

Our Voice



News from NSHA Mental Health and Addictions, Central Zone (Halifax area, Eastern Shore, and West Hants)

"I can see the light."

Submitted by Colleen Fraser on behalf of the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia

The Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia, in partnership with Paws Fur Thought, is pleased to announce a new match has been made through its PTSD Service Dog Matching Initiative for First Responders. Kevin Johnson, a former Halifax Police Officer who lives with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, has been successfully matched with Maggie, a specially trained Chocolate Lab (both pictured right).

While on duty in 2009, Cst. Johnson responded to a wildfire in the Herring Cove area. He helped rescue 8 people and several animals from homes impacted by the fire. As a result of this event, Kevin suffered permanent physical injuries and was diagnosed with severe PTSD. In the years following the fire, Kevin experienced "bunkering," avoiding socialization and public outings.

Last year, Kevin was identified as a suitable candidate for a PTSD Service Dog. In March 2016, Paws Fur Thought delivered Maggie to Kevin's home, where the two met for the first time and began their partnership.

"I was worried, but there turned out to be no adjustment period," Kevin says. "It was like Maggie had always been there. On that very first night at 3:30 in the morning, she woke me during a night terror. And that was a breathtaking experience to have her do that. It was emotional. Because since that first night, it's allowed me to have better sleep – something I haven't had since 2009." Kevin notes that one particularly difficult night, Maggie jumped on the bed and lay on top of him for three hours, allowing him to sleep peacefully. She'd been trained to provide this intervention behaviour: deep body pressure therapy.

Maggie began her training, like all dogs in the program, as a puppy while still with her mother at the breeder's home. As she grew, she worked on basic training with a volunteer puppy-raising family in the Valley. This rural environment turned out to be one of the contributing factors to her match with Kevin, as he lives on a farm.

Prior to advanced training, Maggie had to attain certain standards in basic manners, socialization and public access-specific training in order to be selected to move into advanced training. Her training followed Assistance Dog International's Minimum Standards for Public Access guidelines.

Following the training with her volunteer puppy-raising family, Maggie spent 3 and a half months living with trainer, Lisa Partridge, to receive advanced training specific to Kevin's needs. As a PTSD service dog, Maggie was trained to recognize Kevin's specific scent while experiencing night terrors, rouse him, and apply deep body pressure to help him settle back to sleep. Maggie has been trained to watch Kevin's back in public and performs many other tasks as well.

Maggie has fully adapted to her new life on the farm with Kevin. As a 'bird dog,' Labradors are naturally inclined to chase birds. "To see her walk through a group of chickens, geese, and ducks and act like they don't even exist is pretty incredible to watch," he says. Maggie has also bonded with the farm's barn cats.

"She makes me laugh and smile every day too. She's a character. When she's not in vest and basically being herself, she's just like a puppy. She





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"I can see the light." (continued from cover)

loves to play fetch and go for hikes."

Kevin has noticed a positive change in his ability to relax and socialize, and his family has seen it too. "They're incredibly thankful for the difference she's made in my life."

"If I had one thought to share with others, I'd say: PTSD is real. It's somewhere I never thought I'd be. Something I'd never experience. Anybody out there who is a first responder and even in the slightest is having an issue – I hope they speak up and they don't hide. I hope these people will get help, talk to somebody, and realize they are not alone. Because losing one first responder or one military veteran is way too many. And there have been way too many lost. And the difference Maggie has already made in my life - I can see the light."

LEARN MORE

Learn more about PTSD Service Dog Matching Program for First Responders at:

www.mentalhealthns.ca/ptsd-service-dogs

For a more indepth story, with photos and radio interview, go to:

www.mentalhealthns.ca/kevin-maggies-story.

INTERESTING VIDEO



Jean-Michel (J.M.) Blais is the Chief of Halifax Regional Police. Earlier in his career, he was a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for 25 years. In 2008, he was assigned to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti as Deputy Police Commissioner in charge of over 1,700 international police officers. Chief Blais was also dispatched to provide aid following the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti in 2010. He is a committed community member and has been decorated with medals by both the UN and the Government of Canada.

The following intro was provided online:

"Our Jean-Michel Blais describes the experiences that led him be diagnosed with PTSD and how the daily management of his condition has led him to be a better leader, which is helping to change the attitude and culture of his police force.

To learn more, go to:

<http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/Police-Mental-Health-from-self>



Quality Matters - Quality Team in Action: Acute Care

Submitted by the NSHA Mental Health and Addictions Quality Council, Central Zone

The Acute Care Quality Team includes representation from the following service areas: 6 Lane, 7 Lane, Mayflower, and more recently, Addictions Intensive Treatment Services (ITS).

The co-chairs of the Quality Team, **Donalda Edgar** and **Patsy Trahan**, provided an overview of the team's work at the March 24th meeting of the Mental Health and Addictions Quality Council. They reported that the year has been one of transition with the addition of Addictions ITS to the team. This change supports continued integration of Mental Health and Addictions Services and advancement in the treatment of concurrent disorders.

Some examples of initiatives underway are as follows:

1. **Chart Audit Process:** All quality teams are working towards the implementation of a regular chart audit process to ensure key documentation is present on the chart and Acute Care is no exception. The team plans to have this process up and running by the summer. This initiative is one of many quality assurance processes to ensure clients are receiving safe, appropriate care.
2. **Transitions of Care:** Improving continuity of care has been a priority area for the Quality Council, which has been put into practice through a series of inter-service collaboration initiatives. Acute Care has been focusing on improving their transitions of care with Recovery and Integration Services as well as Community Mental Health. In addition, the mental health acute care units have developed posi-

tions to facilitate transitions including a dedicated bed flow manager and two discharge specialists.

3. **Assessment Tool:** At present, there are various assessment tools that differ by clinical specialty (Psychiatry, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, etc.). This results in multiple forms and some duplication. The acute care quality team, in collaboration with the nurse educators and unit staff, is working towards developing one assessment tool to streamline the process.
4. **E-Discharge Implementation:** The e-Discharge application is an electronic discharge summary that has proven to improve the quality and timeliness of discharge summaries. This application is being used quite consistently by psychiatry on the acute care units. The quality team has been working towards having all disciplines document on the e-Discharge, which poses some challenges, but would simplify the amount and type of information sent to the receiving clinician.

For more information, please contact Laura Ankcorn, quality leader, at:

Laura.Ankcorn@nshealth.ca.

The Acute Care Quality Team members are: **Donalda Edgar** (co-chair), **Patsy Trahan** (co-chair), **Charlene Casey-Gomes**, **Donna Davis**, **Donna Methot**, **Jane Hughes**, **Jennifer Lee**, **Donna MacIntyre**, **Amy MacRae**, **Michael Nahirnak**, **Curt Peters**, **Mary Pyche**, and **Joseph Sadek**.

What's new at the Library?

Submitted by Lara Killian, librarian educator, Health Sciences Library (NSH)

The Health Sciences Library, located in the Hugh Bell Service Centre, now has several small puzzles available for clients and staff to piece together.

We have space available for puzzling, reading, enjoying the view, or using one of the Mental Health Foundation's iPads on our in-house WiFi. If you are looking for space to plan programming or to bring a client for some activities, stop by and chat with one of our staff. We'd be happy to help.

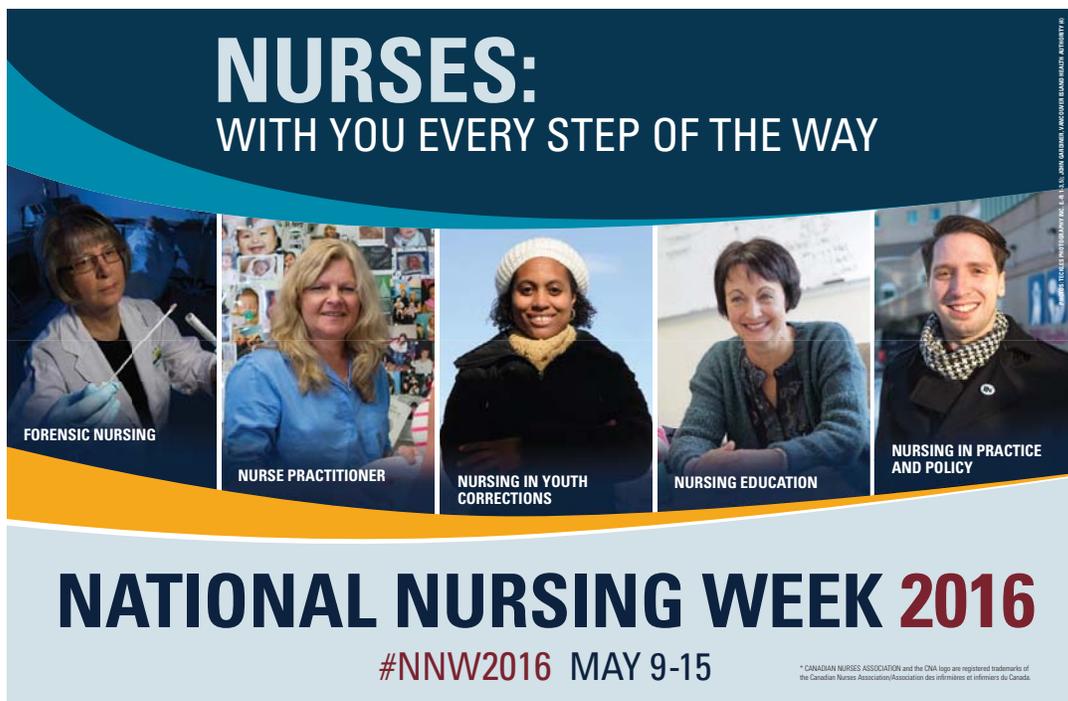
Thank you to Jessica MacDougall (staff) for donating the puzzles.





Nursing Week 2016

Submitted by the nurse educators



[f/cna.aiic](#) [t/canadanurses](#) [y/cnavideos](#)

cna-aiic.ca

This year's award recipient for the Janine Williams Award for Excellence in Mental Health and Addictions Nursing Practice is:

MAUREEN MORRISON
Bedford/Sackville Community Mental Health

We were pleased to have three submissions this year. The other nominees were **Annette Nicoletti**, Addictions Intensive Treatment Services, and the **entire clinical team at the Community Treatment Program** located in Sackville.

Congratulations to all of the nominees and this year's winner, **Maureen Morrison!**

Please join us as we present the award to Maureen and recognize the contributions of all of the nominees. The award ceremony will take place on Tuesday, May 10, noon to 2:00 pm at the Cobeguid Community Health Centre in the offices of Bedford/Sackville Community Mental Health (Room 3142). The presentation of the award will be at 12:30 pm.

Stay tuned for nursing trivia questions during Nursing Week. Each day a nursing trivia question will be sent out by email. If you answer correctly, your name will be entered into a draw for a prize!

Also each day during Nursing Week, we will send out a profile of a nurse (RN or LPN). This is an opportunity to place a spotlight on the contributions and amazing work that our nurses provide.



Improving Information for Clients and Families

Submitted by Laura Ankcorn, quality leader

When the Feedback and Experience Action Team (FEAT) reviewed the results from the 2012-13 and 2013-14 satisfaction surveys, one of the recommendations to the Quality Council was to improve the information available to clients and families. Since that time, the quality teams have been reviewing, updating and/or replacing the patient and family information pamphlets available via Library Services.

The list of reviewed/updated pamphlets include:

<u>Pamphlet #</u>	<u>Title</u>
0740	Assertiveness
0748	Building Self-Esteem
0751	Motivation
0754	Self-Esteem
0756	Substance Abuse
0763	Communication Skills
0771	Handling Criticism
0776	Managing Your Anger
0780	Positive Self-Talk
0784	Should and Must Thinking

These pamphlets can be found on the new NSHA Library Services website at:

<http://libguides.cdha.nshealth.ca> and are easy to print from your own computer.

Work continues on improving these resources and we would like your help! If you have any pamphlets or information that you have found useful for patients and families and would like to have it more readily accessible, please send it to Laura Ankcorn at Laura.Ankcorn@nshealth.ca.

Simpson Landing is presenting...

Submitted by Karrie Scribner, health promotion & wellness coordinator, Simpson Landing

Pictured right are the three co-presenters (Colin, Mike and Karrie) hard at work preparing their presentation "Creative Collaborations: How One Person, Service Provider, Peer Supporter and Family Worked".

They will co-present (with Colin's family in the audience) during the 2016 National Conference on Peer Support, April 27 to 29 in Toronto.

Full story to follow in the next issue of Our Voice...





Our Staff

Submitted by Calley Stapleton on behalf of the staff at Cole Harbour Community Mental Health

Retirement

After 18 years of dedicated service to the communities of Cole Harbour and Eastern HRM, **Nancy Trenchard** retired at the end of March.

An occupational therapy assistant by training, she also achieved certification as a psychiatric rehabilitation practitioner in 2003. However, when it came to introducing herself and her title, Nancy would often chuckle at how to describe herself. "Community mental health worker" was the most recent phrase used to try to capture her unique role. At the end of the day, Nancy was just Nancy doing what Nancy did in a way only Nancy could. And... what she did was truly awe-inspiring to watch.

The core of her strength is no doubt her ability to connect with people. This allowed her to engage meaningfully with wider communities, especially North and East Preston and Cherry Brook, as well as individuals to help them along in their recovery journey. Recovery is at the heart of everything for Nancy. She loves to "help people help themselves" and has a way of inspiring them to recognize their unlimited potential, then helping to map out the small, practical steps to get there.

Within her first year at Cole Harbour Community Mental Health, she started the psychosocial rehabilitation group, Friends Among Friends, which drew immediate positive attention and helped earn Nancy an Extra Mile Award. Friends Among Friends remains a point of pride for the clinic and continues to thrive.

Throughout her time at the clinic, Nancy continued to go those extra miles, every day, every week, every year. Her positivity, energy, and boundless enthusiasm will be greatly missed by her team as she more fully directs her attention to her partner, Randy, her dogs, Bud (pictured here with Nancy) and Cali, and many hobbies and interests. Knowing Nancy, there will no doubt be some new and exciting adventures on her horizon, including some ambitious travel plans.

All the best to you, Nancy, and remember to send postcards to Cole Harbour!



National Law Day - April 14, 2016

Celebrate Democracy!

Law Day is a national event every April that celebrates the signing of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is an occasion for the public to learn about the law, the legal profession and the legal institutions that form the cornerstones of Canadian democracy.

Locally, Law Day was celebrated at the Central Library on Spring Garden Road, Halifax. Representatives of the Mental Health Court (right) were on hand answering questions and providing information.





New Staff

In January, Janet Knox shared a message regarding restructuring at the Department of Health and Wellness resulting in a new organizational structure at the department, as well as the transfer of some functions, provincial programs and the associated funding to NSHA and IWK.

A number of the transferring functions were related to NSHA Mental Health and Addictions (MH&A) and we received information from DHW regarding those functions and considered how those functions could align within our team, including to whom those new roles would report.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to our team:

- **Carolyn Davison**, senior analyst, policy and planning, reporting to **Dr. Linda Courey**, senior director. Carolyn will participate in the development of the strategic direction of MH&A by providing leadership in the areas of policy development, planning and accountability, provincial operational standards, best and promising practices and more broadly, evidence-based decision making. You can reach Carolyn at 902-424-1630 or Carolyn.Davison@nshealth.ca.

- **Wanda McDonald**, analyst, policy and planning, reporting to Carolyn Davison. Wanda will work closely with Carolyn in areas of policy development and provincial planning, and will also contribute to quality improvement initiatives, such as developing and implementing new models of service delivery and supporting workforce development initiatives. She will also be working to facilitate the implementation of provincial planning for MH&A. You can reach Wanda at 902-424-0815 or Wanda.McDonald@nshealth.ca.

- **Lynn MacNeil**, consultant, reporting to **Sam Hodder**, director MH&A, Northern Zone, and provincial lead for Health Promotion and Prevention. Lynn will be supporting the development, implementation and evaluation of evidence-based health promotion, prevention

and early intervention strategies designed to promote wellness and to reduce the harms associated with substance use and gambling. Lynn can be reached at 902-424-7895 or Cheryllynn.MacNeil@nshealth.ca.



All three team members will be based in the E.C. Purdy Building at the Nova Scotia Hospital site.

We are also pleased to welcome **Pamela Ross** and **Gary MacPhee** to NSHA Mental Health and Addictions. They both previously worked with the Department of Health and Wellness. Pamela and Gary will provide critical support to our quality work and to the management of the ASsist database.

Pamela is a program administration officer, reporting to **David Pilon**, program leader (**Shaun Black**, manager).

You can reach her at:
902-424-4896

Pamela.Ross@nshealth.ca



Gary is a computer services officer, reporting to David Pilon, program leader (Shaun Black, manager).

You can reach him at:
902-424-4803

Gary.MacPhee@nshealth.ca



They are both based at the Dr. Clyde S. Marshall Building at the Nova Scotia Hospital site.





Housing First in Halifax

Submitted by Jane Mitchell, Housing First and Homelessness Partnership

Housing First in Halifax is an important approach at the heart of an effective program to help move people experiencing homelessness with complex mental health and addictions challenges along with chronic health issues, out of long-term homelessness and into homes. It is one of a number of solutions in our community that works with people who do not have a home, to allow them to move into a place of their own. There are two Housing First programs in Halifax: MOSH-Housing First and Herring Cove Apartments-Housing First.

MOSH-Housing First and Herring Cove Apartments-Housing First are possible as a result of significant resources available from the federal government and the Housing and Homelessness Partnership in Halifax to help deal with homelessness in the region.

You can find more information about Housing First at: <http://housingandhomelessness.ca/>.

Food Truck Rally

Submitted by Kelinda Sloan, roaming reporter



It was chilly but well worth braving the cold. It was so much fun to have the food trucks on the property.

I had the Classic Press - three local cheeses on sourdough bread with a quarter dill pickle. There were additional items available for the sandwich such as smoked bacon, caramelized onions, roasted sweet potatoes, and more. My sandwich was so yummy.

The ladies from the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia (pictured below right) kindly shared their order of donuts from the Ol' School Donuts truck - cinnamon sugar and toasted coconut. Warm, fresh donuts are the best.

Hope to see you there next year!



Photos by: Kelinda Sloan