

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2024 2025

HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION  
NOVA SCOTIA



*Supporting you  
supporting others.*





# HEALTH ASSOCIATION NOVA SCOTIA

**Health Association Nova Scotia (HANS) is a not-for-profit, non-governmental, membership-based association with over 65 years' experience in delivering shared services, policy support, and expertise our members can count on.**

We don't just work for our members — we work with them. Together, we look for solutions to the challenges they face so they can achieve their goals. We carry out this commitment through three main pillars:

## EXPERTISE

We provide expertise on key health system issues through communication, collaboration, and representation.

## SERVICES

We deliver high-quality, high-value services that are responsive to the needs of our members and we support them to enhance the level and quality of services they provide while reducing their overall costs.

## SUPPORT

We support members to develop solutions to system challenges as well as to respond to legislative, regulatory, and policy developments through facilitation, collaboration, and a range of other activities, including research and policy analysis.

We are also a joint sponsor of the Nova Scotia Health Employees' Pension Plan (NSHEPP), which has assets of approximately \$13 billion.

igility, as a subsidiary of HANS, provides significant value-added services to members in partnership with government, as well as supports that are made available to members as additional services at not-for-profit rates:

These include:

- Provincial Wound Care Program
- Provincial Clinical Services Program
- Group Purchasing – both for government-funded supplies and individual organizations' purchasing needs
- Technical Services – such as medical equipment repair and inspections



# Serving over 130 health and health-related organizations, and nearly 200 Early Childhood Education organizations

We represent organizations from across the full continuum of care — all of them working in ways that support the social determinants of health. Our membership includes over **130 health and health-related organizations**, representing more than 200 facility/agency sites, and nearly **200 Early Childhood Education (ECE) organizations**.

They include:

- Nova Scotia Health and the IWK Health Centre
- **97%** of the Licensed Nursing Homes in Nova Scotia, plus some Residential Care Facilities
- **90%** of Home Care Agencies receiving Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care (DSLTC) funding
- **100%** of the province's Adult Residential Centres and Regional Rehabilitation Centres
- Other health-related organizations, such as regulatory colleges, health care educators, and foundations

**Let us take care of the paperwork while you take care of the rest.**

## Delivering member value

Through collaborative approaches with our members, government, and other strategic partners, we provide the following support and services.

### INCLUDED IN MEMBERSHIP FEES:

- Access to **strategic networks** and committees
- Quantitative and qualitative **research**
- Survey design and **data analysis**
- Support for **recruitment and retention** efforts
- Support for new and emerging **sector leaders**
- Support for **member forums** and committees
- Lunch & Learn **educational sessions**
- Access to preferred provider arrangements, (i.e. **preferred rates** for home/auto insurance, pharmacy loyalty cards)
- **Social media** pushes for your organization
- Ability for your staff and their families to apply for an **annual scholarship** (\$3,000)
- **Member pricing** for our Labour Relations conferences
- Tremendous savings on **group purchasing** options

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES AT NOT-FOR-PROFIT RATES:

- Group Benefit Plans
- Extended Administration for Benefits
- Nova Scotia Health Employees Pension (NSHEPP)
- Payroll Services
- Shared Financial Services
- Labour Relations
- HR Solutions
- Technical Services

# Leadership message

**As we look back on the past year, we're proud to share the 2024–2025 Annual Report with you. This report highlights the collaborative spirit, dedication, and shared purpose that have guided Health Association Nova Scotia throughout the year. It also reflects our continued growth, our important contributions to Nova Scotia's healthcare system, and our deep commitment to supporting our members.**



**Annette Elliot-Rose**  
Board Chair



**Catherine Butler**  
President/CEO

As we reflect on the past year, we are incredibly proud of all that we have accomplished together — with staff, members, and system partners. At the heart of our success is our dedicated team — professionals who are deeply committed to making a meaningful difference in the communities we serve. Their integrity, innovation, and compassion continue to shape the future of health and social services in Nova Scotia and beyond. This report also stands as a testament to the strong focus we have on serving our members.

It was an honour to once again be recognized as one of Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada's Top Employers — a distinction we have now held for 11 consecutive years. This recognition is a testament to the exceptional people who make up HANS and igility. Their resilience and commitment to excellence have never been more evident than in this past year of significant transition and opportunity.

Throughout 2023-2024 acute care Labour Relations, Clinical Engineering, and Compensation Analysis transitioned out of HANS to a different model. In response, we leaned into change and embraced reinvention, collaboration, and growth. From April to June 2024, our teams worked tirelessly — not just to navigate the transition but to seize new opportunities to serve our members. We began implementing over 20 new or expanded projects through the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care, totaling nearly \$45 million in value. These projects — aligned with identified needs of our members — are a reflection of both our strong partnerships and our shared commitment to impact. We also proudly welcomed nearly 200 Early Childhood Education organizations as new active members of HANS.

## Leadership message continued . . .

Through a new agreement with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, we began providing group benefits to early childhood educators and payroll services to those organizations who opted in. Group Benefits Solutions (GBS) played a key role in this effort, helping nearly 200 childcare centres and over 4,000 employees access benefits that will improve well-being, strengthen retention, and boost satisfaction in the sector. The scope and impact of this project have been truly extraordinary — a major highlight for the GBS team and our organization.

We also rebranded Clinical Engineering Services as Technical Services to better reflect the broader scope and future vision of the team. At the same time, we developed new business models to continue offering both Labour Relations and Technical Services in a way that supports our members and partners. These efforts were supported by internal transformation as well — with new organizational structures across HANS and igility to align with our evolving mandate.

Our Continuing Care Assistant program (CCA) also underwent a thoughtful transformation this year. From a reimagined curriculum to updated occupational standards and delivery models, the modernized program is well-positioned to meet the needs of today and tomorrow. Early feedback from learners and placement sites has been overwhelmingly positive, and we look forward to the long-term benefits this will bring to continuing care in our province.

Throughout the year, we also took time to celebrate the people who make all of this possible. From International Women's Day, where our incredible female leaders shared their stories, to staff appreciation events — including a delicious breakfast served by our CEO and senior leaders — we made space to honour and recognize one another.

Finally, we must highlight the continued success of our Wound Care team, whose efforts have helped lead a 20% reduction in pressure injuries since reporting began in 2019, despite a 17% increase in long-term care beds. This achievement reflects not only excellence in clinical practice, but the kind of outcomes that change lives.

As we look ahead, we do so with deep gratitude for our staff, our partners, and our members. You inspire us every day. Thank you for your trust, your collaboration, and your continued belief in our mission.

Warmly,

Annette Elliot-Rose, Catherine Butler

# Highlights of the year

## Significant accomplishments

- **20 new or expanded projects** with the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care (DSLTC) worth \$45,000,000
- Welcomed nearly **200 Early Childhood Organizations** for payroll and benefits services
- Wound Care – Supported a **20% reduction** in pressure injuries since 2019 while 17% more new beds were opened across Nova Scotia
- Recognition by Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada as a **top employer** for the 11th consecutive year

## Financial reports

All four financial funds were audited for the fiscal year and all four received an unqualified audit opinion for fiscal 2024/25.

- Association fund achieved a **surplus** position for the year of **\$562,000**, and the overall net assets remain fiscally healthy
- LTD trust fund ended the year in a **surplus** position (assets – liabilities) of **\$42.9 million**. LTD trustee board approved a cumulative retroactive economic cost-of-living adjustment for LTD claimants
- The Health and Other Benefits fund ended the year in a **surplus** position of **\$9.4 million**, and the total net asset position of the fund has improved to \$19.3 million
- The Waiver of Life Premium fund ended the year in a **surplus** position of **\$4.1 million**. Total net assets are financially healthy



## New opportunities

In 2024/25, we saw new opportunities emerge for HANS to grow and continue to serve our members in new ways. We have strengthened relationships with government, Nova Scotia Health (NSH), and IWK while launching new and expanded projects and programs to better support our goals and those of our members.

We also completed the difficult work of acute care services related to Labour Relations, Clinical Engineering, and Compensation Analysis being transitioned to the NSH and IWK.

# Supporting our Members

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS IN THE  
**HIRING OF OVER 111**  
NEW HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

[Page 6 >](#)

ADDED PAYROLL SERVICES FOR 90%, OR NEARLY  
**200 CHILD CARE CENTRES**  
COVERING 4,000 EMPLOYEES

[Page 8 >](#)



ADDED SEVEN NEW HEALTH SECTOR GROUPS  
**COVERING 2,400 MORE WORKERS**  
WITH OUR GROUP BENEFITS SOLUTIONS

[Page 14 >](#)

PROVIDED LONG-TERM DISABILITY SECURITY  
**TO OVER 30,500 EMPLOYEES**  
FROM OVER 300 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

[Page 16 >](#)

ACHIEVED A SIX-YEAR WOUND CARE MILESTONE OF  
**20% FEWER PRESSURE INJURIES**  
DESPITE 17% INCREASE IN LONG-TERM CARE BEDS

[Page 21 >](#)



THROUGH GROUP PURCHASING,  
HELPED MEMBERS SAVE TIME AND MONEY  
**MANAGING 187 CONTRACTS**  
AND OTHER SPECIALIZED PROCUREMENT

[Page 10 >](#)

LED MEMBERS' NEGOTIATIONS FOR  
**143 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS**  
ACROSS 7 DIFFERENT UNIONS

[Page 12 >](#)



# Supporting you with HR and Talent Solutions

**Our HR and Talent Strategy team provides tailored HR support to Continuing Care employers in the Long-Term Care and Home Care sectors.**

The HR and Talent Strategy team supported our members through a range of external, member-focused projects, including multiple executive searches. This year, we worked to expand these services, with increased focus on key HR areas such as:

- **Engagement**
- **Succession planning**
- **Talent planning**
- **Enhanced recruitment support**

Over the past 4 years, HANS has also supported members through the delivery of several Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care (DSLTC) funded programs, including the Recruitment and Retention Program, which provides domestic and international recruitment, immigration support, and funding administration.

In the 2024/2025 fiscal year, the domestic and international recruitment program supported the hiring of more than **111 new health professionals**, bringing the total number of new hires since inception to 467.

This year, the funding administration continued, with several initiatives being supported:

- The Continuing Care Innovation and Professional Development funds
- Programs offering incentives for:
  - » New graduate Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)
  - » CCA Student Salary Top-Up
  - » Registered Nurse (RN) Prescribing

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS IN THE  
**HIRING OF OVER 111**  
NEW HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS



**Other supports we offer members as additional services at not-for-profit rates:**

- Executive searches (senior level and management positions)
- Succession and talent development planning
- New hire setup/orientation programs
- Enhanced recruitment support
- Development and enhancement of core HR recruitment practices
- Peer HR mentorship and support
- Personnel HR file management
- Provide consultation and mentorship support with leaders on HR needs
- Employee engagement strategies (development and implementation of surveys, action planning)



## ***I sleep better having HANS' HR expertise just a call away.***

Managing the HR needs for our facilities is complex and, at times, challenging.

I feel confident knowing I have ready access to HANS' HR professionals at the other end of the phone.

They provide a level of expertise we can't afford to have in-house.

**Paula Joudrey**  
Human Resources Coordinator  
Mountain Lea Lodge



# Supporting you with Payroll Solutions

As part of the additional services at not-for-profit rates, our Payroll Solutions team provides shared services of payroll and finance for members.

## Shared Payroll Services

We continued to offer a **comprehensive, secure, and hands-on payroll solution** to our members. From new hire setup through to year-end reporting, our dedicated payroll team worked alongside member organizations to ensure accurate, compliant, and seamless payroll management.

We have a strategic partnership with Payworks that allows us to **offer shared payroll**, which includes the processing of payroll for the organization including:

- Time-approval integration
- Demographic changes
- Payroll year-end services
- Coordination of employee benefits administration with benefit providers

ADDED PAYROLL SERVICES FOR 90%, OR NEARLY  
**200 CHILD CARE CENTRES**  
COVERING 4,000 EMPLOYEES



## Shared Financial Services

We have designed **this service to free up members' resources and time**. Members still maintain responsibility for financial management, reporting, and oversight, but they have the ability to reallocate their valuable resources to better meet their needs.

The Health Association's Financial Services uses cloud-based software (Hubdoc, Xero, and ApprovalMax) that connect to make managing finances easier from start to finish. Included among the transactional accounting services provided are:

- Accounts payable
- Accounts receivable (including resident/client billing)
- Payroll and reporting

Members' financial teams have full access to the accounting system for purposes of reporting.





## ***Using HANS' Shared Payroll Services frees me up to do other things.***

Early childhood centres like ours are very busy working environments with lots of administrative demands. Having HANS look after the payroll and benefits for our group gives me more time in my day to focus on other tasks.

### **Carol Coolen**

Executive Assistant,  
Through the Years Early Learning Centre  
Hubbards, NS



# Supporting you through our Group Purchasing Program

We partner with national Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs) to help members achieve significant cost savings on a wide range of products and services.

## Government Partnerships and Program Extensions

We received renewed government funding for two key programs:

- **Wound Care – \$1 million**
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – \$700,000**

These programs help reduce procurement risk by ensuring product availability, faster turnaround, order volume control, and lower overall costs than site-level purchasing.

## Expanded Procurement Support

In 2024, we managed **187 contracts** covering items such as :

- Clinical supplies
- Support services
- Maintenance and repairs
- Capital equipment
- Furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E)
- Food and nutrition

We also provided procurement support for the IV Therapy Pilot Project (\$300,000), and the Home Care CCA Training Program, ensuring timely access to standardized supplies.

HANS GPO supports publicly funded and not-for-profit members by making purchasing easier, lowering costs, and keeping decision-making in their hands. Members have access to multiple contract categories, including:

- Clinical Supplies
- Capital Equipment
- Support Services
- Office and Facility Supplies

## Bed and Mattress Replacement Program

A five-year provincial partnership was launched to manage long-term care bed and mattress replacements, backed by \$14 million in funding. To date:

- Over **1,400 beds and mattresses** have been procured, far surpassing the previous average of 200 per year.
- The program is operating well under budget, giving DSLTC the flexibility to consider reallocating funds to other priorities and service expansion.

THROUGH GROUP PURCHASING,  
HELPED MEMBERS SAVE TIME AND MONEY  
**MANAGING 187 CONTRACTS**  
AND OTHER SPECIALIZED PROCUREMENT



## ***HANS' tech and purchasing support has made a big difference for CORE.***

Our programs help people with diverse abilities lead meaningful and inclusive lives. The Technical Services and Group Purchasing support we get from HANS helps us put more of our limited time and resources into our programming.

**Susan Hines-Kennedy**

CEO, CORE Support Services  
Waterville, NS



# Supporting you in Labour Relations

Our Labour Relations service has been providing labour law expertise to our members for decades.

## The Labour Relations team

Our team of lawyers represented employers and led the negotiations of collective agreements and essential services agreements for **143 collective agreements with seven different unions**.

The team also:

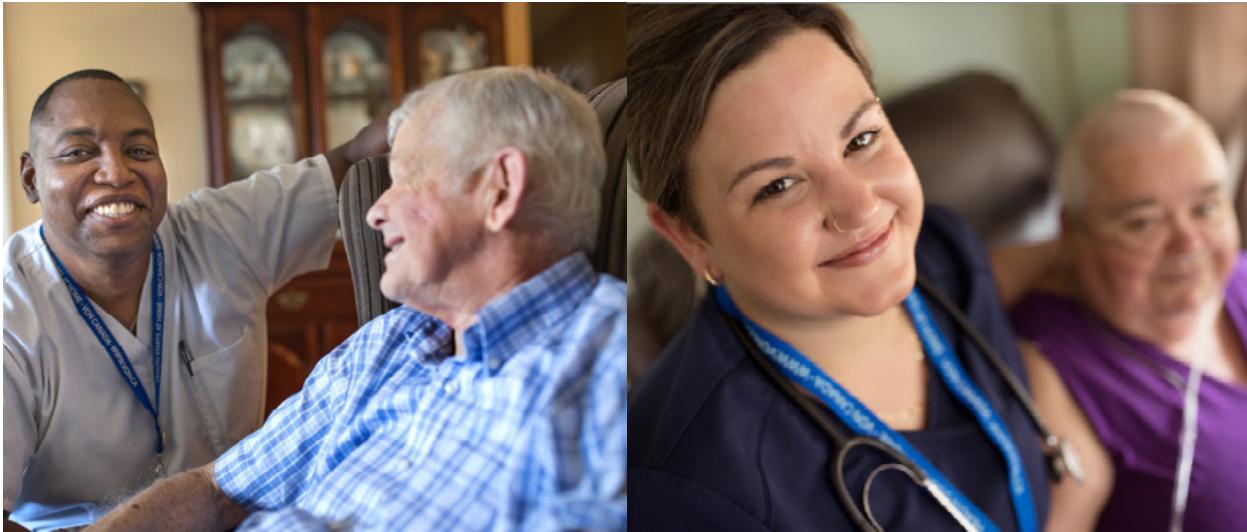
- **Shared** potentially impactful **legislative changes**.
- Coordinated and **led the Continuing Care Employers Group (CCEG)**, which is an information-sharing and strategic forum.
- **Tailored services** to address broad issues impacting multiple employers such as the impact of the Remedy on our Disability Support Program employers.
- Provided **educational support and capacity building** by presenting at three Regional Conferences in May and the Annual Conference in November. All four events were sold out and received strong positive feedback from members. Combined attendance across the regional and annual conferences reached 692 participants — an increase of 26%.
- Provided **coordination and connections across sectors** and with government (where appropriate) on labour matters.



**Other supports the Labour Relations team provides as additional services at not-for-profit rates:**

- Support and representation on behalf of the employer through arbitration and alternative dispute-resolution forums for grievance issue resolution and labour board issues that may arise in relation to the Trade Union Act or the Essential Health and Community Services Act or other relevant legislation
- Day-to-day labour law advice
- Labour law education / training for capacity building

LED MEMBERS' NEGOTIATIONS FOR  
**143 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS**  
ACROSS 7 DIFFERENT UNIONS



## ***The HANS' Labour Relations team understands VON's requirements.***

VON has a large workforce with unique needs and challenges.

Knowing I can access HANS' top-tier expertise and counsel any time I need it is a great comfort.

Their support is very valuable to us.

### **Colin Roop**

Director, Labour and Employee Relations  
VON, Halifax, NS



# Supporting you with Group Benefits Solutions

We are the largest, longest-standing provider of group benefits administration services in Nova Scotia's healthcare system, serving over 40,000 active employees and 11,000 retirees. We also serve the education and early childhood development sector.

HANS offers members a broad range of Employee Benefit Plans, including **Long-Term Disability** (including the early assistance and support program, *path*), **Group Life**, and **Extended Health and Dental**.

Optional benefits are also available to individual plan members — they are 100% employee paid and include accidental death and dismemberment, optional life, and critical illness.

## Growth and Opportunity

- Throughout 2024, Group Benefits Solutions worked collaboratively with clients and partners to enable nearly **200 childcare centres and 4,000 employees** to participate in HANS benefit plans.
- During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, we **welcomed seven new health sector groups** to our Group Benefits Solutions service. Our number of covered lives in this sector alone **increased by over 2,400**.

ADDED SEVEN NEW HEALTH SECTOR GROUPS  
**COVERING 2,400 MORE WORKERS**  
WITH OUR GROUP BENEFITS SOLUTIONS

Our team of experts in benefits administration deliver a comprehensive package of services to participating employers, such as:

- Full disability program management
- Plan design, contract management, claims oversight, and premium renewals (in cooperation with our governance partners)
- Enrollments, life event management, billing and reconciliation, and contact centre management
- Plan member communications and website
- Day-to-day support for benefit administrators at member sites

## Advantages to member organizations include:

- Excellent coverage as well as competitive and sustainable rates through economies of scale
- Reduced exposure to the legal and financial risks associated with the delivery of employee benefits through ongoing training
- Employer and plan member training and education sessions
- Access to preferred provider arrangements, (i.e. preferred rates for home/auto insurance, pharmacy loyalty cards)



## ***The HANS' Group Benefits people are always there for us.***

Nova Scotia Health functions in a rapidly changing environment. Relying on HANS to administer our Group Benefits programs brings us significant peace of mind. Their team of industry experts demonstrates professionalism and a strong commitment to quality and service, consistently prioritizing our best interests.

### **Joanne Levy**

Interim Director,  
Compensation and Benefits  
Nova Scotia Health



# Report from the Long-Term Disability Plan Trustees

**The Long-Term Disability Plan provides security to over 300 of the Association's member organizations from the Health and Early Learning and Child Care sectors. That means peace of mind to 30,506 employees and their families.**

**Plan members can be confident that if they are unable to work due to illness or injury and their LTD application is approved, they will receive a monthly benefit to help cover living expenses, along with access to programs that support a safe recovery and return to work.**

PROVIDED LONG-TERM DISABILITY SECURITY  
**TO OVER 30,500 EMPLOYEES**  
FROM OVER 300 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

## Highlights of LTD Plan and Trustee activities during fiscal year 2024/2025

- The Trustees rebranded the LTD Program as *Path2Health* in order to forge tighter links between LTD and our **path** early intervention program. If a disability does become an LTD claim, **path** involvement has positive impacts on claim durations and outcomes. The goal was also to remove the stigma around LTD so that claimants wouldn't feel it means they may never return to work again or recover their health.

- The Trustees recommended, and the HANS Board of Directors approved, that effective April 1, 2025, the LTD contribution rate remain unchanged. Both employees and employers will continue to contribute 1.95% of employee earnings.
- An ad hoc Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was granted to restore purchasing power from 2019 to 2024 for claimants who were disabled prior to August 2024. Each claimant was contacted individually and informed of any changes to their disability benefit.

## The **path** program

The **path** program experienced another busy year with an increase in participation and a strong return-to-work rate.

- Participation increased from 754 to 771
- **The participant return-to-work rate held at almost 70%.**
- Mental Health files continue as the top diagnosis, remaining high at 47.7%
- Survey results remain strong with an 86% overall satisfaction with the program
- The Trustees entered into a contract with Lifemark to continue as the **path** program service provider for the period February 2025 to February 2027, with an option to extend a further two years

# Technical Services

With many decades of experience, our Technical Services team has been a trusted partner in healthcare technology management across Nova Scotia, specializing in equipment inspections, preventive maintenance, and timely repairs for a wide range of medical and mobility equipment.

Our certified technicians deliver responsive, province-wide service, tailored to the needs of healthcare providers.

**We work with a broad range of organizations, including:**

- Acute care hospitals
- Long-term care facilities
- Physiotherapy, dental, and medical clinics
- University and research institutions
- Educational and correctional facilities

***There are preferred member rates to use Technical Services***

## Our key service areas

- **Clinical equipment**, such as defibrillators, patient monitors, infusion pumps, and dialysis machines
- **Mobility and care equipment**, including electric beds, stretchers, wheelchairs, and lift systems
- **Sterilization and support systems**, including sterilizers, blanket warmers, tubs, biosafety cabinets (BSCs), and UPS units
- **Environmental and safety checks**, including temperature and alarm quality assurance (QA) for refrigeration and lift testing
- **Administrative support**, including asset tracking, contract management, and assistance with equipment purchases and recall alerts



# Supporting our Member Forums

**HANS provides administrative, policy, and research support to member forums as needed. We also coordinate external presenters and share updates between the HANS committee structure and member groups to improve communication, information-sharing, and efficiency through coordinated efforts.**



The Continuing Care Council is composed of nominated members of Long Term Care Nova Scotia (LTCNS), the Home Care Network (HCN), and Diverse Abilities NS (DANS). Part of its mandate is to address cross-sectoral issues affecting the provision of continuing care and disability support services in Nova Scotia. In 2024, Council updated its Terms of Reference (TOR) to better reflect the purpose and functioning of Council.

In 2024/25, Council focused on four strategic projects:

**1. Strengthen connections**

The goal of the council is to work in a collaborative way with government to find solutions.

**2. Support the development of new generation sector leaders in Continuing Care**

The groundwork has been completed to identify ways to address the gap in leadership training for supervisors and managers, or those interested in advancing in their careers.

**3. Ensure cross-sectoral issues are brought forward via the committee structure**

The current issues being addressed at Council are: the Remedy, Recruitment and Retention, Succession Planning, and Occupational Health and Safety Requirements.

**4. Develop and implement a member engagement strategy**

Keep members informed and establishing a consistent feedback loop with members.



The Terms of Reference were revamped to increase the number of members to a total of 12 representatives. This change was made to ensure we have sufficient representation of different types of providers and geographic locations. It will also allow for more capacity to take on the numerous issues identified.

**LTCNS prioritized a number of issues, including:**

- Seven-day admissions
- Occupational Health and Safety resources
- Interfacility transfer of information
- Emergency planning
- Managing bad debt
- Establishing regular communications with DSLTC

## Supporting our Member Forums continued . . .



Over the last year, the new mission, vision, and strategic directions of HCN laid the groundwork for initiatives that continue to move the sector forward. This year, HCN has collaborated to provide support for the following within each of its strategic directions.

### **Continuous Improvement and Capacity Building**

- Agencies are now engaged with Accreditation Canada and have survey dates selected for 2026.
- Support was provided for the Safety Leadership Playbook (AWARE-NS) and the Better Safety, Better Care Campaign.
- Strategized with AWARE-NS on the high-risk work environment challenges experienced by some agencies within the sector.

### **Sector Efficiency**

- Agencies worked collaboratively with NSH and DSLTC on the revised Care Authorization Guidelines.
- Studies were conducted on how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used within the sector to improve efficiency in key areas like office functions and programming.

### **Innovation and Expertise**

- A second HCN Professional Development Day was held on May 15, 2025, and speakers from various organizations presented the latest research best practices and available programs.
- HCN participated in a Research and Community Practice information session at St. Mary's University (SMU).
- HCN also engaged with Build Nova Scotia to provide insight into the cellular telephone needs for home care service providers and employees.



The goal of DANS is to see that Nova Scotian communities are inclusive, and that persons with disabilities can live life to the fullest. In support of this vision, DANS members have dedicated significant effort this year to ensure that the major sector transformation launched in 2023 benefits everyone involved. As the Human Rights Remedy is implemented, DANS remains a strong advocate for a successful transition to community-based supports for the individuals they serve.

### **Highlights of the year**

- Participated in government consultations on the development of Disability Support Outreach teams.
- Engaged government officials regularly on the Remedy process as it affects Adult Residential Centres and Regional Rehabilitation Centres.
- Collaborated with other disability support program organizations on initiatives beneficial to the sector.

DANS member organizations are committed to working with the provincial government and other stakeholders to create a positive and inclusive environment in which persons with disabilities can thrive.

# Educational Programs and Services

**HANS provides educational programs and services that strengthen members' ability to support others.**



## CONTINUING CARE ASSISTANT

### Educational Programs

#### CCA Program Update

The Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) program is part of DSLTC and is administered by HANS. Program services included supporting all program deliveries, the Certification Exam, Recognizing Prior Learning (RPL) program, and the CCA Registry. In addition, the program also implements new ideas and initiatives on behalf of DSLTC that directly relate to the program — this year, it was the Challenge Exam Pilot.

Over the past year, the program has gone through a re-imagining and was modernized, transformed, and standardized to meet future needs. The revision included updating the CCA Occupational Standards of Practice and Competency Framework, as well as the CCA Curriculum and Delivery Standards. Early feedback from learners and placement sites has been positive.

#### College Deliveries

- **1264 Enrolled** (not including RPL)
  - » Up 7% over last year

#### CCA Exam Update

- **1469 Certified** for this fiscal year (includes traditional, Challenge Exam & RPL)
  - » Up 63% over last year

#### RPL Program Update

- **433 registrations** (either Phase 1 and/or Phase 2)
  - » 307 Certified for fiscal year
    - » Up 122% over last year

#### Challenge Exam Pilot

The program successfully piloted a CCA Challenge Exam opportunity which allowed individuals to write the CCA exam and complete Dementia: Understanding the Journey (DUTJ) and Pallium Canada's Palliative Care course for Personal Support Workers and Continuing Care Assistants (LEAP PSW) by June 30, 2025, to gain CCA Certification.

- **381 Certified** to date for the pilot

#### CCA Registry

- There were **9,206 members** on the CCA Registry between January 1 and March 31, 2025. Membership remains open all year, to encourage new or renewing members to activate their membership online.



#### Dementia: Understanding the Journey

The DUTJ course is part of the DUTJ Society and administered by HANS. This year, the Board contracted for the course to be reviewed and revised, with the aim of streamlining the delivery while updating diversity, equity, and inclusion components, infusing trauma-informed care, and continuing the strong focus on person-centred care.

- **2039 certificates** were issued by the DUTJ Board for this fiscal year
  - » Up 21% over last year

# Services

Each of the following services are DSLTC-funded programs offered through HANS.

## Recruitment and Retention Program

The HANS Recruitment and Retention Program is a provincially coordinated initiative that operates under the direction of DSLTC, who also provide funding. This program is a **key component of the province's strategy to strengthen the Continuing Care workforce** across Nova Scotia.

The program provides human resources and immigration support to employers in the Continuing Care sector, helping them to effectively recruit and retain qualified healthcare professionals. These services are designed to address both immediate staffing needs and long-term workforce sustainability.

In addition, the program is responsible for administering DSLTC-funded initiatives that focus on:

- **Innovative recruitment strategies** to attract new talent
- **Professional development** opportunities to enhance staff skills and retention
- **Workforce planning supports** to help organizations adapt to evolving care demands

The program plays a vital role in building a resilient, skilled, and stable Continuing Care workforce.

## Provincial Wound Care Program

The Wound Care Program is a referral-based service that delivers specialized, hands-on wound care directly at the bedside in the residents' homes. The services include comprehensive **wound assessments, debridement** (the removal of non-viable tissue), and the **management of complex wounds**. This approach ensures timely, evidence-informed care is provided within the community, reducing the need for hospital visits.

ACHIEVED A SIX-YEAR WOUND CARE MILESTONE OF  
**20% FEWER PRESSURE INJURIES**  
DESPITE 17% INCREASE IN LONG TERM CARE BEDS

In addition to clinical care, the program supports capacity building through ongoing education. This includes bedside teaching, regular webinars, and the facilitation of internal and external expert engagement to promote continuous learning and best practices across the province.

Key Highlights:

- Since the program started, our team has had **11,183 referrals** and follow-ups with individuals
- From 2019 to 2025, when reporting began, there has been a **20% decrease in pressure injuries**, despite a 17% increase in new LTC beds
- The program has grown to nine consultants including a Clinical Wound Specialist for the Indigenous community

## Clinical Practice Support Program (CPSP)

The CPSP develops and implements evidence-based standards and guidelines tailored to the unique needs of Continuing Care settings. This work supports the consistent delivery of high-quality, resident-centred care across the sector.

Current CPSP initiatives include support for the DSLTC Prototype, the integration of Registered Nurse Authorized Prescribers (RNAPs) in Continuing Care, the implementation of IV Therapy in LTC, the development of Communities of Practice, and the advancement of enhanced education for Internationally Educated Nurse Licensed Practical Nurses (IEN LPNs).

# Additional Funded Projects

Over the past year, HANS has actively managed short- and long-term projects that support our members and the healthcare sector at large. Additional projects included:

## **CCA Salary Top-Up Initiative**

Supports up to \$25,000 in salary coverage per student and strengthens employer HR systems

## **Long-Term Care Prototypes Project**

Pilots innovative care delivery models and includes funding disbursements to employers

## **LPN Incentives Program**

Provides strategic funding to support the hiring and retention of Licensed Practical Nurses

## **RN Prescribing Program**

Covers tuition and preceptorship costs to expand RN clinical authority

## **VR Safety Training Pilot**

Tests immersive training to improve frontline safety and behavioral de-escalation

## **CCA Program Transformation**

Modernizes, streamlines, and transforms CCA education and delivery

## **Home Care Accreditation Project**

Supports 12 non-accredited agencies in preparing for Accreditation Canada's Primer standards

## **Business Continuity Plan Procurement**

Funds emergency equipment and readiness tools for home care and support agencies

## **Young Adults in LTC Project**

Supports improved services and physical environments for younger adults in long-term care

## **CC Job Families Model Review and Renew**

Update the former Job Families Model and advance its development

## **Health Sciences Placement Network (HSPnet) Expansion**

In collaboration with Office of Healthcare Professional Recruitment, HANS has agreed to support the expansion of the use of HSPnet within the province to the Continuing Care sector

# Our 2024-2025 Board of Directors

The governance of the Health Association is vested in a competency-based group of volunteers who provide stewardship and strategic leadership, ensuring the Association fulfills its mandate in a manner reflecting our values. Included among these key governance responsibilities are strategic direction, enterprise risk management, quality and board effectiveness, and efficiency.

## **Annette Elliott Rose, Chair**

Independent Director

## **Kevin McNamara, Vice Chair**

Independent Director

## **Steven Gaetz, Treasurer**

Independent Director

## **Joyce d'Entremont, Past Chair**

Continuing Care Council

## **Harman Singh**

Diverse Abilities NS

## **Gavin Slade**

Long-Term Care

## **Jen Feron**

IWK Health Centre

## **George McPhail**

Nova Scotia Health

## **Kayla Smith**

Home Care Network

## **Maureen Brennan**

IWK Health Centre

## **Kerry Hobbs**

Home Care Network

## **Sasha Raz**

Independent Director in Training

## **Board Committees**

As set out in the Health Association's Bylaws, there are three standing committees of the Board.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Annette Elliott Rose  
Kevin McNamara  
Steven Gaetz  
Joyce d'Entremont, Past Chair

### **GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Annette Elliott Rose  
Kevin McNamara  
Harman Singh  
George McPhail

### **FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

Steven Gaetz  
Annette Elliott Rose  
Kevin McNamara  
Gavin Slade

# Financial Statements

The following are excerpts from our financial statements. An audit has been conducted for all four funds managed by Health Association Nova Scotia and in each case the auditor's report is unqualified. Full audited financial statements are available by visiting [www.healthassociation.ns.ca](http://www.healthassociation.ns.ca).

## ASSOCIATION FUND

Statement of Financial Position - March 31, 2025, with comparative figures for 2024.		2024	2025
	Assets	\$10,277,795	\$29,691,821
	Liabilities	\$5,434,770	\$24,251,342
	Net Assets	\$4,843,025	\$5,440,479

## LONG-TERM DISABILITY PLAN FUND

Statement of Financial Position - March 31, 2025, with comparative figures for March 31, 2024.  Funding Policy: In accordance with the Plan, members are required to contribute a certain percentage of insured salary, with employers matching the contributions of the members.		2024	2025
	Assets	260,589,672	\$315,750,110
	Liabilities	\$2,353,507	\$1,469,838
	Net Assets available for benefits	\$258,236,165	\$314,280,272
	Actual present value of accrued benefits	\$253,375,000	\$271,406,000
	Funding Surplus/Deficit	\$4,861,165	\$42,874,272

## HEALTH AND OTHER BENEFITS FUND

Statement of Financial Position - March 31, 2025, with comparative figures for 2024.		2024	2025
	Assets	\$37,103,825	\$49,318,118
	Liabilities	\$27,150,107	\$29,971,196
	Net Assets	\$9,953,718	\$19,346,922

## WAIVER OF LIFE PREMIUMS FUND

Statement of Net Assets Available for Benefits - March 31, 2025, with comparative figures for 2024.		2024	2025
	Assets	\$28,920,228	\$33,072,380
	Liabilities	\$227,916	\$302,761
	Net Assets available for benefits	\$28,692,312	\$32,769,619



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