, RNU members put their dedication and commitment on full display. Snowshoeing and riding on skidoo (like Jen and Andrew) to get to work, putting in incredibly long shifts — some up to 60 hours — to be there for their patients.

Nurse Practitioners were asked to send along photos of them celebrating Nurse Practitioner Week which ran from November 10 to 16. We received so many great pictures, including this one of Colleen Moores, NP at the Dr. G.B. Cross Memorial Hospital.

GOAL: To have 90% of branch executives actively participating.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION

% of branch executives actively participating



Given the vital role branch executives play in our union, it is critical for them to be active and engaged.

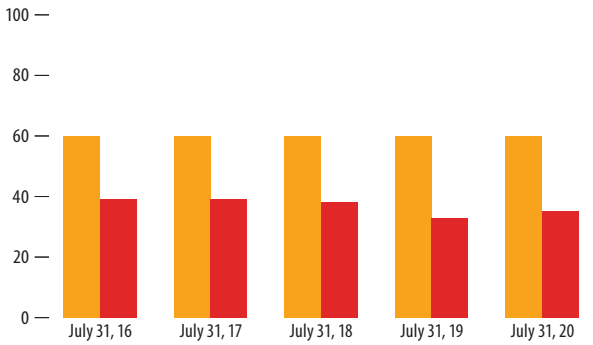
This year, the number of branch executives actively participating in the workplace declined to 71%. There might be a few reasons contributing to this decrease, including COVID-19 and the additional demands the pandemic is placing on our members' time. This was also the second year we had to postpone Branch Executive Education. It was cancelled this spring because of COVID-19 and in 2019 due to collective bargaining. While the number of active branch executive members has slightly declined, 92% of branch presidents report they are active.

Our team is preparing plans to offer virtual education next year to branch executives. We will continue to look for opportunities to engage our volunteers and cultivate feelings of value and confidence.

PERSPECTIVE: EXCEL AT SERVICE

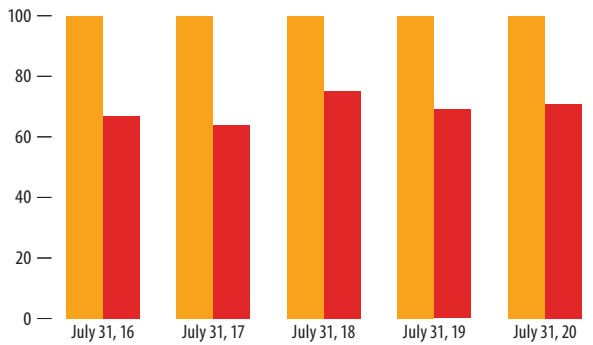
GOAL: To resolve 60% of grievances within 12 months of filing.

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION
# of grievances resolved within one year of filing



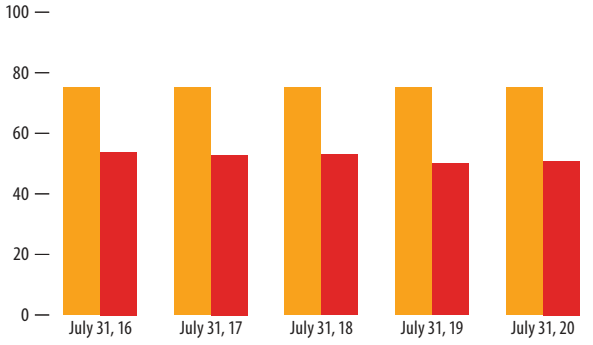
GOAL: To resolve 100% of grievances within five years of filing.

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION
# of grievances resolved within five years of filing



GOAL: To resolve 75% of grievances within 24 months of filing.

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION
# of grievances resolved within two years of filing



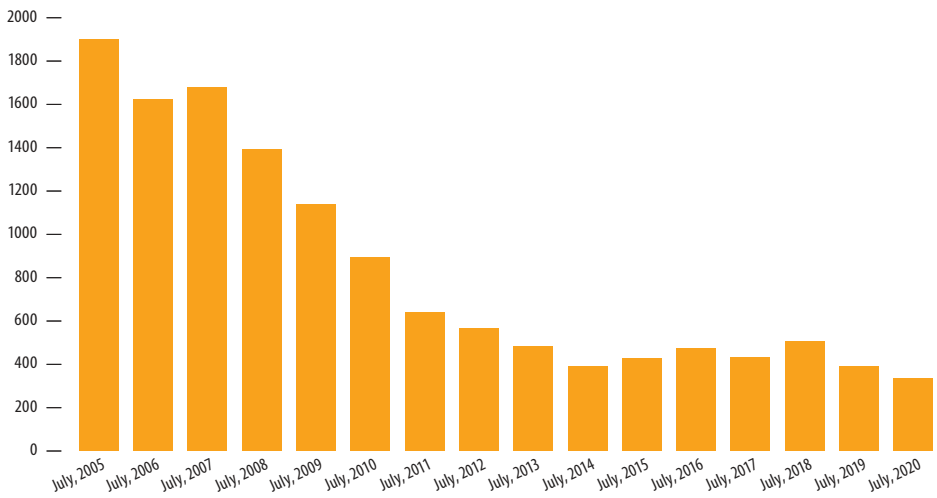
RNU continues to make progress with grievance resolution, reducing our number of files from 389 on July 31, 2019 to 319 on July 31, 2020. This is the lowest on record since we began performance measurement in 2005.

We resolved 137 files this fiscal year with many positive outcomes for our members, including:

- job code changes;
- awarding of a number of positions;
- awards for failure to accommodate up to $15,000;
- 80 hours credited to pay and seniority;
- a lump sum payment of $6,500; and
- returns of annual leave credits.

As you can see in the charts, there were slight gains in our rates of grievance resolution for the one, two and five year indicators.

COMPARISON - NUMBER OF FILES AT YEAR END



This increase is primarily due to a reduced level of grievance resolutions in our last quarter because of workload disruptions and timeline waivers related to COVID-19.

We have a number of strategies in place to help achieve faster resolutions to grievances.

First and foremost, we continue to see decline in the number of grievance files presented to provincial official as a result of our dispute resolution language now in effect for all regional health authorities.

For each of the past three years, there was a 50% decrease in the number of files. Hopefully this means members, with the support of RNU branch volunteers are having conversations with managers to resolve conflicts at the lowest level before they reach a grievance.

We made solid progress improving older grievances in the first half of 2019-20 thanks to having a dedicated labour relations officer focused on this work. For example, 49 files related to the RN/BN qualifications arbitration decision of 2015 and 19 files associated with denial of annual leave at Central Health dating as early as 2012 were closed. We anticipate returning to full LRO staffing by January 2021 and hope to reinstate a dedicated resource on our older files.

#WEARWHITEWEDNESDAY

Being visible is key to promoting and protecting the RN role. In 2019, we held a weekly #WearWhiteWednesday, that offered RNs and NPs a chance to shine in their white and blacks. We're planning a new way to put this pride on display for 2021.

Corner Brook and Bay of Islands Community/Public Health RNs Denise Graham, Cheryl Keating, Patti Sheppard-Walsh and Julia Young.

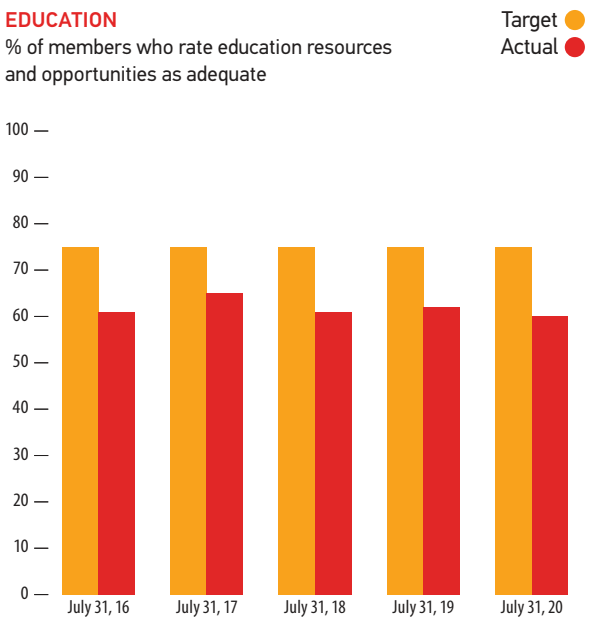
RNs Terry Aylward, Marlana Caines and Angela Hamlyn-Patey from Rufus Guinchard Health Centre in Port Saunders.

RNU members from our Schools of Nursing. Candace Vaters (Western Regional School of Nursing) and Seretha Wheaton (Centre for Nursing Studies).

KPI EDUCATION

GOAL: To have 75% of members rate education resources and opportunities as adequate.

EDUCATION
% of members who rate education resources and opportunities as adequate

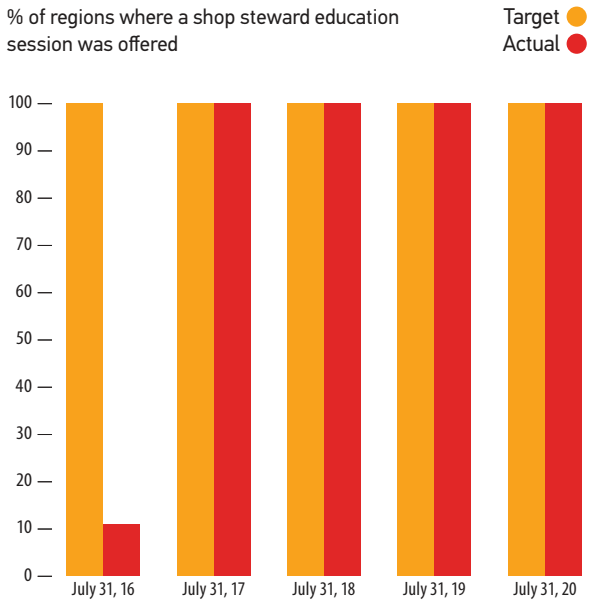


RNU aims to provide members with valuable education opportunities that are timely and support our members' professional and union development. This year, 60% of our members were satisfied with the level of education provided.

For the foreseeable future, RNU is shifting to online learning. While the pandemic has presented challenges in terms of connecting in person with volunteers and members, we see many opportunities to expand our engagement. A virtual learning environment will allow us to widen our geographical reach. It also overcomes the difficulty of securing additional leave for members to accommodate travel to union events. From potential webinars and online modules, to volunteer training and branch meetings, virtual technology provides many opportunities to increase our education capacity.

GOAL: To provide a minimum of one shop steward education session per region each year.

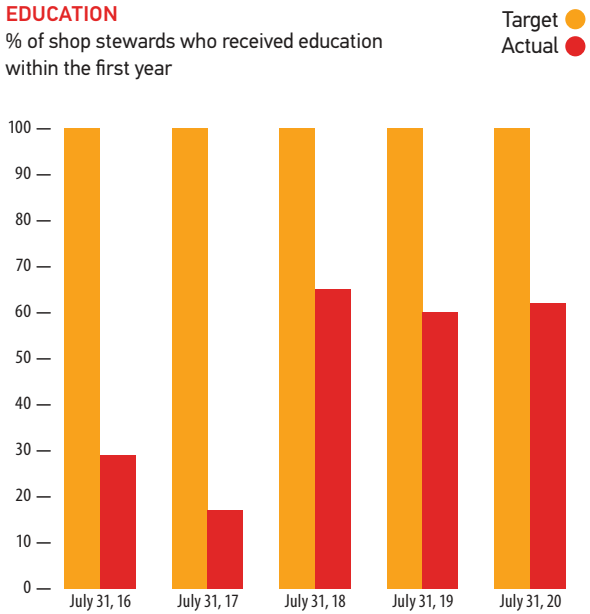
EDUCATION
% of regions where a shop steward education session was offered



RNU is committed to providing shop stewards with the opportunity to attend an education session in, or near, their region. We are pleased to report that an educational opportunity was offered in all regions once again this year.

GOAL: To provide all new shop stewards with education in their first year of appointment.

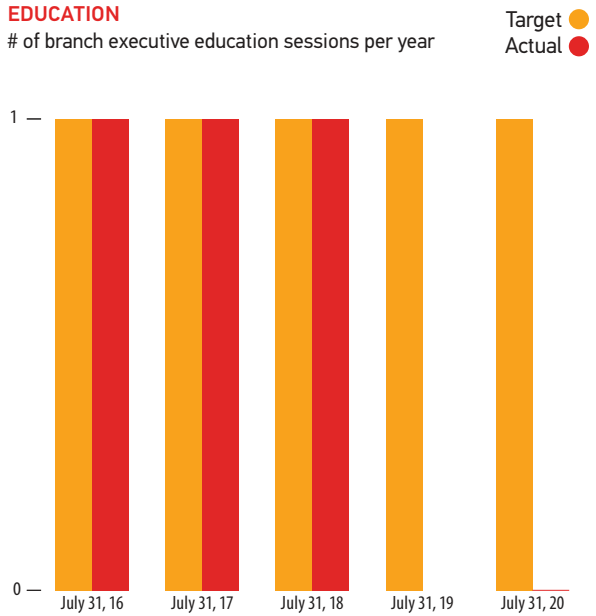
EDUCATION
% of shop stewards who received education within the first year



Shop steward education gives volunteers a chance to learn more about their role and duties over the course of a two-day session. Of the 73 new shop stewards appointed during 2019-20, 62% attended an education session. While this number is lower than target, we are pleased well over half of new shop stewards received education prior to the postponement of education sessions due to COVID-19. One challenge facing shop stewards in the past has been difficulty securing additional leave to allow for travel. We hope more shop stewards will be able to avail of virtual education sessions.

GOAL: To provide a minimum of one branch executive education session per year.

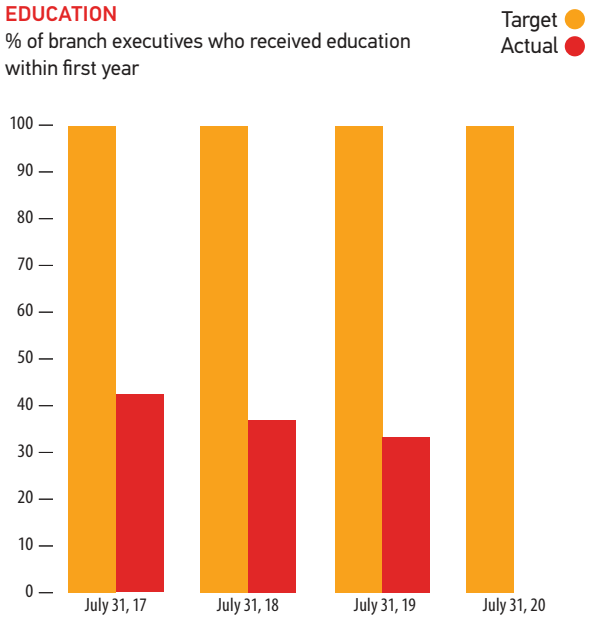
EDUCATION
# of branch executive education sessions per year



Branch executive training was originally scheduled for last spring but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As previously mentioned, it was also cancelled in 2019 due to collective bargaining. Our next Branch Executive session will likely take the shape of a virtual event in the spring of 2021.

GOAL: To provide all new branch executive members with education in their first year of appointment.

EDUCATION
% of branch executives who received education within first year

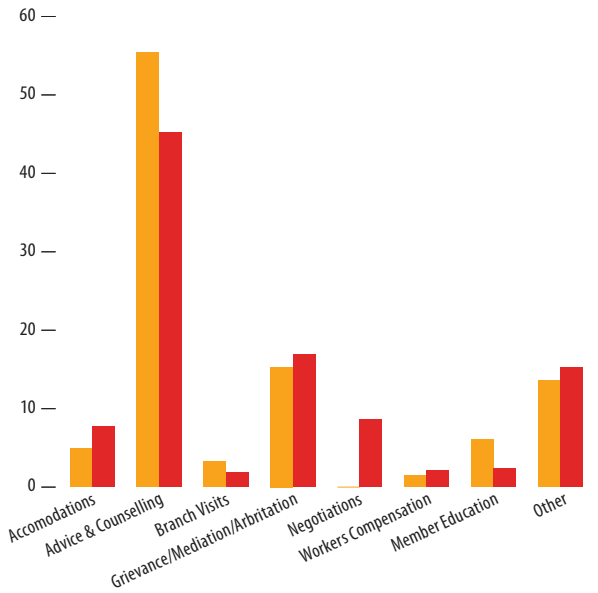


Due to the pandemic, we were disappointed to cancel our spring branch executive session. Our goal remains to provide branch executives with the information they need to guide them in their leadership role. We look forward to having the opportunity to offer this session virtually in the coming year.

KPI SERVICE EQUALITY

GOAL: To ensure labour relations officers' time is appropriately distributed to support core union services.

SERVICE EQUITY
% of distribution of LRO time by core services



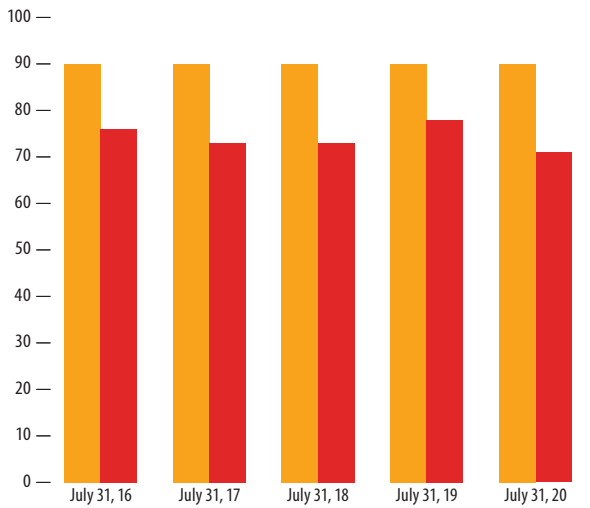
Labour relations officers (LROs) provide core services to members. They help members navigate important and challenging issues by assisting in grievance resolution, providing advice or counseling on a workplace matter, or by guiding members through the worker's compensation system. Our LROs continue to allocate the majority of their time to advising and counselling members and addressing grievances.

KPI EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

GOAL: To have 90% of RNU members rate the effectiveness of communications as high (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5).

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

% of members who rate communications effectiveness as high



Communications is a critical function for RNU. Through various communication practices and tools, we keep members, staff, and stakeholders updated and engaged in union activities and decisions. Effective communication is strongly correlated with the success of our union.

While members continue to rate communication effectiveness as high with 71% of members giving a rating of 4 or higher on a 5 point scale, this measure is down from 2019.

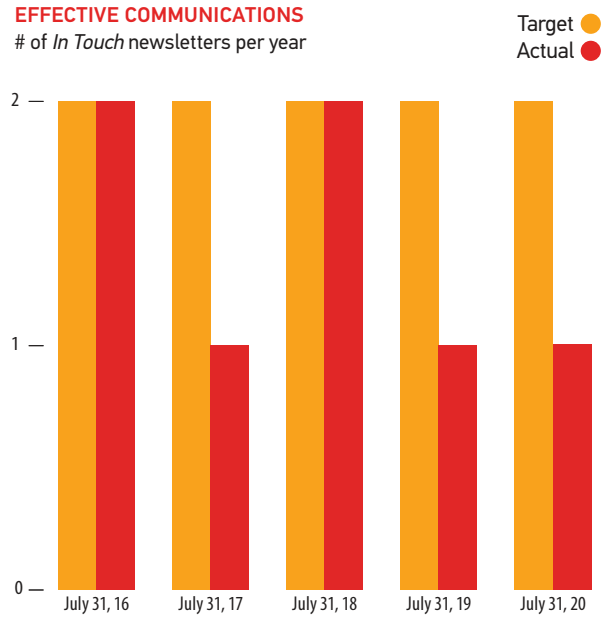
Email continues to be the preferred method of communication according to members, followed by *myRNU*, social media and *In Touch*.

In 2021, RNU will add a new temporary full time position for communications. In recent years, the level of work for RNU's sole communications specialist has expanded with our increasing use of social media tools and our shift to more electronic communication. The new staff person will work with our communication specialist to strengthen and grow our communication tools and advocacy work. Having an additional resource will also prove invaluable as we transition to new leadership in 2021.

GOAL: To issue a minimum of two *In Touch* newsletters per year.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

of *In Touch* newsletters per year

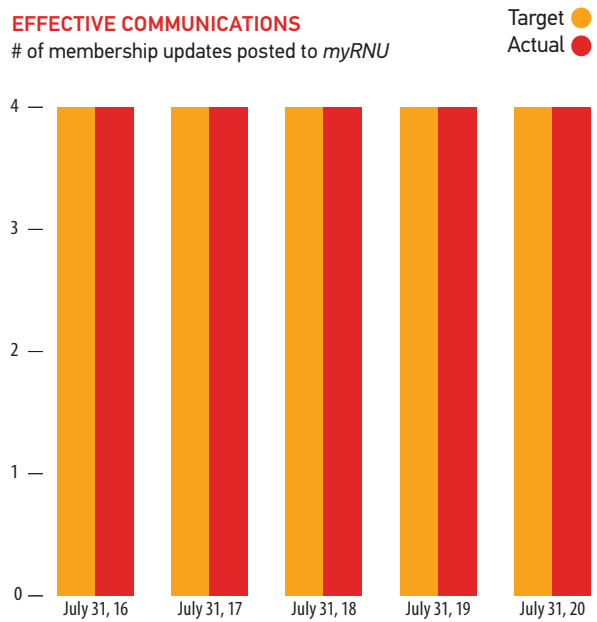


Our *In Touch* newsletter remains fairly popular amongst members, with 62% of members rating their satisfaction with the publication as high. *In Touch* connects members with education, news and information about their union. Our goal is to distribute two *In Touch* newsletters annually, however this year we did not meet that goal due to workload in the communications role.

GOAL: To post a minimum of four membership updates to *myRNU* per year.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

# of membership updates posted to *myRNU*

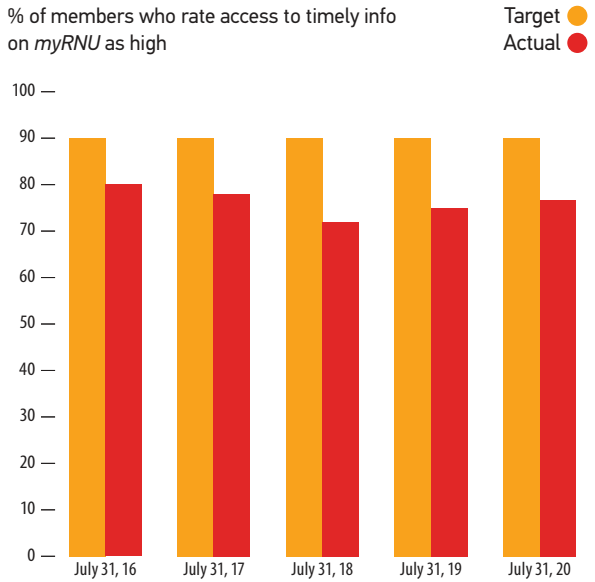


Based on member feedback, we know that *myRNU* is a valuable tool to share information and news with our members. Various member updates are posted throughout the year, including information on collective bargaining, quarterly reports, events and more. Additionally, we aim to send an RNUpdate email bi-monthly which links to various updates on *myRNU* and updates members on current news and activity.

GOAL: To have 90% of RNU members rate access to timely info on *myRNU* as high (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5).

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

% of members who rate access to timely info on *myRNU* as high



We were pleased to see strong results for the number of members rating access to timely information on *myRNU* as high. In our recent member survey, 97% said they are aware of the site, with 88% reporting they had visited *myRNU*. Members reported their top reasons for visiting *myRNU* as looking at the collective agreement, accessing news and asking questions in the forum.

We are finalizing updates to *myRNU* to improve usage and effectiveness of this important member-only tool.

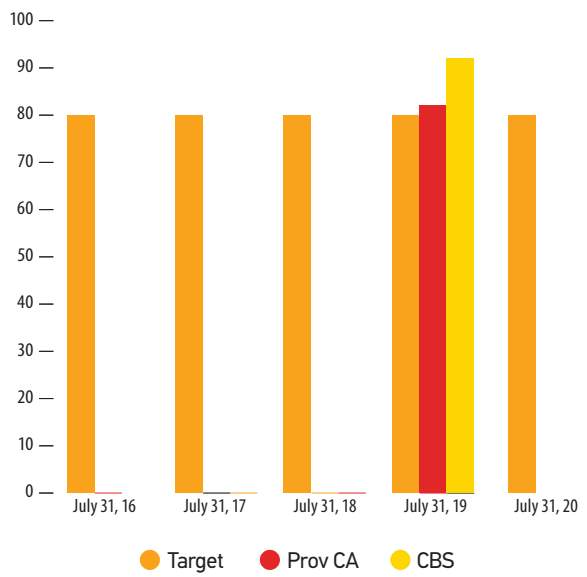
KPI COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SUCCESSES

The primary purpose of RNU is to negotiate a fair collective agreement that protects the rights of members, individually and collectively. In each round of bargaining, we look to members for input on negotiation priorities and strategies. RNU reports on how well we perform during contract negotiations each year by measuring contract ratification votes in order to determine whether top priorities were addressed.

There were no contracts negotiated this year so there are no result to report for the following two goals. However, we did reach an agreement on a two-year contract extension for the provincial collective agreement. The extension, which passed with strong support (85.6% of members voted yes), included a 4% wage increase and will remain in effect until June 30, 2022.

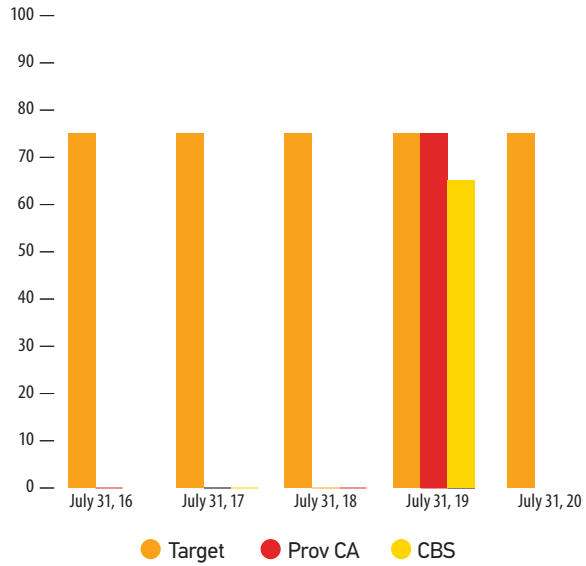
GOAL: To obtain 80% 'yes' votes on all contract ratifications.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
% of 'yes' votes on contract ratifications



GOAL: To successfully negotiate improvements in 75% of the top priorities identified by RNs.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
% of priorities successfully negotiated



ADVOCATING FOR OUR MEMBERS AND BETTER HEALTH CARE

RNU President Debbie Forward addresses the provincial violence prevention forum.

RNU joined nurses across Canada in making health care a priority during the federal election last fall. Here are members from Placentia with RNU President Debbie Forward committing to vote for care, not cuts.

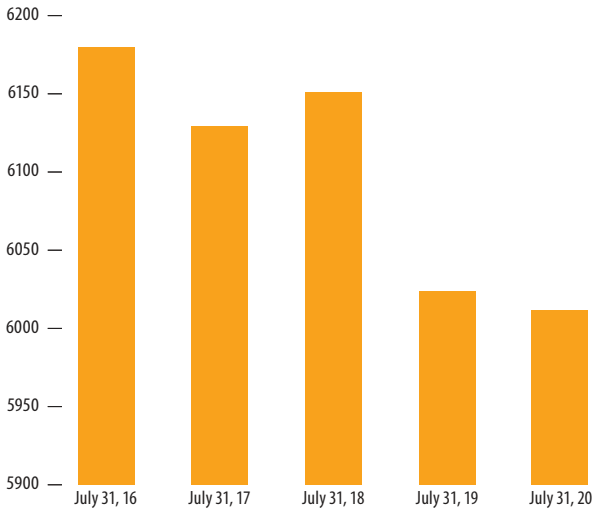
RNU members and supporters sent over 2,000 emails to Premier Ball, Minister Haggie, and Dr. Fitzgerald, which helped secure a joint statement on PPE.

PERSPECTIVE: ADVOCATE HEALTH CARE

KPI STAFFING LEVELS

GOAL: To monitor the number of RNs employed in the province.

RN STAFFING LEVELS
# of RNs employed in the province.



RNU is committed to advocating for the recruitment and retention of RNs and NPs. Appropriate staffing levels are essential to high quality health care.

We monitor the growth of RN employment in the province by reviewing annual licensure data from the College of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador (CRNNL).

In 2019-20, the number of RNs employed in the province was 6,011, 185 of which had a practicing NP license. There has been a 40% increase in the number of NPs compared to five years ago.

We continue to receive quarterly reports from the regional health authorities, which allow us to analyze changes in core nursing providers and bed counts. Based on the analysis of these reports, we believe there are a few contributing factors for the drop in RN employment. For one, recruitment and retention continues to be an issue in a number of areas, which results in a decrease in staffing if a RN retires or is off on extended leave (maternity leave, sick leave, etc).

External RN recruitment competitions (vacancies) have been climbing since October 2017. Our most recent data on vacancies from October 2019 shows the number of vacancies for all RHAs totaled 273. This is the highest since April of 2015 (284).

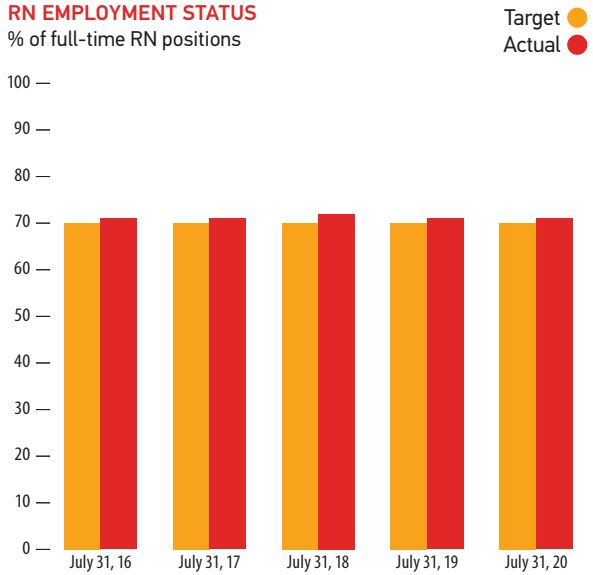
Additionally, while it's much harder to track, we know some positions have been eliminated through attrition or replaced with licensed practical nurses.

As previously outlined in this report, addressing staffing continues to be a top priority for RNU and we have a number of initiatives in place to support our work in this area.

KPI RN EMPLOYMENT STATUS

GOAL: To maintain the full-time permanent RNs positions at 70% or higher.

RN EMPLOYMENT STATUS
% of full-time RN positions



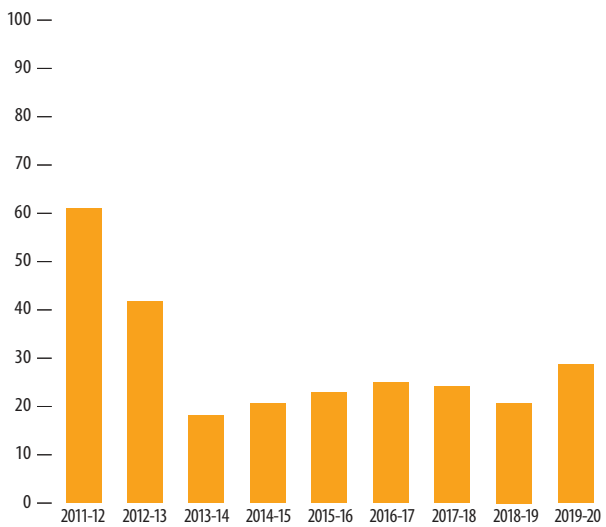
Establishing and maintaining full-time permanent positions has a positive impact on recruitment and retention, which is why RNU monitors employment status each year.

The Canadian Nursing Advisory Committee sets a national target of 70% full-time employment for RNs. In 2019-20, Newfoundland and Labrador continued to slightly exceed this rate with 71% of RNs in full-time positions.

While high full-time employment is positive, we continue to have high rates of casual employment. In fact, our province has the highest rate of casual employment among all provinces. Addressing the casualization of the workforce is an issue that RNU continues to work to address with government and employers.

GOAL: To monitor the number of new nursing graduates employed full-time.

RN EMPLOYMENT STATUS
% new grads employed full-time



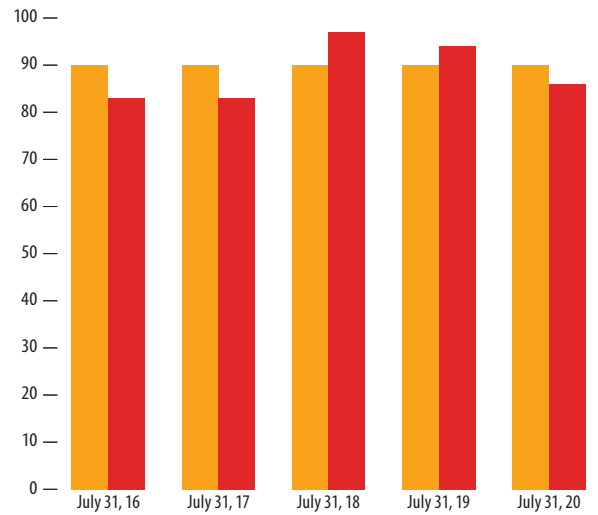
RNU also monitors the percentage of new graduates employed full-time. In 2019-20, 29% of new graduates worked full-time, a slight increase from the previous year.

While RNU continues to advocate for full-time employment opportunities, it's equally important to make the workplace more desirable for nursing grads. Data from the College of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador shows the proportion of 2019 graduates employed casual who report they desire casual employment doubled from the provincial year (40.5 vs 19.5%).

KPI PUBLIC SATISFACTION

GOAL: To have 90% of the public rate the overall performance of the RNU as 3 or higher.

PUBLIC SATISFACTION
% of the public rating satisfaction with RNU as 3 or higher



High public support is essential to RNU's ability to advocate and promote the RN and NP professions. Our performance as a union continues to be highly rated by the public with an 86% overall satisfaction rating.

Other indicators of support show that the public perceives RNU as:

- **Strong Advocate or Voice for RNs –** 87% Agree
- **Strong Advocate or Voice for the Public Health Care System –** 76% Agree
- **Presenting a Professional Image to the Public –** 85% Agree
- **Strong Advocate or Voice for Patients –** 70% Agree
- **Providing Effective Leadership –** 69% Agree

RNU continues to be the most trusted source of health care information in Newfoundland and Labrador when compared to other unions, the provincial government, and the media.

Our calls for improved staffing also resonate with the public. Eighty per cent of residents feel the provincial government should increase the number of full-time RNs in the province.

KPI OPPORTUNITY FOR INPUT

RNU works with employers, government and other stakeholders to identify issues and solutions in health care service delivery and to advance the RN and NP professions. To ensure success in these efforts, it's very important for RNU to maintain good working relationships with these groups. While it is not always possible to agree on all matters, we must strive to build on our relationships

GOAL: To meet with the Health Minister at least twice per year; and the Premier, the Finance Minister, the Labour Minister, and employers at least once per year.

Some highlights from the past year include:

- Meetings with the Minister of Health and Community Services, Minister of Finance, Minister of Labour, and several phone calls with the Premier.
- Regular meetings throughout COVID-19 with senior members of the Department of Health and Community Services, Eastern Health, Central Health, Western Health and Labrador-Grenfell.

- RNU partnered with the Office for the Status of Women and the Department of Health and Community Services to host a provincial violence prevention forum with over 80 participants representing a range of stakeholder groups.
- Meetings of the Senior Joint Quality Work Life Committee, which provide RNU with access to the Deputy Minister of Health and Community Services, the Provincial Chief Nurse, and CEOs and Chief Nurses for the Regional Health Authorities. These meetings occur at least twice per year.
- The RNU President participated in Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions events at the federal level.

GOAL: To take advantage of opportunities to participate in media interviews, committees, community work, lobbying and advocacy.

Media, Committees, Lobbying and Advocacy:

- Numerous media interviews on regional, provincial, and national issues;
- President represented RNU on CFNU National Executive Board;
- During the 2020 liberal leadership campaign, RNU invited leadership candidates to share positions regarding RN and NP staffing;
- Continued participation in a coalition of labour and community groups called Common Front NL;
- Meetings with College of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador leadership;
- RNU President represents RNU on the sponsor body of Provident10 and RNU Executive Director sits on the Provident10 Board of Directors;
- RNU President is a member of Group Insurance Advisory Committee and the Government Money Purchase Pension Plan (GMPP) Advisory Committee;
- RNU president is a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL) Executive Council and took part in various meetings in this capacity;
- For the first time, RNU sent a delegation of members to the NLFL convention;
- RNU supported a number of non-profit charitable organizations and substantially increased our annual giving as a result in light of COVID-19;
- RNU supported virtual Pride events, including sponsoring St. John's pride week and supporting members in various communities throughout the province to participate in pride activities.

RNU IN THE COMMUNITY

RNU Vice President Yvette Coffey presents our annual donation at the Kids Eat Smart Radiothon.

RNU staff take part in Pink Shirt Day.

RNU members from Mount Pearl Square Dialysis supporting Black Lives Matter.

PERSPECTIVE: MOTIVATED, KNOWLEDGEABLE, CLIENT-FOCUSED STAFF

KPI RNU STAFF SATISFACTION

GOAL: To have 90% of employees rate their overall satisfaction level with RNU as an employer as high (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5).

STAFF SATISFACTION

% of employees rating overall satisfaction with RNU as an employer as high

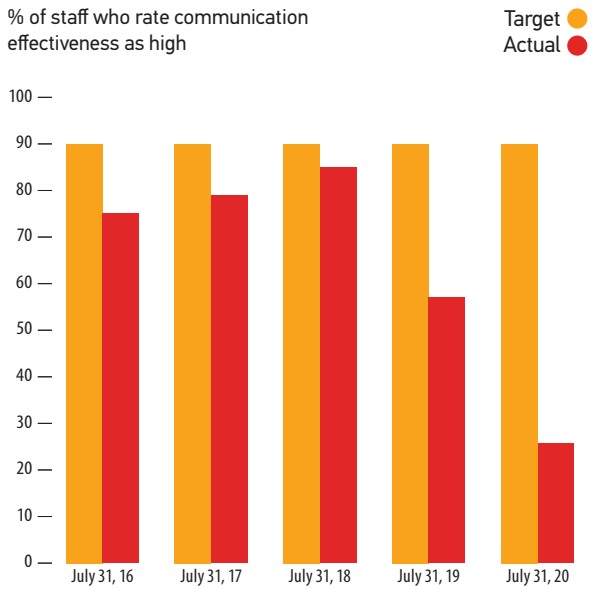
Our staff are integral to the success of our organization. This year, 75% of staff rated their overall satisfaction with RNU as an employer as high. Satisfaction has trended downward over the last two years. We take this drop very seriously and will be working with staff to ensure we are meeting their expectations to the best of our best ability. RNU remains committed to monthly staff meetings, weekly labour relations officer meetings, team building opportunities, and various internal mechanisms that provide support to our staff.

KPI EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

GOAL: To have 90% of employees rate effectiveness of communications as high (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5).

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

% of staff who rate communication effectiveness as high

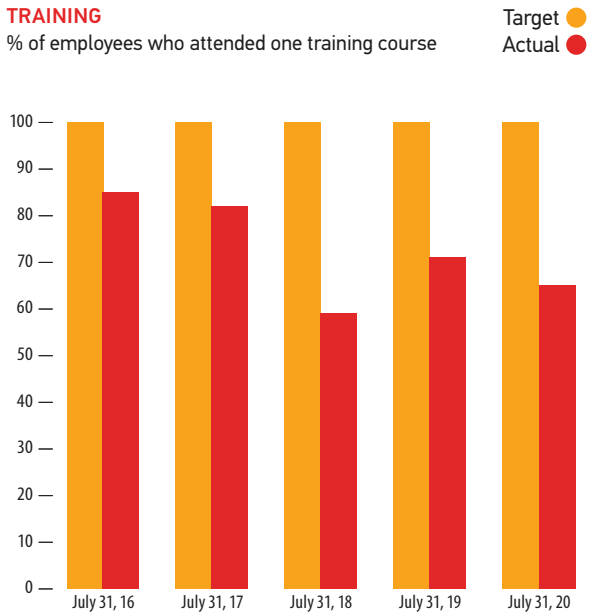


This past year, only 25% of RNU staff rated communications effectiveness as high. While satisfaction with RNU as an employer remains relatively high, it's quite troubling to see such low satisfaction with communication. More in-depth research with our staff to understand the source of this dissatisfaction is needed and will take place in 2021. We know changing team dynamics as a result of extended leave of absences among our labour relations staff and office support presented challenges for employees. As well, our staff negotiations were also prolonged.

KPI TRAINING

GOAL: To ensure each employee attends a minimum of one training course per year.

TRAINING
% of employees who attended one training course



We recognize the importance of building on the skill sets and knowledge of our staff. Professional development opportunities are crucial to staff development and help strengthen our organization. RNU encourages staff to embrace PD by providing employees with opportunities to take part in education and training. Sixty-five per cent of staff attended training this year. Some training topics included leadership development, dispute resolutions, health and safety legislation, and pensions. The COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of some booked PD opportunities.

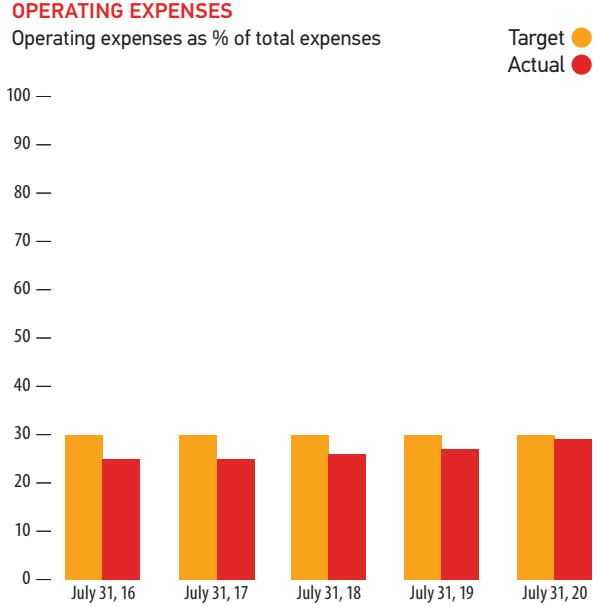
PERSPECTIVE: FINANCIALLY STABLE AND SUSTAINABLE

KPI OPERATING EXPENSES

GOAL: To maintain operating expenses at 30% or less of total expenses.

OPERATING EXPENSES

Operating expenses as % of total expenses



Union dues enable RNU to deliver the services and support you require. We focus on appropriate allocation and use of these funds in meeting your needs with a dedication to investing considerably more in delivering membership services than in operational expenses.

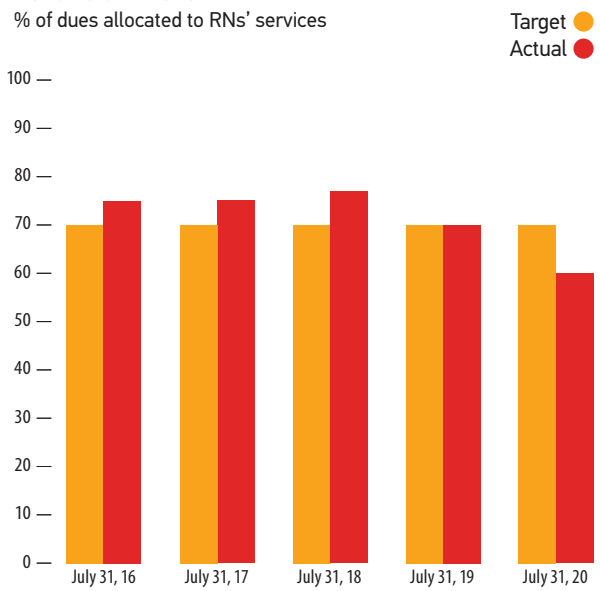
In the 2019-20 fiscal year, we successfully achieved this target, spending just 29% of your dues on the operational expenses of the union.

KPI DUES TO SERVICES ALLOCATION

GOAL: To maintain the percentage of dues income to expenses allocated to providing memberships at 70% or higher.

DUES TO SERVICES

% of dues allocated to RNs' services

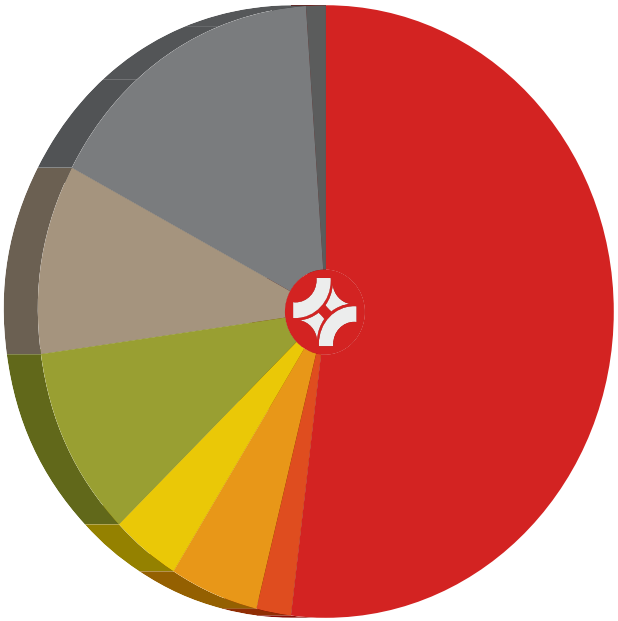


Ensuring members have the services and support they require is a top priority for RNU. This year we allocated 60% of dues income to membership services. The decrease this year reflects reduced expenditures due to COVID-19.

RN
RN
RN

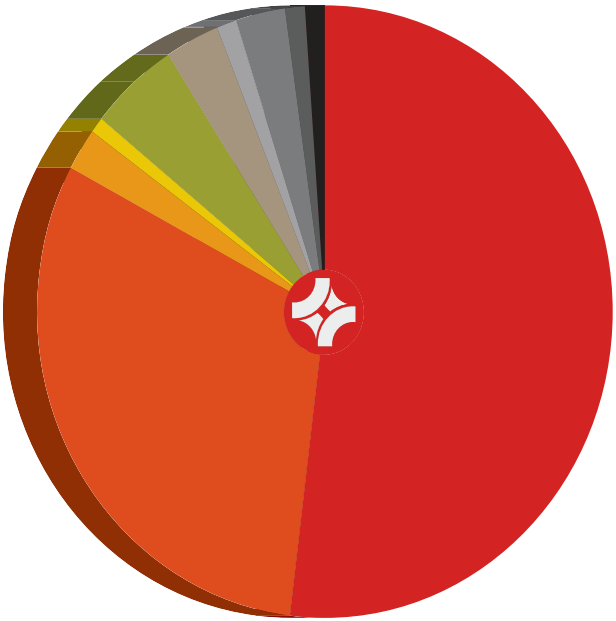
FINANCIAL FOOTNOTES

It is important to provide members with a comprehensive breakdown of our finances so you can see how and where your dues are spent in serving you. The following charts illustrate how your dues are allocated within our primary areas of expenditures.



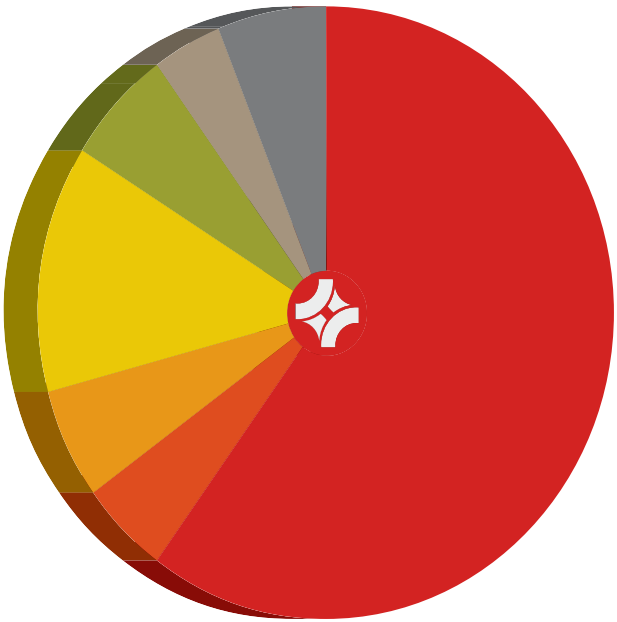
MEMBERSHIP SERVICES—BREAKDOWN

- Membership Support & Advocacy **61%**
- Professional Services **3%**
- Board of Directors & Committees **3%**
- Defense Fund Contributions **5%**
- Education & Communication **18%**
- Labour Affiliations/Conventions **9%**
- RNU Conventions & Meetings **1%**
- Bargaining **0%**



MEMBERSHIP SERVICES—SUPPORT & ADVOCACY BREAKDOWN

- Salaries & Benefits: Labour Relations **52%**
- Salaries & Benefits: Executive **31%**
- Travel: Staff **2%**
- Travel: Executive **1%**
- Branch President Support **5%**
- Arbitration & Mediation **3%**
- Branch Funds **1%**
- Donations **3%**
- Scholarships **1%**
- Political Liaison **1%**



OPERATING EXPENSES—BREAKDOWN

- Salaries & Benefits **60%**
- Professional Services **5%**
- Other **6%**
- Building Maintenance **13%**
- Depreciation **6%**
- Repairs & Equipment Rental **4%**
- Office Supplies **6%**

RN