Celebrating 50 *years*

REGISTERED NURSES' UNION NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

1974 - 2024

• STRONGER TOGETHER •

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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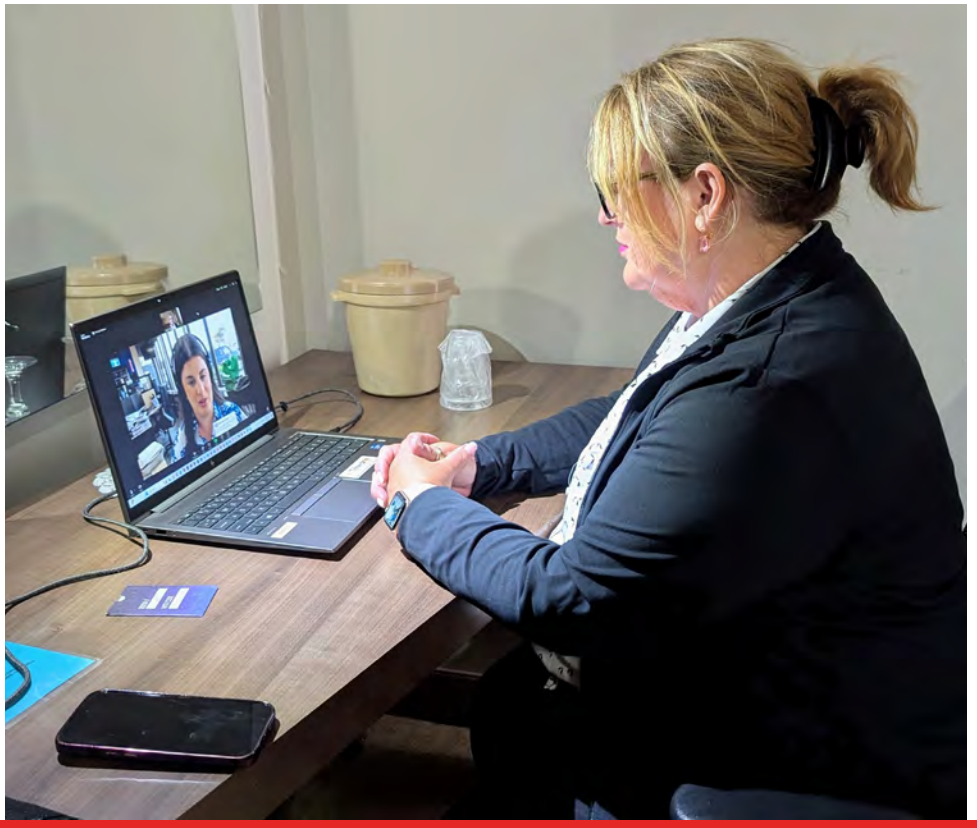
NURSES ARE WORRIED



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Registered
Nurses'
Union
Newfoundland & Labrador

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Yvette Coffey, RN

Over the past two years, we have faced immense challenges and transformative opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador's healthcare landscape. Throughout this journey, my commitment to our union and its members has only deepened. As President of the Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador, I am proud to have worked alongside an extraordinary team of nurses, board members, and allies to tackle systemic issues and drive meaningful change for our profession and our patients.

Our union has made significant strides in addressing the core challenges of recruitment, retention, and workplace quality. Through initiatives like enhanced support for internationally educated nurses, expanded mental health resources, and a renewed focus on mentorship, we are building a foundation for a more resilient and supported workforce. Programs such as the Provincial Nursing Network and the Labrador Grenfell Health Recruitment and Retention Working Committee reflect our commitment to local needs and ensure our members' voices are heard at every level.

In response to the critical need for safe and sustainable work environments, we have strengthened our advocacy for better staffing, expanded scope of practice for RNs and NPs, and fair compensation through initiatives like sign-on bonuses and bursaries. Additionally, our union has taken significant steps to enhance internal structures, with an Organizational Review to optimize our resources and a strategic plan that reaffirms our commitment to serving the growing membership with dedication and precision.

This report captures the collective progress we have made, the wins that strengthen our resolve, and the ongoing work required to secure a sustainable future for our healthcare system. Together, we are building a legacy of support, advocacy, and unwavering dedication to the nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador, ensuring our profession is valued, our voices are heard, and our work has the impact it deserves.

In solidarity,

COMMITTEES/MEETINGS WITH NLHS & HCS

Senior Joint Quality Worklife Committee (SJQWLC)

Established in 2010, this committee addresses province-wide nursing practice and patient care issues. It includes members from RNU, the Department of Health and Community Services (HCS), the Provincial Chief Nurse, the Chief Nurse for Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services (NLHS), and other government officials.

Our most recent meeting took place on September 26, 2024, covering several important topics:

- **Mental Health Supports:** Discussed psychological first aid, debriefing, and Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) offerings. We are working with NLHS to find better ways to share information about available mental health support.
- **Electronic Professional Practice Form:** The project is on hold due to resource reallocation to EPIC. We expressed disappointment that a solution hasn't been found, but HCS and NLHS have committed to continuing this work.
- **Extended Shift Reporting:** NLHS now oversees tracking 24-hour shift reports to develop solutions. They are piloting tracking RN shifts longer than 16 hours. We have questioned the accuracy of current reports, as some front-line managers may be unaware of their responsibility to report shifts. The Provincial Chief Nurse is following up on this.
- **Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs):** Educator positions to support IENs are posted but unfilled. We stressed the need for updates and raised concerns about a lack of support on the ground for IENs. We also highlighted discrepancies between what NLHS and HCS report publicly, and the reality seen by our members.
- **Mentorship Program:** Initial feedback is positive, with 90% finding training effective. However, we need clarity on whether these results apply to mentors and/or mentees. Follow-up is planned with the Provincial Chief Nurse.

  Members reported relationship building challenges in self-scheduling units. NLHS will address these concerns and share their evaluation plan. The Provincial Chief Nurse will discuss the issues further with NLHS.
- **Opportunities for Partnership:** RNU will continue to share valuable information with members, such as mental health support, bursaries, Return in Service (RIS) bonuses and incentives shared with us by HCS. More information will be shared with our Communications Team on an ongoing basis.
- **RN Prescribing Program:** Updates include 11 prescribers in the first cohort, with four already practicing as diabetic educators or regional nurses. Approximately 25 RNs will join the second cohort. These candidates are representative of all zones in NLHS. They include RNs within the Primary Health Care Program, Diabetic Nurse Educators, Community Nursing, and Mental Health & Addictions (Community). We have advocated for education leave for the entire RN Prescribing program, not just the preceptor part.

APRIL 2024 VACANCY REPORT

HCS presented the April 2024 report, noting 695 RN and NP vacancies. The peak was in October 2022 with 752 vacancies. Vacancies reflect available positions due to staff departures or new roles. Despite the improvements reported, we highlighted ongoing concerns, especially discrepancies between recruitment numbers and what our members experience.

In meetings with Minister John Hogan, Assistant Deputy Minister Jeannine Herritt, and VP NLHS Debbie Molloy, we noted issues like unposted vacancies and inflated recruitment numbers for the Labrador Zone. The need for more work to stabilize the nursing workforce was acknowledged by all.

OVERTIME AND SICK LEAVE REPORT

Both overtime and sick leave are decreasing. The RN locum in LGZ helped reduce overtime for permanent staff. The formal evaluation of this pilot is complete and awaiting approval.

We suggested tracking other metrics, like annual leave hours, the number of RNs with varying sick leave accumulations, and unpaid sick leave.

CORE STAFFING REVIEW & LONG-TERM CARE/ PERSONAL CARE HOME REVIEW

Core Staffing Review (CSR)

The Core Staffing Review will evaluate factors affecting registered nurse workload, including client needs, staffing levels, and organizational demands. It will also consider the roles of licensed practical nurses and personal care attendants.

The final six sites selected for this review are:

1. **Eastern Urban Zone:** Mount Pearl, Community Health Mount Pearl Square.
2. **Eastern Rural Zone:** Placentia Health Centre, including Lions Manor.

3. **Western Zone:** Western Long-Term Care Home, including 10 rehabilitation and 15 restorative beds.
4. **Labrador Zone:** Forteau, Labrador South Health Centre.
5. **Central Zone:** Gander, James Paton Memorial Regional Health Centre.
6. **Eastern Urban Zone:** St. John's Health Sciences Centre, Units 4NB and 4NA.

Long-Term Care and Personal Care Home Programs Review

This review aims to improve residents' quality of care and life, boost staff engagement, and enhance work-life quality for healthcare staff. An expert advisory panel has drafted the final report, which is currently under review.

The report is expected to be completed this fall.

HEALTH HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY (DELOITTE)

In February 2023, HCS contracted Deloitte to develop a comprehensive Health Human Resources Strategy. This plan includes 10-year workforce projections for 47 distinct health occupations, covering general practitioners and 35 specialist groups. RNU leadership participated in stakeholder consultations with Deloitte, and the Department continues to work closely with the consultant to finalize the report.

The report is anticipated to be completed this fall.

PROVINCIAL NURSING NETWORK (PNN)

The newly negotiated collective agreement with the Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador (RNU) includes a Letter of Understanding that commits to establishing the Provincial Nursing Network (PNN). This network will provide a collaborative platform for provincial nursing leaders and stakeholders to engage in strategic discussions aimed at optimizing and advancing all regulated nursing professions, including Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, and Licensed Practical Nurses.

Meetings have already begun, with representation from all key stakeholders. RNU invited members to apply for representation on this committee, and the selected representatives are:

- **Margot Antle, NP** (Eastern Primary Health Care)
- **Alicia Reddigan, RN** (Eastern Acute Care)
- **Angela House, NP** (Western Long-Term Care)
- **Tina Edwards, RN** (Eastern Community)

The draft Terms of Reference for the PNN have been distributed to the group and are awaiting final approval.

FEDERAL NURSING RETENTION TOOLKIT

The Federal Nursing Retention Toolkit has been integrated into the PNN work plan. This toolkit focuses on eight core themes that significantly impact nurses' daily working experiences. A one-page summary of each theme was shared with the group, outlining strategies to improve nurse retention. The document also highlighted existing and ongoing actions within participating institutions, along with priorities identified by PNN members to guide further discussions.

The committee was asked to provide information on additional initiatives already in place and to propose new strategies that could support each theme.

For more details, see the Retention Toolkit RNU Update from September 2024, available here:

https://RNU.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Retention-Toolkit-RNU-Update-September-2024.pdf

The full Federal Nursing Retention Toolkit can be downloaded from Health Canada here:

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-care-system/health-human-resources/nursing-retention-toolkit-improving-working-lives-nurses.html

NURSING THINK TANK 2022

In April 2022, RNU successfully lobbied for the establishment of a Nursing Think Tank. This initiative has led to numerous government actions, involving collaboration between the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, the Department of Health & Community Services (HCS), the Office of the Provincial Chief Nurse, the Department of Education, and Newfoundland & Labrador Health Services (NLHS). Key initiatives include:

- **Licensure Reimbursement:** Available

for retired RNs/NPs currently working or willing to return to the healthcare system.

- **Workforce Research:** Informing collective bargaining and other strategies.
- **Labrador Travel Locum Pilot:** Extended until January 31, 2025. Discussions continue on expanding the locum to rural, remote, and hard-to-recruit areas.
- **Double-Time Shifts:** Introduced to address staffing gaps as part of the collective agreement.
- **Mental Health & Addictions Supports:** A working group is promoting existing services and developing new supports tailored to nurses' needs.
- **Self-Scheduling Guidelines:** Implemented throughout NLHS to address flexibility concerns, as part of the collective agreement.
- **Childcare Initiatives:**
  - **YMCA Childcare Facility:** Expanded hours for shift workers announced on August 9. Key details:
    * Extra 10% top-up grant for rural and remote facilities
    * 200 spaces reserved for healthcare workers
    * $10/day childcare, saving $6,300 per child per year
    * 1,600 spaces in development, with over 100 families already placed

    - Extended hours trial to begin this fall with 13-hour overnight care
    - New incentives for family childcare providers and extended hours
    - Sites included for healthcare workers thus far: two sites in St. John's, one site in Bonavista, one site in Corner Brook, and one site in HVGB
    - The FAQ for NLHS staff was sent in a memo on July 3, 2024
  - **Partnership with Early Childhood Educators:** Recognizing and incentivizing extended hours.
- **Nurse Practitioner Joint PDQ Submission:** Ongoing work highlighted in the Executive Director's report.
- **Health Sector Safety Council (HSSC):**
  - Meetings with NL Federation of Labour, NAPE, AAHP, Workplace NL, and NLHS Senior Leadership.
  - Ongoing advocacy for an independent Health Sector Safety Council, with verbal support from the Premier.
- **Incentives Secured:** RNU has advocated for incentives for RNU members as well as financial support for BScN students. Some incentives announced by HCS:
  - **BScN Bursary:** $5,000/year, max $10,000, with one-year service agreement. 49 awarded in 2024, 24 in 2023.
  - **BScN Practice Course Grant:** $750/course for clinical tuition and expenses. 439 awarded in 2024, 233 in 2023.
  - **NP Bursary:** $5,000-$10,000/year with service commitment, doubled for two years. Seven awarded in 2024, two in 2023.
  - **Signing Bonus:** $5,000-$10,000/year with service commitment. 113 RNs and four NPs awarded in 2024.
  - **LTC Recruitment Bonus:** $8,000 for one-year commitment. Two NPs and 74 RNs accepted since March 2023.
  - **Come Home Incentive:** $25,000-$50,000 for out-of-province nurses, with 49 RNs accepted since October 2022.
  - **Tuition Relief:** $2,000/semester for first two years of the BScN program, with return-in-service requirement. Awarded to all eligible students starting in September 2024.
  - **NP Family Care Team:** $20,000-$40,000 for service in Family Care Teams, plus $10,000 for emergency department coverage. 46 NPs have been accepted since May 2023.
- **Nursing Program Expansion:**
  - **BScN Seats:** 72 seats added in 2022 at satellite sites in Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, and Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Total capacity: 363, with first graduates in Spring 2026.
  - **MSc Nurse Practitioner Seats:** Doubled in 2023 from 20 to 40. First graduating class in Spring 2025.
  - **Mentorship Program:** Supports new graduates and nurses transitioning to new practice areas. Mentors receive up to $1,950/year. Currently, 80 staff participate across 13 areas as part of

the collective agreement.

ADVANCED NURSING PRACTICE

RNU leadership actively engages with NLHS, the Department of Health & Community Services (HCS), the Office of the Provincial Chief Nurse, and the College of Registered Nurses NL (CRNNL) to discuss the expanding scope of practice for Registered Nurses (RNs) and Nurse Practitioners (NPs). While RNU does not have the authority to make legislative changes, we advocate for education and support related to these evolving roles. We also encourage our members to file updated Position Description Questionnaires (PDQs) to reflect their increased responsibilities.

Key initiatives include:

- **RN Prescribing:** Legislation was updated in 2023 to allow registered nurses to prescribe medications, expanding their scope of practice. This requires completing two self-paced courses and a practical component course, funded by NL Health Services. RNU continues to advocate for education leave to support course completion.
- **Scope of Practice Enhancements:** Education on airway management and simple suturing is being offered in rural areas to expand RN capabilities. RNU supports these efforts by advocating for necessary training and resources.
- **Nurse Collegian Program:** This program provides nursing students with practical experience while employed by NL Health Services, benefiting both recruitment and current nursing staff. RNU has pushed for greater use of Nurse Collegians and paid clinical placements for BScN students.
- **Standard Orientation:** Efforts are underway to standardize nursing orientation across the province, promoting best practices and facilitating better knowledge transfer for new hires.
- **PICC Line Insertion:** NLHS is exploring the feasibility of performing PICC line insertions in emergency room settings to improve patient care. Initial discussions have been held with NLHS Professional Practice and the Office of the Provincial Chief Nurse, with more information and meetings expected.
- **LPN Scope of Practice:** The scope of practice for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) is expanding. RNU is advocating for educational sessions to inform RNs and NPs about these expanded LPN roles.

LABRADOR GRENFELL HEALTH (LGH) RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION WORKING COMMITTEE

This working group was formed to address persistent recruitment and retention challenges in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and has since expanded to cover all LGH sites. The committee includes RNU branch leadership, RNU LRO, regional representatives, the RNU President, NLHS leadership, and representatives from the Department of Health & Community Services (HCS) and the Workforce Planning Division. The committee meets monthly to tackle these pressing issues.

Initial Efforts

The committee's early work involved gathering comprehensive data to understand the challenges, including:

- Staff and exit surveys
- Vacancy and turnover statistics
- Literature on strategies used in other regions

Recruitment challenges and staffing shortages remain top priorities, and the committee maintains a full agenda at each meeting.

Initiatives Implemented

1. **Enhanced OBS Standby Agreement**
2. **Reinstated Recruitment Bonuses:** Signing bonuses have been brought back to incentivize new hires.
3. **Increased Student Bursaries:** Available for 3rd- and 4th-year students as part of a provincial initiative.
4. **Leave Management Issues:** Members continue to face frustrations, as LGH relies heavily on locums and agency nurses for relief. The LGH Locum Pilot (Travel Pilot) aims to reduce this reliance on private agencies, and early evaluations show a decrease in agency use. There are hopes to expand this pilot across NL.
5. **Remote Nursing Student Seats:** Introduced in September 2022 as a "Grow Your Own" strategy to support local recruitment.
6. **Surgical Backlog Taskforce:** St. Anthony is playing a key role in addressing the provincial surgical backlog. A virtual pre-admission clinic is currently being piloted by LGH.

7. **Revitalized Professional Practice Committee:** Ongoing issues remain, as managers are often unavailable. This remains a priority on RNU's agenda.

8. **24/7 ER Security:** Security staff have been added to the ERs in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, St. Anthony, and Labrador City, a longstanding focus of RNU advocacy.

9. **Site-Specific Working Groups:** Established to address unique issues at each site and report back to the larger committee monthly.

JOINT TRUSTEESHIP OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR PENSION PLAN (PSPP)

The RNU President represents the union on the Sponsor Body for the Public Sector Pension Plan (PSPP). RNU is one of the union sponsors of the plan, along with NAPE, CUPE, AAHP, and IBEW. For the Provident10 Annual Report and regular updates, visit provident10.ca.

Provident10 has been assessing the impact of an increasing number of plan members opting to take their Commuted Value. Despite this trend, the plan continues to perform well under joint trusteeship.

COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS (COP)

The RNU branch presidents meet annually with the Board of Directors. The most recent Council of Presidents (COP) meeting was held in St. John's on September 26-27. During this session, we had a presentation on Change Management related to the Organizational Review and the Internal Communications/ Engagement (ICE) Audit.

The purpose of COP is to update Branch leaders on key topics and gather their feedback, which they then share with members at the Branch level. Over the past two years, topics discussed have included:

- **Integrated Capacity Management (ICM) / Acuity-based Staffing**
- **COVID-19 Updates**
- **Open Forums with the Board of Directors**
- **24-Hour Shifts and Mandatory Overtime**
- **Workplace Violence**
- **Labrador Grenfell Health Travel Locum Pilot**
- **Recruitment & Retention Initiatives**
- **Nursing Think Tank Updates**
- **Bargaining Updates**
- **RNU Strategic Plan 2022-2024**
- **RNU Organizational Review**
- **Internal Communications & Engagement Audit and Strategy**
- **Nurse Practitioner Funding Models and Initiatives**
- **Workforce Research**
- **Core Staffing Review**
- **Health Human Resource Strategy and Retention & Recruitment Office**
- **Surgical Backlog Taskforce Updates**
- **Transition Talks (Amalgamation of Regional Health Authorities into NLHS)**
- **School of Nursing Amalgamation**

- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts**
- **Privatization and Private Agency Nursing Concerns**
- **Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) Updates**
- **Convention Planning (Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments)**
- **RNU Annual Report**
- **RNU Policy Review:** Covering all policies except those specific to the office, such as Branch Finances, Provincial and Branch Elections, Communications, Respectful Workplace, new policies, and Convention-related policies.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR FEDERATION OF LABOUR (NLFL) EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The RNU President is an active member of the NLFL Executive Council, alongside other union leaders. Together, we collabourate on initiatives that impact workers across Newfoundland and Labrador, including:

- **Advocating for a Publicly Funded, Publicly Delivered Healthcare System**
- **Promoting a Fair Living Wage**
- **Improving Wages and Benefits for Early Childhood Educators:** Recognizing the broader impact on childcare for all workers
- **Establishing a Health Sector Safety Council:** Focused on addressing workplace violence and injuries
- **Consulting with Workplace NL:** Seeking better benefits for injured workers throughout the province
- **Supporting a Just Transition for Workers:** As the province moves towards a greener economy

Jessica McCormick, President of NLFL, will be addressing our delegates at the upcoming 29th Biennial Convention.

SURGICAL BACKLOG TASKFORCE

The final report, complete with recommendations, has been released. RNU actively participated in the taskforce, contributing to the development of informed strategies and solutions.

You can access the full report here: *https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/files/23324-Report-Provincial-Surgical-Backlog-Taskforce.pdf*

INTEGRATED CAPACITY MANAGEMENT (ICM)

In 2020, the Newfoundland and Labrador government announced the implementation of a new workforce management system across Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), incorporating acuity-based staffing. This system, known as Integrated Capacity Management (ICM), is being developed across all NLHS Zones.

RNU's staff lawyer, Jaclyn Whelan, and Labour Relations Officer Team Lead, Violet Browne, are overseeing this file to ensure compliance with the RNU Collective Agreement, particularly regarding scheduling and compensation.

ICM is comprised of four key components:

1. **Workforce Management:** This component includes several tools for scheduling, time, and attendance:
    - **ANSOS:** Staff scheduling system
    - **Enterprise Staff Manager:** Helps managers make data-driven decisions based on scheduling rules and patient acuity
    - **WEB Scheduler:** Electronic scheduling software
    - **ANSOS2GO:** Mobile scheduling app
    - **WEB Reporting:** Summarizes and reports on scheduling and staffing data

- **Acuity and Assignment Manager:** Uses patient acuity to forecast staffing needs and balance workload distribution
- **ANSOS Time & Attendance:** Real-time attendance tracking

2. **Enterprise Visibility (EV):** A visual control system that manages patient flow, tracks bed readiness, and monitors service delivery.
3. **Capacity Planner (CP):** A web-based tool that uses analytics to forecast patient demand and assess short-, medium-, and long-term bed and workforce needs.
4. **Integrated Operations Centre (IOC):** Each Zone will have a command center staffed with personnel accessing comprehensive data and dashboards to track patient flow, staffing, and forecasting. This supports real-time, informed decision-making for efficient operations.

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT AUDIT (ICE)

For the first time since 2004, RNU has conducted a comprehensive Organizational Review, led by Cullwick and Associates. This review has set the course for realigning our leadership, strategy, and staff engagement goals.

The review addressed structural and management challenges, resource allocation, and staff workloads, resulting in recommendations for a more effective organizational model. Key initiatives include:

- Updates to the RNU staffing model and management structure

- Enhancements to the RNU Board and Executive
- Revisions to our human resources strategy

With a dedicated team, a renewed emphasis on transparency, and streamlined communication processes, RNU is better equipped to meet members' needs swiftly and effectively. Clearly defined roles ensure every member receives focused support, positioning us to confidently face challenges and continue advocating for our nursing professionals.

IN-PERSON PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT'S TOUR

We have launched our first In-Person Provincial President's Tour since before the pandemic, visiting sites in Labrador, the Northern Peninsula, and the Southwest Coast.

During these visits, we've had meaningful conversations with members, listening to their stories, concerns, solutions, and their deep commitment to nursing and caring for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The insights gathered will be instrumental in our ongoing discussions with NLHS leadership and government officials as we advocate for improved working conditions, effective retention strategies, and enhanced recruitment initiatives.

Our tour will continue into 2025, focusing on visiting sites that have not been reached in a long time.

EASTERN LABOUR SCHOOL

The Eastern Labour School (ELS) took place in Prince Edward Island during the week of June 7th, with approximately 54 RNU volunteers

and staff in attendance. It was a significant week for education and networking, highlighted by the recognition of our own Lesley Lambe, who received the Glenna Rowsell Book Award for her outstanding contributions to RNU and its members. Congratulations, Lesley!

Glenna Rowsell was a pioneering force behind the first ELS held in Nova Scotia in 1976. In honour of her remarkable contributions to nursing unionism, the Glenna Rowsell Book Award was established in 1988 and is presented annually to a deserving ELS participant.

REGATTA 2023/2024

RNU proudly hosted the Seniors Resource Tent lakeside at the 2023 and 2024 Royal Regattas in St. John's. Throughout the day, we connected with many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who stopped by to enjoy the rest stop and engage in meaningful conversations about healthcare. Their strong support for RNU and our members was truly inspiring.

A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers who helped make this event a success!

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF NURSES UNIONS (CFNU)

Over the past two years, RNU has actively participated in several CFNU events and meetings alongside our Canadian counterparts. This collaboration has provided numerous benefits to our members, including shared research and advocacy efforts.

Key Initiatives and Collaborations:

1. **Safe Hours Save Lives:** The CFNU released an executive summary and a comprehensive report detailing research on safe work hours for nurses. The report provides recommendations for governments, employers, and unions to mitigate the risks associated with nurse fatigue. Members can access the full report on the CFNU website: Safe Hours Save Lives. (Report attached)

2. **Nurse-Patient Ratios (NPRs) Summit:** Health Canada and the CFNU will co-host a summit on nurse-patient ratios on November 27-28 in Ottawa. This invitation-only event will gather nurses,

unions, employers, researchers, and federal/provincial/territorial policymakers. RNU will be represented by four Board of Directors members, the Executive Director, and myself. Representatives from NLHS, the Office of the Provincial Chief Nurse, and nursing educators will also attend.

3. **Research on Nursing Career Needs:** The CFNU is collaborating with Dr. Kimberly McMillan from the University of Ottawa on a qualitative study examining nurses' needs throughout different stages of their careers. The study aims to challenge current assumptions about nursing careers and provide insights into what nurses seek in their roles today, considering broader workforce trends.

4. **Upcoming Research by Linda McGillis:** A soon-to-be-published study titled *"Canadian Nurse Perspective on Nurse Retention"* highlights critical findings:

   - Nurses have lost trust in the system.
   - 43% of nurses are considering leaving the profession.
   - Respect is a crucial factor in retention.
   - Excessive workloads remain a significant concern.
   - Orientation alone is insufficient for retention.
   - The current nursing shortage differs from past cyclical shortages, requiring unique solutions.

5. **Engagement with Dr. Leigh Chapman, Federal Chief Nurse:** Dr. Chapman presented at the May National Executive Board meeting, discussing the Retention Toolkit and various initiatives, including:

   - Engagement with Provincial Nursing Advisory Task Forums
   - Provincial/Territorial tours
   - Collaboration with Nurse Executive groups
   - Work on home care, dental care, long-term care standards, and Canada Health Act updates

   Dr. Chapman also addressed the challenges faced by her department, including the ten-year vacancy in the Federal Chief Nurse role, the impact of the pandemic, and the ongoing nursing shortage.

CONVENTION 2024

RNU is thrilled to celebrate our 50th Anniversary at our 29th Biennial Convention, which will take place from November 18th to 22nd at the Sheraton Hotel. Our committee has been working tirelessly to ensure an incredible celebration, honouring our past, present, and future.

The event will feature many distinguished guests, including Premier Andrew Furey, Health and Community Services Minister John Hogan, CFNU President Linda Silas, and several National Presidents from CFNU, among others. We look forward to sharing this historic moment with our dedicated volunteers and members.

In addition to our convention activities, we are hosting a public rally at Bannerman Park to commemorate 50 years of advocacy and action. This rally will not only celebrate our achievements but also call on the government to address ongoing issues faced by nurses today.

RNU POLICY REVIEW

Following the 28th Biennial Convention and subsequent Constitutional Amendments, RNU committed to a comprehensive review of our policy manual. This review was led by the Board of Directors (BOD), with valuable input from all Committees of the Board. Recognizing that many policies had not been updated for years, the BOD aimed to ensure that our policies are current, align with Robert's Rules of Order, Newest Edition, and reflect our strategic goals as an organization.

We also incorporated recommendations from the 2022 Organizational Review and the Internal Communications & Engagement Audit, ensuring our policies meet our fiduciary responsibilities.

The updated Policy Manual is now available on myRNU and has been communicated to all members via email. It was also shared during Branch Executive training in the spring and presented at the Council of Presidents meeting in September. Additionally, we will host an information session about the new policies at the upcoming 29th Biennial Convention.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

RNU Executive Director David Hammond and RNU President Yvette Coffey continue to engage regularly with government officials, NLHS leadership, and other key stakeholders to advocate for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners across Newfoundland and

Labrador, as well as to protect our publicly funded and publicly delivered healthcare system.

Key Stakeholders We Engage With:

- RNU Members
- Premier and Members of the House of Assembly (MHAs)
- Minister, Deputy Minister, and Assistant Deputy Minister of Health & Community Services (HCS)
- CEO and Vice Presidents within NLHS
- College of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador (CRNNL)
- NDP and PC Provincial Leaders
- Auditor General of NL
- Senior Leadership within NLHS
- Department of Education Officials: Discussing childcare initiatives
- Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) Counterparts
- Federal and Provincial Chief Nurses
- Workplace NL Representatives
- BScN Students and Nursing Educators
- Public Sector Union Leadership and NLFL Executive Council
- Department of Workforce Planning
- High School Students: Promoting nursing careers
- Provident-10: Pension and benefits discussions
- Treasury Board Secretariat and Classifications Division, Government of NL
- The Public

Through these ongoing engagements, RNU remains committed to advocating for better working conditions, comprehensive healthcare policies, and strategic solutions that benefit both nurses and the broader healthcare system.

CONCLUSION

As we celebrate 50 years of advocacy and action, RNU remains steadfast in our commitment to our members and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. The past two years have presented challenges, but they have also been filled with progress, collaboration, and a renewed focus on our strategic goals. From enhancing our internal operations to advocating for transformative healthcare solutions, we have laid a strong foundation for the future.

Looking ahead, we are energized and determined to keep driving positive changes. Our work is far from over, and we will continue to champion the needs of Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners, advocate for safe and supportive work environments, and push for the protection and enhancement of our publicly funded, publicly delivered healthcare system. Together, with the strength and dedication of our members, we will build a healthier and more resilient future.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment, passion, and support. Here's to the next 50 years of standing strong, united, and committed to making a difference.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Kimberly Parsons, RN

Attending our annual convention always prompts me to reflect on the meaningful connections we have forged through our gatherings. Without fail, I leave these events feeling energized and inspired by the education and collaboration I experience. The theme "Stronger Together" resonates deeply, as I have come to rely on the collective strength of our community during my first year as your Vice President. I am truly honoured to serve in this role, and I eagerly look forward to the next two years ahead. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to improve conditions for our members and colleagues, outcomes for our patients, and the strength of our healthcare system as a whole.

As Vice President, one of my primary roles is to represent RNU on numerous committees and events. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Yvette for her fantastic orientation, leadership, and guidance as I stepped into this role, as well as the office staff who have been extremely supportive and helpful from the start.

This year, I have had the privilege of representing RNU on the Government Money Pension Plan (GMPP) committee, the Group Insurance committee, the Senior Joint Quality Worklife Committee, the Occupational Health and Safety Committee of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Health Coalition. Within RNU, I have served on the Executive, Finance, People and Culture, and 50th Anniversary committees, and as Co-Chair of the Convention committee.

This has been an exceptionally busy year. In addition to my committee work, I have been actively representing RNU at multiple CFNU events, including the National Executive Board meeting in Ottawa with Yvette and David, the Health Ministers meeting in PEI, where I had the opportunity to speak with the Canadian Minister of Health, Mark Holland, and the Chief Nursing Officer for Canada, Leigh Chapman. I also attended the Council of the Federation meetings in Halifax, where I sat down with the Premier to discuss healthcare issues in our province.

Within our province, I have proudly represented our organization at numerous events. This included attending two Workplace

NL Stakeholder Meetings, the Team Primary Care Nurses Summit, and the Eastern Labour School. I also participated in the Purple Ribbon campaign flag raising to mark the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, laid a wreath at the National Day of Mourning Ceremony to honour those who have lost their lives or been injured due to workplace incidents, and spent the day at the Regatta Seniors Rest Stop. Additionally, I had the privilege of attending crest ceremonies at the Center for Nursing Studies (CNS) and MUN School of Nursing, the CNS Graduation and Pinning Ceremony, the Nursing Charity Ball, and most recently, I presented to the 4th-year class at CNS about RNU and the important advocacy work we do.

A lot of work has been completed within the organization as well. As our organization underwent a comprehensive review, it became evident that significant improvements were needed. This call for change had come not just from our board, but from our members and staff as well. We recognize that change is rarely easy, yet we have approached this review with our members' interest most at mind, resulting in substantial progress - though not without challenges along the way. Having been heavily involved in this review process from the start, I am now eager to dive into the review of our volunteer structure, always with the lens of service improvement for the membership.

I hope you find yourselves inspired this week, and convention serves as a platform for meaningful collaboration. As your Vice President, I am filled with a sense of accomplishment and pride in our collective progress. Working alongside such dedicated individuals has been both humbling and inspiring. I'm confident our collaborative efforts will lead to even greater success, and

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

David Hammond

Serving the Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of the RNU has been a privilege, especially during a year marked by both challenges and successes. We have addressed critical issues, including the implementation of collective agreement benefits, recruitment and retention concerns for the Branch 03 President, and pay disparities for Nurse Practitioners, all while strengthening our organizational framework. As we approach 2025, I am confident that these initiatives will converge to create a successful year of ongoing advocacy and support for our members.

Organizational Review and Internal Communications and Engagement Audit:

In 2022, the RNU undertook a thorough organizational review, facilitated by Cullwick and Associates, to realign our leadership, strategy, and staff engagement goals. This review examined structural and management challenges, resource allocation, and staff workloads, culminating in a series of recommendations for a more effective organizational model. Key initiatives included revisions to the RNU staffing model, management structure, RNU Board and Executive, and our human resources strategy.

This process ran concurrently with an internal communication and engagement (ICE) audit conducted by Inner Strength Communications. Both initiatives identified areas for improvement, such as the need for consistent job descriptions, enhanced accountability, and better staff communication. Throughout 2023-2024, we are proud to report that we successfully implemented one hundred percent of the recommendations from both reviews on schedule. Despite facing challenges, including unprecedented turnover, these efforts have established a foundation of transparency, accountability, and a healthier work environment, positioning RNU as an employer of choice. RNU's internal structure is now stronger than ever, designed to support and advocate for our members more effectively.

With dedicated staff in place, a renewed focus on transparency, and streamlined communication processes, we are fully

equipped to address the needs and concerns of our members swiftly and effectively. Each team member's role is clearly defined and aligned with RNU's goals, ensuring that every member receives the attention and support they deserve. This solid foundation empowers us to handle challenges confidently and to continue working tirelessly in the best interests of our nursing professionals.

RNU Office Staff

Staff feedback from both the organizational review and the ICE audit was clear and consistent. Employees expressed a desire for fairness and consistency across the organization, raising concerns about perceived double standards related to internal practices, as well as uncertainty around the reporting structure. They emphasized the need for more feedback, recognition, and flexibility, while also calling for equal respect for all employees. The RNU effectively addressed these matters by implementing recommendations from both the organizational review and the ICE audit.

As with any significant change, turnover is a potential risk. However, the insights provided by staff to the consultants from Cullwick and Associates and Inner Strength Communications were invaluable in shaping their recommendations. The recent turnover at the RNU office reflects significant organizational adjustments, largely in response to feedback from our staff. Following the 2022 organizational review and ICE audit, RNU implemented a series of updates aimed at fostering fairness, accountability, and consistency across the board. These changes addressed longstanding requests for transparency and equitable standards, focusing on structured workloads, clearer reporting, and balanced policies. While these updates were implemented in alignment with staff input, some employees ultimately found the adjusted environment was not a fit for their expectations, resulting in their departure. We remain committed to creating a supportive, equitable workplace that aligns with RNU's mission and values as we move forward.

Negotiations

On August 4, 2023, the RNU successfully ratified its provincial collective agreement, marking a significant milestone in the ongoing advocacy for our members. This agreement encompasses several key achievements that enhance the working conditions and compensation for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners across the province. Notable highlights include a two per cent wage increase each year for four years (2022-2026), the introduction of the Long Service Pay Premium, which recognizes the dedication and commitment of our members over time, as well as the implementation of a Permanent Full-Time Incentive designed to attract and retain skilled professionals in our publicly funded healthcare system. Additionally, the agreement includes a Recognition Bonus aimed at acknowledging the exceptional contributions of our nursing workforce, temporary enhanced overtime rates, modified pay scales dropping the first two steps and adding an additional two steps, the creation of the Nurse Practitioner "NP" pay scales, and preceptor and mentorship premiums.

These accomplishments not only reflect our collective efforts but also set the stage for improved recruitment, retention, and overall job satisfaction among our members, ensuring a stronger and more resilient healthcare community in Newfoundland and

Labrador.

Today, the RNU remains actively engaged with NL Health Services (NLHS), the Department of Health and Community Services, and the Treasury Board Secretariat to resolve issues surrounding the implementation of collective agreement benefits. Many members have yet to receive full or accurate compensation for entitlements, including the Long Service Pay Premium, the Permanent Full-Time Incentive, and the Recognition Bonus resulting in several group policy grievances. We are committed to ensuring our members receive their rightful benefits and are diligently collaborating with these stakeholders to address outstanding concerns.

Branch 03 (Health Sciences Center) President

We are pleased to announce that RNU has established a Private Agreement with NLHS as of June 11, 2024. This agreement includes the creation of a new Temporary Full-Time (TFT) position for the Branch 3 President, allowing them to work 0.5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) in their current RNU role and 0.5 FTE in the Branch 3 President position. The cost of this TFT role will be shared between NLHS and Branch 03, ensuring that any elected member serving as President maintains their salary, benefits, and contributions to the Public Service Pension Plan.

Nurse Practitioners

The RNU has been actively involved in a range of impactful initiatives with our Nurse Practitioner (NP) groups.

Employer-led joint PDQ submission: The intent of the employer-led joint Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) submission between NLHS and RNU's NPs is to conduct a thorough review and accurate documentation of NP roles and responsibilities. This collaborative effort seeks to clarify job expectations, align duties with the current needs of NLHS, and ensure that NP positions are classified and compensated fairly. A key outcome of this initiative is to accurately place our NPs on the newly negotiated NP salary scales, promoting transparency, consistency in job evaluations, and equitable treatment for NPs across the province.

The NP PDQ Joint Submission has expanded to encompass eight specialized sub-groups: Acute Care, Emergency Room (ER), independent NP-led ER, Critical Care, Geriatric Care, Primary Care, Mental Health, and Specialty Outpatient Clinics. This expansion provides a comprehensive focus on critical areas of healthcare delivery. As we navigate through this initiative it is recognized that sub-groups may be modified.

To assist our NPs, RNU successfully negotiated a private agreement granting NPs up to 10 hours of paid leave to complete their sub-group PDQ submissions. This initiative is cost-shared between RNU and NLHS, reflecting our collaborative commitment to supporting NPs' professional development.

Furthermore, RNU has proposed a private agreement allowing NPs transitioning from the NS Pay Scale to the newly negotiated NP Pay Scale to access experience credits outlined in Schedule B of the Collective Agreement. This ensures equitable recognition of prior experience for RNs/NPs under the new pay structure.

Additionally, RNU is working with the Department of Health and Community Services to develop a targeted survey aimed at gathering insights on independent NP-led clinics. This initiative aims to provide support for NLHS and the NP profession by clarifying the scope, operational challenges, and potential benefits of these clinics for the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. In collaboration with the Department of Health and Community Services, RNU is also developing an enhanced compensation package to improve the recruitment and retention of NPs, particularly in Primary Care Clinics located in rural and remote areas. This strategic initiative is crucial to addressing healthcare access challenges in underserved regions of the province.

Labrador Benefits Agreement

Since January 2024, the RNU has been in active discussions with other provincial unions concerning the renewal of the Labrador Benefits Agreement, which expired on March 31, 2022. Despite this expiry, there has been no engagement from the government regarding its renewal. To address this, we have established a negotiation team comprising representatives from NAPE, CUPE, AAHP, NLTA, and RNCA. Formal meetings have been scheduled, and we are preparing for collective bargaining, which is set to begin in November 2024.

NLHS RN/NP Vacancy Data

On September 12, 2024, the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of Health and Community Services provided RNU with RN/NP vacancy data for NLHS, reporting 695 vacancies as of April 2024. RNU disputes the accuracy of this data, noting NLHS has acknowledged its vacancy figures may be inflated. In a September 18 meeting with the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) and Debbie Molloy of NLHS, a report indicated that 549 hires (531 RNs and 18 NPs) have been made since April 2022, though it's unclear if this includes RNU members who resigned for casual roles.

Despite government statements—such as the Minister of Health's announcement of 170 new nurses since April 2023 and NLHS's report of over 200 internationally educated nurses recruited since 2022—RNU finds these numbers inconsistent with workplace realities. As of October 2023, vacancies remain around 746, with only about 50 roles actually filled, highlighting ongoing concerns about staffing challenges.

The RN profession within NLHS continues to face significant pay inequities, impacting numerous specialized roles that are essential to healthcare across Newfoundland and Labrador. For instance, RNs in Oncology units and Cancer Care Patient Navigators across various zones earn different wages, despite carrying demanding caseloads and providing critical support to patients undergoing complex treatments. Their compensation, especially in certain zones, fails to reflect the specialized knowledge and intensity required in these roles. Emergency Room (ER) nurses in Rural NL face the same challenges. Clinical Educators and Instructors, responsible for patient education, and training the next generation of nurses, also experience pay gaps, despite their essential contributions to maintaining healthcare standards.

The RNU is committed to addressing these pay inequities and is actively engaging with all levels of government to advocate for fair compensation that truly reflects the expertise and responsibilities of RNs in these specialized roles. NLHS has acknowledged these concerns and has committed to collaborating with RNU in 2025 to review and address these inequities, working toward a more equitable and supportive compensation structure across the RN profession.

Transition Agreement

The RNU is pleased to update our membership on the ongoing transition discussions with NLHS. Recently, these talks have been productive, focusing on key priorities such as addressing provincial staffing challenges, developing a provincial seniority list, establishing a provincial professional practice framework, and the structural alignment of roles across NLHS. Both RNU and NLHS are committed to ensuring a smooth transition that upholds the interests and rights of our members, while also enhancing the overall quality of healthcare services across the province. As part of these discussions, we have emphasized the importance of fair and consistent standards across all zones. We will continue to advocate on behalf of our members and will provide regular updates on progress as we move forward in 2025.

Conclusion

In closing, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of the RNU for your unwavering dedication and resilience during this transformative year. Your commitment

to advocating for your profession and the communities you serve is truly inspiring. As we navigate the challenges and triumphs ahead, let us remain united in our efforts to enhance our working environment, ensure fair compensation, and uphold the highest standards of care. Together, we will continue to advocate for each other and for the patients we serve, fostering a supportive and equitable healthcare system for all. Thank you for your tireless efforts and the invaluable contributions you make every day.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF REGISTERED NURSES' UNION NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

March 31, 2024

Registered Nurses Union Newfoundland & Labrador

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of the
Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador (the "Union"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2024, and the statements of operations and changes in fund balances and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Union as at March 31, 2024, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards ("Canadian GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Union in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Union's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Union or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Union's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Union's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Union's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Union to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Deloitte LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants
October 3, 2024

Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador

Statement of operations and changes in fund balances

Year ended March 31, 2024 (with comparatives for the eight months ended March 31, 2023)

	Schedule	General Fund $	Defense Fund $	2024 Total $	2023 Total $
Revenue					
Membership fees		**4,460,833**	**115,319**	**4,576,152**	2,848,640
Interest		**47,948**	**158,058**	**206,006**	120,713
		4,508,781	**273,377**	**4,782,158**	2,969,353
Expenses					
Membership services					
Membership support and advocacy	1	**1,764,621**	**—**	**1,764,621**	1,307,367
Administrative	1	**1,294,864**	**—**	**1,294,864**	948,889
Education and communications	1	**574,875**	**—**	**574,875**	461,739
RNUNL conventions and meetings					
Branch presidents' meetings		**41,109**	**—**	**41,109**	22,480
RNUNL convention	1	**180**	**—**	**180**	464,781
Labour affiliations/conventions					
Membership fees - CFNU		**143,130**	**—**	**143,130**	95,180
Membership fees - NLFL		**50,605**	**—**	**50,605**	45,306
CFNU convention		**114,079**	**—**	**114,079**	(712)
CLC convention		**2,485**	**—**	**2,485**	5,326
NLFL convention		**2,117**	**—**	**2,117**	40,262
Board of directors and committees					
Provincial board	1	**167,322**	**—**	**167,322**	84,856
Support policy - Board		**117,507**	**—**	**117,507**	10,781
Committees		**13,966**	**—**	**13,966**	176
Regional board		**1,709**	**—**	**1,709**	(1,480)
Bargaining	2	**—**	**162,464**	**162,464**	520,017
		4,288,569	**162,464**	**4,451,033**	4,004,968
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)		**220,212**	**110,913**	**331,125**	(1,035,615)
Fund balances, beginning of year		**1,877,689**	**2,852,663**	**4,730,352**	5,765,967
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)		**220,212**	**110,913**	**331,125**	(1,035,615)
Fund balances, end of year		**2,097,901**	**2,963,576**	**5,061,477**	4,730,352

The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador

Statement of financial position

As at March 31, 2024

	Notes	General Fund $	Defense Fund $	2024 Total $	2023 Total $
Assets					
Current assets					
Cash		**1,520,373**	**3,286,256**	**4,806,629**	4,329,678
Accounts receivable					
Membership fees		**361,060**	**—**	**361,060**	432,868
Other		**83,400**	**—**	**83,400**	48,425
Due from Defense fund		**322,680**	**—**	**322,680**	96,638
Prepaid expenses		**73,415**	**—**	**73,415**	74,967
		2,360,928	**3,286,256**	**5,647,184**	4,982,576
Tangible capital assets	3	**619,993**	**—**	**619,993**	602,188
		2,980,921	**3,286,256**	**6,267,177**	5,584,764
Liabilities					
Current liabilities					
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		**807,622**	**—**	**807,622**	662,116
Due to General fund		**—**	**322,680**	**322,680**	96,638
		807,622	**322,680**	**1,130,302**	758,754
Accrued severance payable		**75,398**	**—**	**75,398**	95,658
		883,020	**322,680**	**1,205,700**	854,412
Commitments	4				
Contingencies	6				
Surplus					
Members' surplus		**2,097,901**	**2,963,576**	**5,061,477**	4,730,352
		2,980,921	**3,286,256**	**6,267,177**	5,584,764

The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

On behalf of the Board:

_____, President

_____, Treasurer

Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador

Statement of cash flows

Year ended March 31, 2024 (with comparatives for the eight months ended March 31, 2023)

	Notes	General Fund $	Defense Fund $	2024 Total $	2023 Total $
Operating activities					
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)		**220,212**	**110,913**	**331,125**	(1,035,615)
Adjustments for					
Amortization of tangible capital assets		**49,240**	**—**	**49,240**	48,714
Change in accrued severance pay		**(20,260)**	**—**	**(20,260)**	(45,416)
		249,192	**110,913**	**360,105**	(1,032,317)
Change in non-cash operating working capital	5	**(42,151)**	**226,042**	**183,891**	45,496
		207,041	**336,955**	**543,996**	(986,821)
Investing activity					
Purchase of tangible capital assets		**(67,045)**	**—**	**(67,045)**	(22,323)
Net change in cash		**139,996**	**336,955**	**476,951**	(1,009,144)
Cash, beginning of year		**1,380,377**	**2,949,301**	**4,329,678**	5,338,822
Cash, end of year		**1,520,373**	**3,286,256**	**4,806,629**	4,329,678

The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

1. Description of business

The Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador (the "Union") acts as a bargaining agent for nurses in the Province of Newfoundland & Labrador.

During the prior year, the Union changed their fiscal reporting period from July 31 to March 31. As a result, the current period results are for the year ended March 31, 2024, and comparatives are for the eight month period ended March 31, 2023.

2. Significant accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations in Part III of the Chartered Professional Accountants ("CPA") handbook and reflect the following significant accounting policies:

Basis of presentation

The Union follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions classifying financial statement items in either the General Fund or the Defense Fund. The General Fund represents the regular operations of the Union. The Defense Fund has been established to accumulate funds to be used in the event of a members' strike.

Revenue recognition

Membership fees are recognized as revenue when they are received or become receivable, and collection is reasonably assured. Other revenues are recognized as earned and when collection is reasonably assured.

Cash

Cash includes cash on hand and balances with banks, net of any overdrafts.

Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost. Amortization is calculated on the declining balance basis for depreciable assets at rates which will reduce original cost to estimated residual value over the useful life of the assets.

Building	5%	declining balance
Furniture and office equipment	20%	declining balance
Vehicles	30%	declining balance

Severance pay

Severance pay is accounted for on the accrual basis based upon years of service and current salary levels. The entitlement to severance pay vests with employees after seven years of continual service and accordingly no provision has been made in the accounts for employees with less than seven years of continual service. For employees hired after August 20, 2020, there is no further accumulation of severance. The amount is payable when the employee ceases employment with the Union.

2. Significant accounting policies (continued)

Pension costs

Employees of the Union participate in the Multi-Sector Pension Plan and Public Sector Pension Plan. These plans are not administered by the Union. Contributions to the plans are required from both the employees and the Union. The annual contributions for the pensions are recognized in the accounts on a current basis. Contributions paid and expensed by the Union for the year ended March 31, 2024, amounted to $181,430 ($117,585 for the eight months ended March 31, 2023).

Financial instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities originated or exchanged in arm's length transactions are initially recognized at fair value when the Union becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument. Financial assets and financial liabilities originated or exchanged in related party transactions, except for those that involve parties whose sole relationship with the Union is in the capacity of management, are initially recognized at cost.

The cost of a financial instrument in a related party transaction depends on whether the instrument has repayment terms. The cost of financial instruments with repayment terms is determined using its undiscounted cash flows, excluding interest and dividend payments, less any impairment losses previously recognized by the transferor. The cost of financial instruments without repayment terms is determined using the consideration transferred or received by the Union in the transaction.

All financial instruments are subsequently measured at amortized cost.

Transaction costs related to financial instruments subsequently measured at fair value are expensed as incurred. Transaction costs related to other financial instruments are added to the carrying value of the asset or netted against the carrying value of the liability and are then recognized over the expected life of the instrument using the effective interest method. Any premium or discount related to an instrument measured at amortized cost is amortized over the expected life of the item using the effective interest method and recognized in net earnings as interest income or expense.

With respect to financial assets measured at cost or amortized cost, the Union recognizes an impairment loss, if any, in net earnings when there are indicators of impairment, and it determines that a significant adverse change has occurred during the period in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows. When the extent of impairment of a previously written-down asset decreases and the decrease can be related to an event occurring after the impairment was recognized, the previously recognized impairment loss is reversed to net earnings in the period the reversal occurs.

Use of estimates

In preparing the Union's financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, management is required to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the year. The key estimates include amortization, collectability of accounts receivable, accrued liabilities and accrued severance payable. Actual results could differ materially from these estimates.

3. Tangible capital assets

	Cost $	Accumulated amortization $	2024 Net book value $	2023 Net book value $
Land	**130,208**	**—**	**130,208**	130,208
Building	**1,008,956**	**656,960**	**351,996**	370,522
Furniture and office equipment	**615,673**	**501,493**	**114,180**	67,732
Vehicles	**97,500**	**73,891**	**23,609**	33,726
	1,852,337	**1,232,344**	**619,993**	602,188

4. Commitments

The Union is committed to the following minimum annual lease payments for office equipment:

	$
2025	29,053
2026	11,913

5. Supplemental cash flow information

	2024 $	2023 $
Change in non-cash operating working capital		
General Fund		
Accounts receivable - membership fees	**71,808**	(104,690)
Accounts receivable - other	**(34,975)**	(15,218)
Prepaid expenses	**1,552**	(13,332)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**145,506**	178,736
Due from Defense Fund	**(226,042)**	(53,008)
	(42,151)	(7,512)
Defense Fund		
Due to General Fund	**226,042**	53,008
	183,891	45,496

6. Contingencies

In the normal course of operations, the Union is occasionally party to litigation. Any potential liability relating to such matters is not determinable at this time and therefore no provision has been made in these financial statements. Any settlement resulting from such matters would be recorded as an expenditure of the General Fund in the year incurred.

7. Financial instruments

Financial risk factors

The Union has exposure to credit risk and liquidity risk. The Union's Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the oversight of these risks and reviews the Union's policies on an ongoing basis to ensure that these risks are appropriately managed. The source of risk exposure and how each is managed is outlined below:

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk of loss associated with a counterparty's inability to fulfil its payment obligation. The Union's principal financial assets are cash and accounts receivable. The carrying amounts of financial assets on the statement of financial position represents the Union's maximum credit exposure at March 31, 2024. Further, management believes that the credit risk with respect to accounts receivable is not material. As the majority of accounts receivable consist of dues owed by union members and there has not been an issue with collectability, there is no allowance for doubtful accounts recorded.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Union will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they become due. As at March 31, 2024, the Union had cash of $4,806,629 ($4,329,678 at March 31, 2023). To the extent that the Union does not believe it has sufficient liquidity to meet current obligations, consideration will be given to obtaining additional funds through third party funding or from national unions, assuming these could be obtained. The Union's financial liabilities are current and subject to normal trade terms.

Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador

Schedule 1 - General fund schedule of expenses

Year ended March 31, 2024 (with comparatives for the eight months ended March 31, 2023)

	2024 $	2023 $
Membership support and advocacy		
Salaries and benefits - labour relations	**939,996**	767,810
Salaries and benefits - executive	**620,840**	393,590
Support policy - branch president	**68,460**	60,407
Arbitration	**43,976**	15,645
Donations	**25,992**	14,454
Branch funds	**22,800**	13,200
Scholarships	**13,750**	15,000
Executive	**12,572**	10,374
Staff travel	**11,460**	12,810
Subscriptions	**4,721**	3,995
Political liaison	**54**	82
	1,764,621	1,307,367
Education and communications		
Salaries and benefits	**327,633**	250,120
Professional services - communications	**83,591**	147,843
Advertising	**78,749**	34,980
Training	**40,536**	(3,038)
Telephone	**24,915**	17,473
Printing and postage	**19,451**	12,367
Labour schools	**—**	1,994
	574,875	461,739

	2024 $	2023 $
Administrative		
Salaries and benefits	**675,750**	488,922
Professional fees	**282,749**	208,688
Office supplies	**84,288**	55,679
Insurance	**52,955**	32,088
Building		
Repairs and maintenance	**50,778**	40,249
Property taxes	**29,288**	19,581
Heat and light	**16,491**	15,475
Amortization of tangible capital assets	**49,240**	48,714
Equipment repairs and rental	**31,688**	24,305
Vehicle operating	**11,967**	6,630
Interest and bank charges	**4,758**	3,519
Membership fees	**3,243**	2,320
Miscellaneous	**1,046**	409
Entertainment	**623**	2,310
	1,294,864	948,889
Provincial board		
Unpaid leave	**87,260**	50,671
Travel	**25,552**	17,314
Accommodations	**20,598**	10,136
Meals	**19,084**	6,644
Miscellaneous	**14,828**	91
	167,322	84,856

	2024 **$**	2023 $
RNUNL convention		
Unpaid leave	**180**	57,862
Meals	**—**	109,490
Accommodations	**—**	86,520
Travel	**—**	70,121
Technical and audio	**—**	65,082
Promotional items and kits	**—**	35,046
Entertainment	**—**	17,679
Professional services	**—**	13,278
General	**—**	8,446
Childcare	**—**	1,257
	180	464,781

Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador

Schedule 2 - Defense fund schedule of expenses

Year ended March 31, 2024 (with comparatives for the eight months ended March 31, 2023)

	2024 $	2023 $
Bargaining		
Media campaign	**78,262**	396,548
Unpaid leave	**25,582**	37,842
Accommodations	**21,808**	17,980
Travel	**11,659**	32,263
Meals	**9,588**	17,209
Meeting room rentals	**9,010**	7,292
General	**4,905**	10,335
Entertainment	**1,650**	231
Dependant care	**—**	317
	162,464	520,017

Registered
Nurses'
Union
Newfoundland & Labrador

Ovation
Award

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Tony Moores, RN
Secretary-Treasurer

The Finance Committee has been highly engaged throughout the year, actively discussing key initiatives and reviewing both branch and office policies, aimed at strengthening financial management as a whole. This ongoing work has been essential to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organization.

In early June, the Finance Committee approved the 2024-2025 budget, which reflects a balanced approach despite the challenges posed by hosting our Convention and the highest inflation rates seen in recent years. Achieving a balanced budget in this environment was made possible through a thorough analysis of our key performance indicators (KPIs) and alignment with our strategic objectives. During our financial update in September, we confirmed that we are on track to maintain this balanced budget as we move into 2025. **We will meet our KPI of maintaining operating expenses at 30% or less of total expenses.**

In August, the Director of Corporate Services met with the auditors to review the 2023-2024 fiscal year. We are pleased to report that RNU had a clean audit and affirming our internal controls remain robust.

For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, which covered an 8-month period, the organization reported a deficit of $1,035,615. This was primarily attributed to the costs associated with hosting the 2022 Convention, as well as significant expenses related to bargaining activities,

which occurred during this condensed reporting period.

However, for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the organization demonstrated a strong recovery, ending the year with a surplus of $331,125. This positive outcome reflects prudent financial management, cost control efforts, and a return to more stable operating conditions.

Policy Work

The Finance Committee has updated its financial policies to strengthen the financial stewardship of the organization and better support branch operations. These measures aim to help branches promote their activities

while ensuring sound financial practices.

- **Audit Requirement for Provincial Funding:** Branches are now required to submit an audit before receiving funding. This policy has led to a significant increase in compliance, from less than 50% to 98% in just a few months.
- **Branch Stipend Increase:** The stipend for each branch has been increased from $600 to $1,000 to better support branch activities.
- **Increased Meal Per Diems:** Daily per diems for meals have been raised by $10 for members and staff traveling on union business (lunch and supper).
- **Additional Funding for Branch Volunteers:** Efforts have been made to ensure equal pay for equal work by ensuring all branch executives receive the same amount for their work at the branch level.

Cost-Cutting Measures at the Provincial Office

We have been proactively working to reduce administrative costs at the Provincial Office. This process is ongoing, but significant strides have been made:

- **Subscription Review:** We conducted a comprehensive review of all subscriptions and eliminated those that did not provide sufficient value.
- **Vendor Contract Negotiations:** We renegotiated contracts with multiple vendors, resulting in reduced costs for services like telecommunications and IT support.
- **In-House Digital Communications:** Increased investment in in-house digital communications and marketing will generate long-term savings, offsetting initial capital costs.
- **Surplus Account Strategy:** We now transfer any balance over $500,000 from our general account to a surplus account, which will increase our interest revenue by approximately $25,000 annually.

Other notable highlights

- **Membership Dues:** The increase in member dues was a result of an increase in salary not a change in the ways dues are calculated (1.1% of an NS 28, step 6. No plan to increase dues for the for the next 2 years.
- **Healthy cash flow:** We are maintaining a healthy general fund to pay our short-term liabilities. We have been able to increase the amount of cash flow in the previous and current fiscal years.
- **RFP for Audit Services:** A request for proposal has been submitted to 20 accounting firms with the intent to reduce the cost of our audit.

The finance committee remains committed to presenting a balanced budget for the next two years. With the cost of doing business rising, sound financial management will ensure we keep our expenses in check while also providing more value to our membership, you!

RNU Budget 2024-2025

Revenue		
Membership Dues		$4,968,376
Total Revenue		$4,968,376
Expenses		
Strike and Strike Vote Expenses		$ -
Administrative Expenses		$1,155,730
Education and Communications		$715,202
RNU Conventions/Meetings		
	Council of Presidents	$45,000
	RNU convention	$720,000
Membership Support/Advocacy		$1,748,760
Labour Affiliations/Conventions		
	Membership Fees - CFNU	$157,443
	Membership Fees - NLFL	$55,666
	CFNU Convention	$ -
	CLC Convention	$ -
	NLFL Convention	$ -
BOD Committees		
	Provincial Board	$115,000
	Support Policy - Board	$108,000
	Committees	$7,000
	Regional BOD	$7,000
Bargaining		$ -
Total Expenses		$4,834,801
Excess Revenue over Expenses		$133,575
Capital Budget		$132,059
Surplus		$1,516

3

RN
No RNs,
No Health Care
BEYOND BROKEN.ca
Registered
Nurses'
Union
Newfoundland & Labrador
No RNs,
No Health Care
BEYOND BROKEN.ca
Registered
Nurses'
Union
Newfoundland & Labrador

28TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS UPDATE

October 2024

Resolution #1 - 50th Anniversary

WHEREAS the RNU (Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador) was formed in 1974 and recognized as the official bargaining unit for nurses in this province; and

WHEREAS unionized RNs (Registered Nurses') and NPs (Nurse Practitioners') take pride in their involvement and contribution to an organization that is built on principles of democracy and input from our members; and

WHEREAS 2024 marks the 50th anniversary year of the RNU; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that 2024 be officially recognized as the Golden Anniversary Year of the RNU; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors and Convention Committee plan a calendar of events to celebrate this milestone in RNU's history. Budget to be approved by the Provincial Board of Directors.

Resolution #1 Update

Our Theme for the 50th Anniversary and Convention is "Stronger Together".

The committee has been actively working on several initiatives to celebrate this milestone, starting with a logo contest, which was won by Heather Tracey NP. We ordered new promotional commemorative items, and in 2024, an in-person President's Tour began with visits to Labrador, the Northern Peninsula, and the Southwest Coast of the island. The next phase of the tour will focus on the Central Zone, prioritizing sites that haven't been visited in years before moving on to other locations.

To further commemorate this occasion, the committee has refreshed the "Unions Why Bother" video with a video celebrating RNU and unionism. Additionally, historical memorabilia has been collected to create a shadow box which will be showcased at Provincial office.

As of May 2024, the 50th Anniversary Committee completed its meetings while the Convention Committee continues to meet regularly. The President has attended anniversary conventions for the Ontario Nurses Association (ONA), Saskatchewan Union Nurses (SUN), and New Brunswick

Nurses Union (NBNU), providing valuable insights to both committees.

Finally, the "I AM A NURSE" project is underway, collecting stories from nurses during the President's Tour. These stories will be shared at the convention and on social media to celebrate the nursing profession and inspire interest in this vital field.

Resolution #2 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

WHEREAS there is a common understanding that the push for a more equitable and just society can only be achieved through working collaboratively and seeking input from the necessary experts with lived experiences; and

WHEREAS the RNU's priority is always to support and strengthen our membership and promote diversity, equity and inclusion within our organization; and

WHEREAS the RNU is committed to providing a supportive and productive workplace culture for our membership and staff; and

WHEREAS the RNU has as one of our objectives the advancement of the social, economic, and general welfare of our members; and

WHEREAS the RNU's vision is dedicated to providing an environment conducive to participation, learning and personal growth and maintains mutual trust, respect, support and understanding, while valuing diversity and creativity; and

WHEREAS the RNU's Strategic Plan Direction 1 Goal 4 promotes diversity, equity and inclusion within the RNU; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU hire a subject matter expert(s) to develop an organizational Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) strategy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU develop policies and actions to support the DEI strategy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to advance policies, guidelines, best practices and campaigns regarding diversity, equity and inclusion in the nursing profession, and to assist member organizations in the same; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU establish a DEI Committee for the Biennial Convention 2024, as well as provide space for members to come together to address matters of relevance.

Resolution #2 Update

The RNU has been actively engaging in initiatives to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) within the organization. In 2023, the RNU began sessions with First Light at

Provincial office.

In March 2024, the RNU introduced a new policy on Diversity and Gender-Based Analysis + (GBA+) as part of its comprehensive policy review and began developing a DEI Strategy aligned with its Strategic Plan. In May 2024, the RNU partnered with outside consultants to provide education to staff and committed to offering sessions at the upcoming Convention.

In September 2024, the RNU engaged Stephanie Howlett of DiversityNL to lead DEIB training, with sessions already conducted for both staff and the Board. Additionally, the RNU has continued to seek guidance from DiversityNL to strengthen its DEIB initiatives.

As part of our commitment, we are providing education at our upcoming Convention. Plans are underway for more DEIB education as part of our Strategic Plan.

Resolution #3 - NP Funding Model

WHEREAS the RNU's Strategic Direction 3 Goal 1 states that the RNU will continue to lobby government to tap into the full scope of practice of Nurse Practitioners (NPs) to improve access to care across all settings; and

WHEREAS access to primary care is challenging in many areas of Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS the RNU's vision statement advocates a high quality, publicly funded health care system, in partnership with the public, communities, and health care professionals; and

WHEREAS private practice NP clinics are operating to provide primary and collaborative care; and

WHEREAS NPs are independent advanced practice clinicians that provide holistic medical care in all settings; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU continue to adamantly lobby Government to implement a publicly funded NP funding model in Newfoundland and Labrador; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to advocate for NP-led primary care and collaborative clinics to enhance healthcare access; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to promote the role of NPs in emergency rooms, acute care, Community care and Long-term care settings.

Resolution #3 Update

The RNU has been actively advocating across all levels of government. The newly ratified Collective Agreement introduced a distinct pay grid for NPs, which included an 8% increase, a

two-step wage increase, 2% added to each step of the salary scale, and overtime pay for Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) outside regular hours.

In August of 2023, the RNU requested an NP Occupational Review, which was denied by the Treasury Board and the Department of Health and Community Services. However, they offered a joint Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) submission with Newfoundland & Labrador Health Services (NLHS) and the Job Evaluation System (JES) classification division. After meeting with NPs and conducting a survey, the RNU found that 86% of respondents supported the joint PDQ submission.

The NP PDQ Joint Submission has now expanded to cover 8 specialized sub-groups: Acute Care, Emergency Room (ER), independent NP-led ER, Critical Care, Geriatric Care, Primary Care, Mental Health, and Specialty Outpatient Clinics. This expansion ensures a comprehensive focus across critical areas of healthcare.

The RNU successfully negotiated a private agreement granting NPs up to 10 hours of paid leave to complete their sub-group PDQ submissions. This cost-shared initiative between RNU and NLHS underscores a collaborative commitment to supporting NPs' professional development. Work on this initiative is ongoing.

As part of the NP incentive for Family Care Teams, 31 NPs were approved, following RNU's advocacy to make all NPs in Primary and Community Care teams eligible. The Department of Health and Community Services and the Treasury Board Secretariat deferred to NLHS to decide which positions would qualify.

In the fall of 2023, the RNU launched an NP awareness campaign in partnership with an agency to promote the critical role of NPs, while continuing to urge government and employers to fully utilize NPs' scope of practice. The RNU President has been vocal in the media, emphasizing the value and expertise NPs bring to patients, residents, and clients, and highlighting the need for NP-led clinics to address primary healthcare shortages throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The RNU also maintains regular meetings with the Department of Health and Community Services, NLHS, the Department of Retention and Recruitment, and the Premier to discuss sustainable funding models for NP-led clinics.

The RNU's advocacy successfully led to nearly double the NP seats at the Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador (MUNL), and a formal request to the Minister of Health and Community Services for a dedicated NP Week resulted in a jointly declared celebration shared on social media.

Additionally, a proposal was submitted to recognize RN experience for new NPs through experience credits under Schedule B of the RNU Collective Agreement, with ongoing discussions with NLHS.

RNU collabourated with the Department of Health and Community Services and NLHS on a recent survey regarding independent NP-led clinics, which closed on October 25, 2024. The results will guide discussions on enhancing compensation packages to improve recruitment and

retention, especially in rural and remote areas.

Resolution #4 - Prevent Privatization of Health Care Delivery

WHEREAS the Canadian Health Coalition continues to campaign against the erosion of Medicare and convincing the federal and provincial governments to reinvest and rebuild it as a universal, publicly-funded health care system; and

WHEREAS the RNU is a member of Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU), which is the recognized national voice advocating for nurses and high-quality public health care; and

WHEREAS one of the RNU's objectives is the promotion of the highest standards of health care; and

WHEREAS the vision statement of the RNU advocates a high quality, publicly funded health care system, in partnership with the public, communities, and health care professionals; and

WHEREAS the RNU believes that in order for all Canadians to have adequate health care, the five principles of the Canada Health Act must be maintained; and

WHEREAS the RNU has a position statement which supports the five founding principles of the Canada Health Act:

1. Universality
2. Accessibility
3. Portability
4. Comprehensiveness
5. Public Administration not for Profit

And

WHEREAS the RNU recognizes the need of stabilizing, maintaining and improving the health care system to ensure a productive and healthy society in Canada; and

WHEREAS the RNU's Strategic Direction 3 in our Strategic Plan, states that the RNU will continue to support and advocate for accessible, public health care for the people of the province, while acknowledging that we live in a time of change; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU continue to lobby government and other organizations to prevent the privatization of health care delivery in the Canadian Health Care System; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to work with other likeminded organizations,

unions and community partners to protect health care for the future of all Canadians and advocate for our universal, publicly funded health care system.

Resolution #4 Update

The RNU actively advocated for substantial investments in Newfoundland and Labrador's publicly funded healthcare system, focusing on robust support for healthcare workers and the broader community.

A primary focus of the RNU's efforts was the elimination of Private Agency Nurses, a longstanding issue. Both the government and the NLHS aligned with the RNU's stance and announced plans to reduce reliance on private agencies. The President of the RNU, Yvette Coffey, was vocal in the media about the high costs associated with agency nursing, especially following a critical report by The Globe & Mail, and promoted initiatives aimed at retaining the RNU members, supporting Newfoundland and Labrador nursing students, and expanding the Travel Locum Pilot. The RNU remained committed to educating members on the adverse effects of privatization.

The Auditor General agreed to investigate Private Agency contracts in healthcare, with findings expected within a year. In addition, the RNU held discussions about expanding the Travel Locum Pilot to rural, remote, and hard-to-recruit areas in Newfoundland and Labrador and advocated for Nurse Practitioner-led clinics within the public system.

Improving work-life balance for healthcare workers in the public system was another key priority. Following the "2022 Nursing Think Tank", the RNU achieved several milestones: flexible scheduling for the RNU members, an expanded Travel Locum, designated childcare for healthcare workers, additional childcare seats, a pilot for overnight childcare, double time for overtime to address scheduling gaps, and workforce research that informed collective bargaining. The RNU's advocacy also led to the establishment of a Provincial department focused on healthcare recruitment and retention, as well as a Provincial campaign to recruit healthcare professionals.

The RNU was also active in CFNU campaigns and advocacy work, with the RNU Board members serving on committees dedicated to strengthening public healthcare. Kim Parsons, Vice – President of the RNU, participates in the Provincial Health Coalition, working to prevent healthcare privatization.

The new Collective Agreement (CA) provided various retention incentives, including benefits for permanent full-time and part-time roles, step progression and salary increases, mentorship and preceptorship programs, long-service recognition, and improved contract language.

During the Council of the Federation (Premiers' Summit) in July, the RNU's Executive Director and Provincial Vice President represented the RNU in discussions about strategic healthcare reform and enhancing primary care systems. Additionally, on September 18, 2024, the RNU's Provincial President and Executive Director met with senior officials from the Department of

Workforce Planning to review the Core Staffing Review Request for Proposal, ensuring a rigorous two-pronged approach to select a vendor capable of meeting the initiative's requirements.

Through these efforts, the RNU demonstrated a strong commitment to strengthening healthcare accessibility and quality in Newfoundland and Labrador, while effectively addressing member concerns on agency nursing and privatization.

Resolution #5 - Organizational Review

WHEREAS the RNU recognizes the importance of volunteers to sustain a strong work environment; and

WHEREAS the RNU acknowledges the responses from a questionnaire pointing out the need to assess volunteer recruitment and sustainability of these roles and to assess the needs of volunteers through an education review; and

WHEREAS the RNU recognizes the increased workload on already overworked RNs and NPs when in a volunteer position; and

WHEREAS the RNU's Strategic Direction 2 Goal 2 in our Strategic Plan states that the RNU enable our volunteers to work to capacity to serve members by strengthening support and engagement; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU undergo an organizational review to assess provincial office staffing and the branch volunteer structure, and create an action plan to implement recommendations from the organizational review; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to offer support and education to our volunteers at the branch level, and complete an education review assessing the needs of volunteers and members and implement an education plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU will continue to recognize the added effort required to maintain volunteer duties in addition to an unmanageable workload.

Resolution #5 Update

The Organizational Review of the Registered Nurses Union has been completed, with ongoing efforts now focused on strengthening volunteer structures and enhancing training. In-person training for shop stewards and branch executives has resumed for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. The RNU's strategic plan includes a comprehensive review of educational resources for volunteers, with current evaluations underway to refine these offerings.

The next phase of the Organizational Review will focus on the volunteer framework, under the oversight of the People & Culture Committee. This phase includes engagement with the RNU volunteers, following the completion of a jurisdictional scan of other unions. Simultaneously, the

Communications team is advancing the Internal Engagement and Communication (ICE) strategy, integrating feedback from volunteers into future initiatives.

Survey results from 2022 on nurses' educational interests remained consistent in 2024, showing the highest interest in pension information and retirement planning (58%), understanding union member rights (54%), and professional practice processes (51%). This input will guide the development of new educational programs for volunteers and members. Additionally, an initiative is underway to share content from the Eastern Labour School, taught by the RNU's Labour Relations Officers, on the myRNU platform for broader access.

During the Council of Presidents (COP) meeting in September, Presidents received a briefing on an upcoming survey of volunteers, marking the next stage of the Organizational Review led by the People & Culture Committee. In April 2024, the Branch Executive Education (BEE) event in St. John's highlighted updated policies on branches and finances. The Eastern Labour School (ELS) was well attended, and the RNU volunteer, Lesley Lambe, was awarded the Glenna Rowsell Award for her contributions as an RNU representative.

Overall, the RNU is dedicated to strengthening its volunteer framework and expanding educational opportunities to better support and engage its members.

Resolution #6 - Point of Care Risk Assessments

WHEREAS the Severe Acute Respiratory System (SARS) Commission made strong recommendations regarding erring on the side of caution and using the precautionary principle when dealing with a new contagion; and

WHEREAS the RNU has signed a Joint statement on Personal Protective Equipment with the provincial government; and

WHEREAS COVID-19 has challenged the health care system like never before; and

WHEREAS COVID-19 has highlighted the need for a pandemic supply plan; and

WHEREAS it is incumbent upon federal/provincial/territorial governments and employers to provide appropriate protection to health care workers, and to take a leadership role on infection prevention and control in health care settings; and

WHEREAS it is the position of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) that, in the event of an outbreak of any new respiratory virus, we acknowledge that the required and best respiratory protection for health care workers at risk is, minimally, fit-tested NIOSH-approved N95 respirators or higher levels of protection (e.g., powered air-purifying respirators (PAPR) or elastomeric respirators), given the emerging science, occupational health and safety legislation, and the precautionary principle; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU continue to take a strong stance on the importance of the RN/NP

Point of Care Risk Assessment for each patient encounter; therefore,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to lobby employers and governments at all levels to ensure emergency preparedness planning, proper administrative and engineering controls, the support of the administrators of the health system, as well as employers and governments to ensure the necessary protocols, measures, procedures, training and protective equipment that take into consideration risk and precautionary principles.

Resolution #6 Update

The RNU is actively advocating for enhanced emergency preparedness and the consistent implementation of Point of Care Risk Assessments (PCRA) due to the ongoing presence of COVID-19. The organization has reported that the supply chain for personal protective equipment (PPE) remains stable.

In March 2024, the RNU reached out to Provincial Procurement for updates on PPE supplies following an increase in respiratory illnesses. A meeting was held with Provincial Procurement and Public Sector Health Unions, leading to the resumption of weekly PPE availability reports. During this meeting, it was announced that two new PPE warehouses were being established—one on the West Coast and another on the Avalon.

By May 2024, the RNU confirmed that PPE supplies remained strong despite the rise in respiratory illnesses within the community. However, the mask mandate for NLHS was lifted, leading to a reduction in PPE usage. The RNU continues to encourage its members to conduct Point of Care Risk Assessments (PCRA) to assess the necessary PPE for their specific situations.

In September 2024, the RNU continued to receive regular updates from Provincial Procurement, with no issues reported in PPE supply. The organization maintains a strong emphasis on the importance of conducting PCRAs to ensure members are properly protected in their work environments. With a renewed rise in respiratory illness and increased admissions, NLHS has since reinstated its masking policy throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Resolution #7 Workplace Violence Working Group

WHEREAS addressing workplace violence has been an objective of the RNU for many years; and

WHEREAS while the RNU has had some successes in violence prevention, the incidence of workplace violence continues to increase; and

WHEREAS the RNU was successful in negotiating language to bring together stakeholders to increase awareness and action and that the violence prevention forum was held January 2020; and

WHEREAS participants in the forum supported the need for an action plan to make positive

change; and

WHEREAS the RNU members and health care workers face staggering and rising rates of workplace violence; and

WHEREAS the RNU'S Strategic Direction 1 Goal 3 states that RNU enhance the work lives of our members and advocate for their physical and psychological safety; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU lobby for a provincial working group on workplace violence made up of health care personnel and other stakeholders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to lobby, with the support of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL), for the creation of a Health Sector Safety Council under the umbrella of Workplace NL with an initial mandate of workplace violence.

Resolution #7 Update

The RNU is actively engaging with Workplace NL (WPNL), Newfoundland & Labrador Health Services (NLHS), and the Newfoundland & Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL) to establish a Health Sector Safety Council, with a primary focus on addressing workplace violence and injury prevention. A meeting scheduled for December will further assess the potential impact of this council, as healthcare—and nursing in particular—continues to experience the highest rates of workplace violence and injuries in the province. Currently, a RN files a claim with WPNL every other day, underscoring the urgent need for enhanced safety measures.

The RNU remains a staunch advocate for safe working conditions, overtime reduction, and the elimination of mandated overtime. Recently, the RNU's persistent efforts led to the introduction of 24/7 security coverage for the HVGB Lab Health Centre, St. Anthony CCMH, and Lab West Emergency Departments. The union continues to raise awareness in the media on the critical issues of violence and workplace injuries in healthcare.

In March 2024, the RNU representatives, along with partners from NLFL, NAPE, and AAHP, met with WPNL to discuss the Health Sector Safety Council, which remains a top priority. RNU is also advocating for the establishment of an independent oversight body to drive initiatives for preventing workplace violence and injuries.

Additionally, the RNU has collabourated with NLHS Protection Services, which conducted a workplace violence survey among NLHS employees. This team is actively conducting site risk assessments, establishing security protocols, and implementing training programs to manage aggressive behavior. Currently, 22 NLHS sites have security measures in place, with the Labrador Zone being the latest addition.

September 2024 saw significant progress as RNU's Executive Director was appointed Employee Representative on Workplace NL's Board of Directors, providing RNU with greater influence over workplace safety and injury prevention measures. RNU's President was named Chair of the

Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Council, enabling the RNU to shape provincial safety policies directly. Additionally, the Premier's endorsement of the Health Sector Safety Council reinforced governmental commitment to strengthening workplace safety in healthcare.

The RNU's participation in Workplace NL's Stakeholder Forum ensures that the perspectives of Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners are integral to discussions on workplace safety and compensation. The Provincial President has also advocated for enhanced recognition and management of chronic workplace stress. The RNU successfully secured 24/7 mental health support for members and is negotiating standardized mental health and critical incident debriefing protocols across NLHS to ensure all healthcare workers in the province have equitable access to essential support services.

Resolution #8 - Professional Practice Process

WHEREAS the RNU members continue to feel that their work environment is deteriorating due to low staffing levels, working conditions, heavy workload, COVID-19, poor management practices, and low morale; and

WHEREAS staffing challenges in Newfoundland and Labrador have hit a critical point; and

WHEREAS inadequate staffing and shortages have compromised patient care, resulting in bed closures, extensive waits in ER, cancelled surgeries, long delays to receive care; and

WHEREAS the RNU has many sites with inactive Professional Practice Committees; and

WHEREAS the RNU's Strategic Direction 1 Goal 1 in our Strategic Plan states that the RNU strengthen the professional practice process to make it a more effective advocacy tool; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU improve employers' and members' understanding, accountability and participation in the professional practice process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU negotiate collective agreement language to strengthen accountability and adherence to the professional practice process and a commitment to implement a joint education session on professional practices to all managers and members of the RNU; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU work with employers to develop a standard Professional Practice Form that is consistent across all Employers.

Resolution #8 Update

In June 2023, the RNU encountered challenges in securing an independent assessment process during negotiations. In response, the RNU began actively encouraging volunteers and members of the Professional Practice Committee (PPC) to fully utilize the provisions in the current collective agreement, including extending formal invitations to the Chief Nurse to participate in

PPC meetings.

The current Collective Agreement includes a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) requiring the establishment of a joint committee within 180 days to develop educational sessions on professional practice. This education is to be delivered annually to the RNU volunteers, members, managers, and Human Resource representatives.

A standardized online form will also be introduced to facilitate data collection and track submission volumes. Although the rollout of this electronic form has been delayed due to the implementation of EPIC, the RNU expects an update on its progress this fall.

The RNU leadership has engaged in transition discussions with Newfoundland & Labrador Health Services (NLHS) and the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) on the status of professional practice committees, the electronic form, and the establishment of a provincial reporting structure. The RNU expressed concern regarding the delay in the development of the form and recommended that NLHS consider adopting an existing electronic form currently used on the Labrador-Grenfell Zone (LGZ) intranet.

To prepare both managers and staff for the professional practice processes ahead of the EPIC rollout, joint educational sessions will ensure all parties are well-informed and aligned. This proactive measure aims to mitigate disruptions and maintain a strong focus on professional practice, regardless of technical delays.

The digital professional practice form will remain a standing item on the Senior Joint Quality Work Life Committee's agenda, supporting continuous oversight and systematic review of professional practice issues.

Additionally, the commitment to provide managers with comprehensive training on professional practices will equip leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively support these processes. Collectively, these initiatives are designed to foster a more structured and accountable framework for professional practice, ultimately benefiting both healthcare staff and patient care.

Resolution #9 - Social Media Strategy

WHEREAS the RNU's Strategic Direction 2 states that the RNU is committed to strategies that strengthen communication channels throughout the organization; and

WHEREAS the RNU is committed to meeting the needs of our members and staff in an increasingly digital and data-driven world; and

WHEREAS the RNU's members and staff are our strength, and it is important to engage our membership and staff at all levels; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU measure the effectiveness of communication efforts and assess

engagement and communication needs of all internal audiences; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU develop and implement a communications and engagement plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU create a social media strategy to strengthen our ability to reach audiences on this platform.

Resolution #9 Update

Inner Strength Communication was retained to strengthen the internal communications and employee engagement strategies for the RNU. A comprehensive report was completed in February 2023, resulting in the development and approval of an internal communications plan by the Board of Directors. Efforts to further refine this strategy continue with the Communications and Research & Education team, and the RNU staff holding follow-up meetings to gather additional insights post-audit. A staff retreat in January 2024 provided a forum for discussing these initiatives, yielding positive feedback.

The 2024 annual membership survey assessed the effectiveness of the RNU's communications initiatives. Results from a recent communications pulse check indicated that members prefer receiving updates via email (87%), social media (55%), and the myRNU platform (48%). Members also shared their top communication priorities for the coming year, including "RNU advocacy updates" (80%), "Timelines for CA incentives" (79%), "NLHS transition updates" (50%), and "General education on labour relations concepts" (48%).

The President's Tour began in August 2024, with initial stops in Labrador, the Northern Peninsula, and Southwest Coast. The RNU intends to extend the tour into the new year, prioritizing visits to sites that have not been engaged in recent years.

The next stage of the Internal Communications & Engagement (ICE) strategy will focus on optimizing the volunteer structure, having already implemented all other recommendations. Collaborating with the People & Culture Committee, the communications, research and education teams developed a volunteer survey aimed at evaluating the RNU's resource use to support members both proactively and reactively. This survey is pivotal in ensuring that resources, support systems, and processes are effectively meeting members' needs. It will be distributed to all volunteers, and Mark Aylward, Chair of the People & Culture Committee, presented the survey information to Branch Presidents at the Council of Presidents meeting in September 2024.

Upon completion and analysis of the survey data, the RNU will consider necessary adjustments, potentially through focus groups to further explore responses. This ongoing work is integral to enhancing support for the RNU's membership.

Resolution #10 - Recruitment, Retention, and Enhancing Nursing Profession

WHEREAS Canada is facing a critical nursing shortage and there is a global human health resource crisis; and

WHEREAS the RNU members are faced with dramatic increases in overtime and workloads, made worse by the shortage of RNs and increased vacancies; and

WHEREAS RNs are working up to 24-hour shifts and have experienced very high patient- and resident-to-staff ratios; and

WHEREAS research shows an increase in the number of RNs and NPs who are physically and mentally exhausted, many of whom are unable to get time off; and

WHEREAS eighty-six percent of the RNU members report their work environment has gotten worse in the last year due to low staffing levels, deteriorating working conditions, heavy workloads, COVID-19, poor management practices, and low morale; and

WHEREAS RNs feel they can no longer cope with their current working conditions and high numbers are leaving their positions, with many leaving the profession altogether; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the RNU continue to push governments at all levels for a Health Human Resource Plan and recruitment strategy to address recruitment and retention of RNs, NPs and other health care professionals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to work with the Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions and other health organizations, such as the Canadian Health Workforce Network, for a federal health workforce agency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU play an active role in the planning and implementation of initiatives to create healthier workplaces and improve staffing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU continue to highlight the realities our members face and how the current working conditions compromise patient care, by seizing strategic opportunities to be prominent and assertive in public conversation through media opportunities and campaigns; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RNU bargain for Collective Agreement language focusing on recruitment and retention and enhancing the work lives of members.

Resolution #10 Update

The RNU successfully negotiated new Collective Agreement language aimed at enhancing retention and recruitment efforts. This includes provisions for a permanent full-time bonus, years of service premiums, mentorship and preceptorship premiums, step adjustments across

pay grids, a separate classification and pay grid for Nurse Practitioners (NPs), self-scheduling options, and the implementation of a mentorship pilot program. Additionally, joint educational initiatives on the Professional Practice process will be offered to members, managers, and Human Resources personnel.

The RNU is actively engaged in discussions with Newfoundland & Labrador Health Services (NLHS) and government officials regarding a Transition Agreement for the amalgamation of former Health Authorities into NLHS. Key topics of discussion include establishing a professional practice reporting structure and creating a combined seniority list for the RNU members.

The RNU leadership regularly meets with officials from NLHS, the Department of Health and Community Services (HCS), and the Premier to address pressing concerns related to the nursing shortage and workplace conditions. The Union has been outspoken about the financial implications of employing Private Agency Nurses, advocating for investments in our members instead. NLHS has announced a plan to reduce the use of Private Agency Nurses by 15%, with the goal of returning to pre-pandemic staffing levels by 2026. The Auditor General has initiated an investigation into Private Agency contracts.

In pursuit of better working conditions for the RNU members and improved access to care for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, the RNU is implementing several initiatives. These include childcare support for healthcare workers, self-scheduling options for the RNU members, the expansion of the RNU Travel Locum program, workforce research, enhanced mental health supports, mentorship programs, financial assistance for BScN and NP students, financial incentives for nurses in Long-Term Care and NPs in Family Care Teams (FCTs), and advocating for an independent Health Sector Safety Council to address rising violence and workplace injuries in the healthcare sector. The RNU is also focused on providing support and enhanced orientation programs for Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs).

The RNU has collabourated with NLHS, the Treasury Board, and HCS on a joint job description submission for NPs, establishing a private agreement on experience credits, exploring alternate scheduling models, developing NP-led clinics, and conducting an NP survey to inform recommendations for work arrangements.

Furthermore, the RNU continues to work closely with the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU), which serves as a central hub for research and advocacy on national nursing and public health issues, including the health human resources crisis. The CFNU has released the research paper “Safe Hours Save Lives”, examining safe working hours for nurses. They have conducted a study tour focused on nurse-patient ratios in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. Nova Scotia and British Columbia have successfully negotiated nurse-patient ratios over the past year. This fall, the CFNU partnered with the office of the Federal Chief Nurse to host a Nurse-Patient Ratio Summit, in which the RNU is participating, along with representatives from NLHS, the Department of Health & Community Services, and the Provincial Chief Nurse. Both the RNU’s President, Yvette Coffey and CFNU President, Linda Silas, have communicated with Premier Furey, advocating for initiatives to enhance the recruitment and retention of RNs and NPs, including legislation on safe hours of continuous work, health human resource strategies, the

elimination of Private Agency Nurses, and the establishment of nurse-patient ratios.

Yvette Coffey, President of the RNU also participated in federal consultations on Long-Term Care, coinciding with the province's review of Long-Term Care and Personal Care Homes, with a report expected to be released this fall.

Additionally, President Coffey attended a Nurses Retention Forum with the Federal Chief Nurse, Dr. Chapman, representing the CFNU. A Federal Nursing Retention Toolkit, containing actionable initiatives for Canadian nursing employers and organizations to enhance the working conditions of nurses, has been finalized.

The RNU negotiated the establishment of a Provincial Nursing Network, which includes representatives from all regulated nursing professions within the publicly funded healthcare system. The Federal Nursing Retention Toolkit serves as a foundational framework for its work.

The RNU President and Executive Director have collabourated with the Department of Health & Community Services to finalize the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Core Staffing Review, which was negotiated in 2019. All parties have recognized the importance of this review in ensuring adequate nursing resources across all healthcare sectors in Newfoundland and Labrador. The review, originally focused on four sites, has been expanded and is currently in the second phase of a two-pronged approach.

The Labrador Grenfell Zone (LGZ) Travel Locum program continues in Labrador, extended to January 31, 2025, while evaluations are ongoing. Initial discussions with NLHS have begun regarding staffing initiatives for rural, remote, and hard-to-recruit areas throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, including the expansion of the Travel Locum program, fly-in/fly-out options, and alternative scheduling and work arrangements.

The RNU has consistently advocated for a comprehensive Health Human Resource Strategy. President Yvette Coffey has maintained a visible presence in media outlets both provincially and nationally, promoting retention and recruitment strategies that aim to improve workplace conditions across all healthcare sectors. The government of Newfoundland and Labrador has established a dedicated department for the recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals, led by Dr. Megan Hayes as the Assistant Deputy Minister. RNU leadership meets regularly with this department to propose solutions and strategies.

While Newfoundland and Labrador has made some progress in recruiting RNs and NPs, there remain over 600 RN vacancies and 81 NP vacancies. The RNU has raised questions regarding NLHS's recruitment statistics in both meetings and the media, highlighting discrepancies in the reported numbers, particularly in the Labrador Grenfell Zone, where figures have been inflated due to the Travel Locum program, and noting that historical practices have not included all vacancies in external postings.

The RNU continues to advocate for effective retention strategies and bring forth solutions to enhance the work lives of its members and improve health outcomes for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES' REPORT

Ross Tansley

Introduction

As the Director of Corporate Services, it is with great pride that I provide you with an overview of the achievements, and the challenges we've navigated over the past year. This report offers a comprehensive overview of the initiatives we've undertaken, the strategic goals we've advanced, and key developments accomplished by the RNU team.

Our team has remained focused on driving operational efficiency, fostering a culture of accountability, and ensuring that our services continue to meet the evolving needs of the organization. While we have encountered and addressed various challenges, we have emerged stronger, more agile, and better equipped to support the broader goals of the organization.

Human Resources: Our Greatest Asset

The past two years has seen a transformation in our human resources landscape. RNU's organizational review provided great insight to where change was required, creating a culture we are proud of to showcase to our membership. Staff turnover, a natural part of changing the organizations culture, has created valuable opportunities for growth and collaboration. This has provided an opportunity to introduce new perspectives and refine our internal processes for greater effectiveness

A key initiative was the recruitment of additional administrative staff. With these new members of the team in place, we seized the opportunity to streamline and update several outdated procedures that had previously slowed down our workflow. The modernization of these processes has made us more agile, and responsive to the needs of our members.

While turnover presented risks in terms of institutional knowledge and stability, it has

provided an opportunity to introduce new ideas and perspectives on cross training and collaboration amongst the team. We have worked hard to ensure disruption is minimized and we continue to meet the needs of our members with minimal impact on services.

The realignment of our administrative team has led to several cost-saving initiatives. We have identified and implemented synergies within and across functional groups, consolidating roles and eliminating redundant tasks that previously created inefficiencies. This has allowed us to streamline operations and reduce overhead costs.

Financial Management: Focus on Members' Money

As part of our culture shift, we have adopted a new approach to spending to enhance financial responsibility; how we spend, invest, and build a financial mindset that shapes our future.

In the past year, there has been a strong emphasis on financial management and accountability. I firmly believe our members money must be used wisely to achieve the union's vision. The results from our audit demonstrate that we have improved our financial position, giving no indication of inability to meet our short term and long-term liabilities. We have a healthy balance sheet,

and our cash flows continue to improve. While the past two years have impacted our surplus, we are moving in the right direction, by balancing our 2024-2025 budget to align with our strategic goals.

The 2024-25 budget has been crafted to not only meet but surpass our Key Performance Indicators, particularly the target of maintaining operating expenses at 30% or less of total expenses. This alignment with our strategic goals is essential, as it ensures we achieve our objectives while also enabling us to invest in future growth opportunities and exceed our performance expectations.

We have successfully balanced a budget that includes funding for one of our largest expenses—the Biennial Convention. In previous years, balancing the budget during a convention year has been particularly challenging due to the additional costs associated with hosting large-scale events and activities.

Through a combination of cost-cutting measures and careful planning, we have been able to create a budget that not only supports our operational needs but also ensures we have resources allocated for important future initiatives.

Every line item in our 2024-2025 budget has been scrutinized and is reviewed regularly. Any expense, no matter how small, is reviewed to ensure it offers value for members. Reevaluating recurring costs, such as subscriptions that are easy to overlook are scrutinized to ensure they provide value for money. Strong negotiation and renegotiation with our vendors (which make up a significant portion of our administrative costs) have been reduced, saving thousands per year. This includes recruiting top talent and providing tools that can reduce costs in the long term.

As well, we are investing our surplus funds more strategically as per RNU policies.

These initiatives align with our commitment to ensuring that every dollar spent is in the best interest of our members. Financial stewardship is a core value, and each decision regarding expenditures is made with careful consideration of the impact on our members' dues and overall financial health of the RNU.

Looking Ahead

We will be continuing the work we have started, particularly in human resources and financial management. Key priorities include:

Strengthening our Team: With additional administrative team in place, we will promote

professional development and ensure that we are equipped to handle both the challenges and exploit opportunities as they arise.

Efficiency and Innovation: We will continue to invest in process improvements and seek out further opportunities for cost savings without sacrificing service quality. This includes expanding the use of technology to increase productivity and enhance synergies across all groups within our office.

Financial Health and Sustainability: We will continue to prioritize financial responsibility, ensuring every dollar is accountable, justified, and aligned with our strategic goals. With the balanced budget for 2024-2025, we are well-positioned to sustain the union's financial future.

Conclusion

The past year has been one of significant change and positive transformation. Despite challenges, we have emerged with a stronger and more efficient administrative team, better financial management practices, and a renewed commitment to serving our members.

We remain committed to achieving excellence in all areas of corporate services, always keeping the best interests of our members at the forefront of every decision.

Thank you for your trust and allowing me to be part of such an amazing organization.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS' REPORT

Jonathan Hamel

Introduction

The Communications and Research & Education team at the Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland & Labrador (RNU) plays a vital role in advancing our mission to support, protect, and champion our members. This year, we've focused on enhancing transparency, driving impactful public and government engagement, and ensuring our members and volunteers are well-informed. By aligning our initiatives with RNU's strategic goals, the team has worked to foster a stronger, more connected union community.

Organizational Review and Strategic Transformation

In 2022, RNU initiated a thorough organizational review with Cullwick and Associates to strengthen our leadership, strategic alignment, and engagement with staff. Together with an internal communication and engagement audit, this review examined our structure, management practices, resource distribution, and workload capacities, producing targeted recommendations for a more responsive and effective model.

By 2024, RNU had fully implemented these recommendations, meeting every timeline and addressing each goal. This transformation presented some challenges, as clearer responsibilities and defined roles prompted transitions in both the Digital Communications Coordinator and Research and Education Specialist positions.

With these changes, RNU's structure now offers greater transparency and accountability, creating a healthier, more supportive environment for our team. This progress strengthens our capacity to serve and advocate for our members and reinforces RNU's commitment to being an employer of choice within the healthcare sector.

Team Highlights

This has been a year of transformation and renewal for RNU's Communications and Research & Education team. Following the recommendations from our 2022 organizational review and communication audit, we have restructured our team to enhance accountability, clarify roles, and improve our strategic impact across public relations, member education, research, and government relations. The Research and Education Specialist was moved from being a standalone position to becoming a part of a team. This realignment is creating synergies that will benefit our membership through improved education, resources, supportive research, and improved engagement.

New Team Members

In September, we were pleased to welcome Dan Williams as our new Digital Communications Coordinator. Dan brings a wealth of experience in digital content creation, strategic communications, and social media management. With a background in marketing and communications, he has led digital campaigns, crafted engaging content, and built online communities across various platforms. Dan is passionate about storytelling and leveraging digital tools to connect with and engage RNU's members and the broader community. Outside of work, he explores creative photography and keeps pace with the latest trends in digital media. We're excited to see the innovative contributions Dan will bring to our digital presence.

In October, we conducted a search for a new Research and Education Specialist, attracting a strong pool of candidates. We extended an offer to Ashley Hunt, a Registered Nurse with a rich background in frontline nursing, nursing education, and research. Ashley began her career at the Dr. Walter Templeman Health Centre on Bell Island, later moving to pediatrics at the Janeway, and then into Cardiac and Critical Care at the Health Sciences Centre. With a passion for education and research, she spent a year as a Clinical Instructor with the Centre for Nursing Studies and currently serves as a Registered Research Nurse Coordinator at the HSC. Ashley's experience and dedication to advancing nursing knowledge and skills will be invaluable as she joins us on December 2, 2024.

With these new team members on board, we look forward to strengthening, refreshing, and reenergizing our communications, education, research, and government relations work. This expanded capacity will allow us to better support our members, amplify their voices, and advance RNU's mission with renewed focus and effectiveness.

Engagement and Communication Audit

In 2022, RNU embarked on an extensive Engagement and Communication Audit, facilitated by Inner Strength Communications, to assess and enhance our internal communications and engagement strategies. This audit was a significant undertaking, aimed at creating a work environment that values transparency, accountability, and active support for our staff, members, and volunteers.

Phase One: Staff Engagement Initiatives

Building on the audit's recommendations,

RNU has implemented several initiatives to strengthen engagement and cultivate a positive work culture:

- **Internal Social Committee:** A new internal social committee now plans regular activities to celebrate staff milestones and foster a sense of community within the organization.
- **Annual Staff Retreat:** To encourage team building and connection in a relaxed environment, RNU introduced an annual staff retreat. The first retreat, held in January 2024 at The Wilds at Salmonier, was met with enthusiastic feedback, affirming its value in creating a positive and productive workplace. Planning is currently underway for our 2025 retreat, scheduled for February.
- **Regular Staff Updates and Meetings:** Staff receive ongoing updates on key initiatives, including media coverage of union initiatives, government relations progress, and solutions being advanced for members and the public healthcare system. These updates, shared during regular staff meetings and through regular email correspondence to the RNU staff email distribution group, ensure transparency and keep all staff informed on the union's initiatives.

Phase Two: Member and Volunteer Engagement

This past summer, RNU launched the second phase of the audit implementation, focusing on challenges identified by our members and volunteers. Collaborating with the People & Culture Committee of the Board of Directors, we created a survey to gather insights from our volunteers and members. Developed by the Communications and Research & Education team, this survey aims to identify challenges, opportunities, and successes within our current volunteer structure. The findings from this survey will guide our efforts to address any gaps, improve services, and strengthen support for members and volunteers, underscoring RNU's commitment to delivering top-notch, quality service to our community.

Advocacy Highlights

RNU's advocacy efforts this year have focused on championing our members' interests, fostering productive government relations, and reinforcing the value of a strong, publicly funded healthcare system. Below are key highlights from our recent initiatives:

- **“Beyond Broken” Rally:** Held during our 2022 Biennial Convention, the “Beyond Broken” rally brought attention to the critical state of the healthcare system and RNU’s advocacy for change. This rally also received an IABC Pinnacle Award, acknowledging its strong message and impact.
- **Collective Agreement Negotiations – “Hung Out to Dry” Campaign:** During negotiations for our last collective agreement, RNU launched the impactful “Hung Out to Dry” mini-campaign, successfully applying public pressure on the government. Recognized with an IABC Pinnacle Award, this campaign underscored the need for fair treatment of nurses.
- **Highlighting the Role of NPs – “The NP Difference” Campaign:** In fall 2023, RNU ran “The NP Difference,” a short, animated campaign emphasizing the essential role of nurse practitioners. This initiative educated the public and policymakers on NPs’ specialized contributions to healthcare.
- **Raising Public Awareness of Private Nursing Agency Reliance:** RNU cooperated with The Globe and Mail for an investigative report on the government’s heavy reliance on private nursing agencies. This report exposed the significant taxpayer expense—over $120 million—and highlighted how this practice affects

workplace morale and nurse retention. RNU's advocacy has driven commitments from the government to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, the use of private nursing agencies. Additionally, RNU demonstrated the effectiveness of its Travel Locum Pilot, a sustainable alternative for primacy healthcare access in rural and remote areas, which is now yielding promising results.

- **Ongoing Public Awareness – Media Engagements:** Yvette Coffey, RNU President, has regularly appeared on local radio stations and TV news broadcasts locally and nationally to discuss the pressing issues facing the nursing profession, advocating for sustainable solutions to improve healthcare delivery, retention, and work conditions for nurses.
- **Celebrating Nursing Expertise – "I am a Nurse" Campaign:** During our Biennial Convention, the "I am a Nurse" social media campaign was launched to showcase our members' skills, training, and experiences, highlighting the value nurses bring to publicly funded, publicly delivered healthcare in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- **Union Values and Collective Strength – "Stronger Together" Video Resource:** RNU's "Stronger Together: One Voice for Nursing - One Union for All" video reinforces the essential role of union support and the impact of our members' daily work across the province.

These advocacy efforts showcase RNU's unwavering dedication to advancing the profession, strengthening public healthcare, and ensuring a sustainable future for nursing in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Update on myRNU and Forum Closure

This year, RNU undertook a review of our member engagement platforms, specifically the forum on myRNU. While the forum was initially created as a space for members to ask questions and engage with RNU staff and leadership, recent analysis revealed that its usage was low, with only 4% of our membership logging onto myRNU weekly. In contrast, our research identified email as the top information source, utilized by 76% of members.

Given these findings, it was determined that the forum was demanding considerable human resources with limited benefits to the broader membership. The Board of Directors made the decision to close the forum, allowing RNU staff to better allocate resources to projects that serve the entire membership.

Member FAQs on the Forum Closure

To help members transition smoothly, we provided an FAQ addressing common questions:

Why was the forum closed?

Research indicated that the vast majority of members preferred email for updates, with only a small percentage actively using the myRNU forum. This decision allows RNU staff to focus on initiatives that benefit all members.

Accessing Past Forum Content

While the forum is now closed to new posts,

members can still search and view previous questions and responses by using the search function on the forum page.

Alternative Channels for Questions

Members are encouraged to follow the established process for addressing workplace questions, beginning with their Shop Steward, then Branch Executive, and, if necessary, their LRO. Contact details for Regional Representatives and LROs are available on the RNU website.

Access to Other myRNU Resources

All other resources on myRNU remain accessible, including the Education Corner, Collective Agreement Interpretations, Policies, and more. We continue to provide updates through MailChimp, quarterly RNUpdates, InTouch, News, and our social media channels.

myRNU Resource Development

We are excited to bring renewed focus to enhancing our resources and advancing the development of accessible FAQs, Collective Agreement Interpretations, engaging education materials, and other valuable tools. These improvements are designed to provide an even better experience for our members.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, the Communications and Research & Education team will focus on enhancing engagement with our members, volunteers, and the public. To support this goal, we'll be reviewing our primary communications tools, including:

- **myRNU (Members-Only Website):** Evaluating usability, content relevance, and member engagement to ensure it serves as an effective hub for member resources.
- **InTouch (Quarterly Newsletter):** Assessing content, design, and distribution to enhance value and accessibility for members.
- **Education Resources:** Reviewing existing resources to ensure they are comprehensive, up-to-date, and aligned with the current needs of our members.

Additionally, we're evaluating the main RNU website to confirm it remains informative, relevant, and well-equipped to communicate essential information to our members, volunteers, and the general public. These initiatives will guide our efforts to strengthen engagement, improve access to resources, and streamline communications across all platforms.

Conclusion

This year has been a transformative one for RNU's Communications and Research & Education team, marked by strategic changes, strengthened advocacy efforts, and renewed focus on member and staff engagement. From the success of our targeted campaigns to our collaboration with government and media, we have effectively raised awareness of the challenges facing our members and the healthcare system, while advocating for sustainable solutions.

With a restructured team in place, we are well-positioned to continue this work in the coming year, enhancing our engagement methods, refining our communication tools, and building upon the foundational changes

we have implemented. Guided by the insights from the Engagement and Communication Audit, our commitment remains steadfast: to serve and support our members, elevate their voices, and advocate for a healthcare system that respects and values the contributions of nurses across Newfoundland and Labrador.

As we move forward, our focus on transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement will ensure that RNU remains a strong, responsive union dedicated to meeting the needs of our members and advancing the nursing profession for the future.

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