

# Our Voice



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

## Marking Milestones

Submitted by the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia



When's the last time you marked a milestone? Maybe it was a special wedding anniversary or a memorable birthday. Milestones are meant to be commemorated. They give us a tremendous reason to look back and reflect while also focusing on the future.

Here at the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia we're getting ready to mark an anniversary of our own. Our signature event, the Compass Group Canada Festival of Trees, turns 25 on November 25<sup>th</sup>. It's hard to believe Nova Scotians have been coming together to unofficially kick-off the holiday season and support mental health initiatives for the last quarter century.

Festival began in 1992 when Charles Keating, a widely known civic leader and philanthropist, brought the idea home to Nova Scotia after attending a similar event in Edmonton. In its inaugural year, our Festival of Trees raised just over \$12,000. Since then, it has grown to raise more than 7.6 million dollars to support mental health initiatives across the province.

But beyond the dollars raised, just think of the strides we've made in addressing stigma since 1992. Twenty-five years ago, Nova Scotians didn't openly talk about topics such as depression, PTSD, self-harm and suicide. It was more common to

ignore mental illness and addiction than it was to start conversations around it.

Now, we typically welcome more than 1300 guests to our weekend festivities that revolve around stories focused on mental health. We are thrilled this year to have the President & CEO of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, Louise Bradley, speak at our Shannex Holiday Luncheon and the Chair of the Commission's Board, The Honourable Michael Wilson, share remarks at our RBC Black Tie Gala.

Beyond bringing people together, sharing stories of hope and showcasing our beautiful artistic and musical talent, the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Compass Group Canada Festival of Trees will continue to change the way people think. And we think that's a milestone worth celebrating!

Compass Group Canada Festival of Trees

Shannex Holiday Luncheon, WTCC, Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup>

RBC Black Tie Gala, WTCC, Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup>

For more information on the event or to purchase tickets, visit our [website](#).



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# Nurses Reunion

Submitted by Lorna Khan, RN (NSH, Class of '69)

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, a reunion of former graduates of The Nova Scotia Hospital School of Nursing was held in Dartmouth. The Nova Scotia Hospital School of Nursing began in 1893 and ended in 1970. There were 101 graduates attending the reunion with two graduates present from 1949, and graduates ranging from 1954 to 1970 in attendance.

Maureen Wheller, senior communications advisor, along with Health Services Managers Charlene Casey-Gomes and Norma Lewis hosted a tour of the current Nova Scotia Hospital site. Over 30 former graduates took part in the tour, visiting the Mount Hope Building, Simpson Landing, and ending at the Health Sciences Library in the Hugh Bell Service Centre.

Today the hospital has changed significantly from how it was when the majority of the reunion nurses graduated. Back then, the hospital would have had over 600 patients and it was the psychiatric hospital for the entire province. Psychiatric nursing has moved forward with the expansion of community-based care taking a higher priority.

The tour ended in the Health Sciences Library where the photo below was taken. Each graduate was presented with a book, *Mount Hope Then and Now*, a history of The Nova Scotia Hospital.

Thank you to everyone for making the tour a huge success.





## Quality Matters: 2017 NSHA Quality Awards Competition Now Underway

We are pleased to announce the second annual NSHA Quality Awards Competition. This is an opportunity to share the great quality work that is being done across our health authority and to showcase your team's commitment to quality improvement.

There are two categories to submit in the NSHA Health Care Quality Team Awards template:

1. NSHA Health Care Quality Team Award - Quality Improvement Initiative(s) within an organization: Initiative(s) within a single site, or multi-site organization, focused on a single issue/aspect of care.
2. NSHA Health Care Quality Team Award - Quality improvement initiative(s) across a health system: Initiative(s) focused on health system redesign resulting in transitions and/or integration across the continuum of care, between two health system organizations, service networks or partners.

The Health Care Quality Team Awards recognize important elements of the quality improvement process - innovation, quality, patient/family engagement and teamwork. They are given annually to teams of three or more persons who, within the past three years, have worked together on a results-orientated quality improvement project that has created a significant, sustained change within the organization or across the system over a minimum of 18 months. Administrative and operational teams, including interdisciplinary teams and cross-functional teams, across all sectors of healthcare are eligible to apply. Please use the [NSHA Health Care Quality Team Award template](#).

Please use the [NSHA Award of Excellence in Mental Health Quality Award template](#) for the NSHA Award of Excellence in Mental Health Quality Improvement. This award will honor a hospital, health authority, community-based mental health and addictions program/service, or a leader in the field that demonstrates evidence-informed and sustained quality improvements in the area of mental health and addictions.

Please ensure that you meet the deadline of **Monday, November 28, 2016 at 4:00 pm**. The package of submissions will be sent directly to the judging panel so, unfortunately, extensions cannot be granted.

All awards submissions should be sent electronically to [sabrina.mackenzie@nshealth.ca](mailto:sabrina.mackenzie@nshealth.ca) for review. Your entire submission should be in one electronic PDF file. Please ensure you keep the word version of your document for future editing purposes.

The NSHA Quality Awards are modeled on the 3M Health Care Quality Team Awards and Janssen Award of Excellence in Mental Health and Quality Improvement coordinated through the Canadian College of Health Leaders (CCHL). For the full listing of CCHL award nomination forms, please visit their [website](#).

If you would like any additional information, please contact [laura.ankcorn@nshealth.ca](mailto:laura.ankcorn@nshealth.ca).

## Congratulations Dr. Rudolf Uher!

A Dalhousie University professor has taken home a national prize for his efforts in trying to catch mental illness before it starts.

**Dr. Rudolf Uher** last week was awarded the Royal-Mach-Gaensslen Prize for Mental Health Research - a national prize that celebrates promising young mental health researchers by helping fund their studies.

Learn more by reading the [Chronicle Herald article](#) written by Staff Reporter Amanda Panacci (October 24, 2016).....





# Our People

## Welcome New Staff

- **Jennifer Fougere**, MSW - Connections Halifax
- **Amber McConnell**, psychologist - Connections Halifax

Correction: It was noted in the September issue that **Tia Wormwell**, OT, joined Connections Halifax. We wanted to correct the misspelling of her last name.

## New Staff for the MHFNS

The Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia is pleased to welcome two new team members to its office:

**Jennifer Lewandowski** is the new communications lead. She most recently worked in Communications at Emera. She is a highly motivated athlete who ran a marathon a month for a year to raise money for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. Jennifer has spent many years working with non-profits in the healthcare sector and knows the importance of partnering mental health with overall physical health.



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Our former communications coordinator, Colleen Fraser, moved to a new position with the Halifax Public Libraries. We wish her well.

**Deborah Eaton** is our new fund development & donor relations lead. She has an impressive track record in the field of major gifts. She has spent her entire career in the world of NFPs (Nature Conservancy of Canada, QEII Foundation, United Way, IWK Foundation and Canadian Red Cross).



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Our former fund development & donor relations lead, Martha Tuff, moved to a director's position with Autism Nova Scotia. We wish her all the best.

## Staff Location Change

**Colin DeFreitas**, psychologist, joined the Recovery & Integration team on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. His home-base will be Simpson Landing, but he will be working at all three Connections locations as well. Colin previously worked with both Bayers CMH and Dartmouth CMH.

## Sad News

On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, we lost a cherished colleague, friend and brilliant light in the death of **Susan Hare**.



Susan was part of the former Capital Health for 25 years. She worked as an occupational therapist with Connections Halifax before taking on the role of service coordinator for the Mobile Crisis Team in 2002. In four years, under her direction, the service grew to a 24/7 partnered service model with police and the IWK.

She worked as program leader is several portfolios in the Mental Health and Addictions Program. In 2015, she expanded her career to become a program manager in physical medicine at the VG site.

Susan had the rare ability to make sense out of the large systems, while never forgetting the impact on patients/clients and families. She unfailingly kept the interests of those requiring services in the forefront of all decision-making.

We will miss her passion for her family and friends, her desire to create excellence in service delivery, and her courage.

Her final message, which she wished to be shared, was that if you strive for love in everything you do, every conversation, meeting, and action then a positive outcome will naturally come to fruition. Love one another, be kind to one another, and make an effort every day to support your world in becoming a slightly better place.

Let's honour our friend's final message and do just that!



## Our People

### Sad News



Joan Watters, retired switch-board operator/receptionist at the Nova Scotia Hospital, passed away on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

Her friend and colleague, **Lollie Verge**, writes:

Joan was a very special lady. She worked at the NSH for over 25 years, and volunteered at the hospital in many different ways. She took patients on various

outings - shopping, a meal, to the beach or for a walk in the park.

Joan was creative and enjoyed making crafts and writing children's stories; several of her poems were published.

She will be greatly missed!

## Upcoming Events and Education Sessions

### The Halifax Housing Conference

The conference will be held at the Halifax Central Library on November 20<sup>th</sup> followed on November 21<sup>st</sup> with a Let's Talk Housing Facebook Live event.

**Monday, November 20, 2016, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm**

Please join us for practical workshops and presentations for those in the affordable housing sector to learn and work together.

**Tuesday, November 21, 2016**

There will be a Facebook LIVE Event to celebrate National Housing Day. It will feature the Hon. Minister Jean-Yves Duclos sharing what he's heard from the National Housing Strategy consultations. Timing TBD.

For more information go to our [website](#).

The events are free, but you must pre-register. Registration opens in early November.

The conference is being organized by the Housing and Homelessness Partnership.

### NSH Library Open House

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, NSH Library staff (photo: Robert MacKenzie, Lara Killian, Jackie Zoppa, and Carmen Dorey) welcomed lots of visitors with cake and coffee for an Open House event.

Each of NSHA's hospital library sites around the province held an Open House to celebrate the merging of our library services and raise awareness of the additional resources now available to all NSHA staff through the library's [website](#).

The carrot cake was definitely the most popular treat!

### RN-PDC Mental Health Education Programs

- **Suicide Risk Assessment & Intervention Inter-professional Part-time Program** starts January 4 to April 9, 2017. Registration deadline is November 14, 2016, or until the program is full.
- **Promoting Recovery in Mental Health** starts January 9, 2017, and runs to June 30, 2017. This is a part-time interprofessional program open to all health care providers. Registration deadline is November 14, 2016, or until the program is full.

For more information on these programs, please visit our [website](#) or contact:

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