



Nova Scotia
College of
Pharmacists

ANNUAL REPORT: 2022

Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists





Welcome

From the Registrar and President

The past year has once again challenged us to explore how best to fulfill our mandate - to govern the practice of pharmacy in the interest of optimal health outcomes. Increasingly, doing this well requires working together with our health system partners, pharmacy professionals and the public on solutions for meeting growing healthcare needs.

As Nova Scotia continued to grapple with significant health workforce supply challenges and growing primary care needs, the urgency to stand up solutions under Nova Scotia's *Action for Health* plan was felt by all, including the NSCP.

As we reflected upon, "what does the public need the pharmacy regulator to focus on during this healthcare crisis," we recognized that, while it is critical that we continue to look for ways to address our healthcare workforce challenges, increasing the number of healthcare professionals in the province is not the sole solution. With an aging health workforce and a growing population, focusing on supply will never be enough. Balancing the supply / demand equation requires equal investment of attention and effort on ensuring that the demand (healthcare needs) is optimally allocated across our existing health workforce according to knowledge, skills and expertise.

Throughout the past decade, the NSCP has ensured that there are no regulatory barriers to pharmacy professionals in NS practicing to the full scope of their expert



**Beverley
Zwicker** ”

Nova Scotians need all health professions working collaboratively towards a transformed healthcare system where patients receive the right care from the right provider at the right time.

~ Beverley Zwicker
Registrar and CEO



knowledge and skills. In 2022, our focus in this work shifted to supporting the incorporation of this broad authorized scope into a transformed healthcare delivery model. The launch of the first pharmacy walk-in clinic in February 2022 repositioned pharmacists in primary care such that the public could more fully benefit from a pharmacist's extensive knowledge and skills. With the success of this redesigned role for pharmacists in primary care and its ongoing expansion across the province, we have also accelerated work to ensure our quality assurance and practice audit processes align with this evolving practice model.

In all of this, we know that, like other front-line care providers, the pharmacy workforce is experiencing high levels of stress and burnout, and we recognize the implications of this on the quality and safety of care that is provided to the public. As such, in 2022 we strengthened our work to address pharmacy practice environment challenges. This included launching a first-of-its-kind in Canada research project aimed at ensuring that the staffing levels of a pharmacy supports the consistent provision of quality care in a manner that can be sustained by the pharmacy staff team. We also submitted regulatory amendments to government aimed at addressing workforce challenges, including changes that will reopen a pharmacy technician licensure stream for experienced pharmacy assistants, and revisions that will better enable innovation in pharmacy care delivery.

Transforming the healthcare system so that all Nova Scotians can depend on having access to the right care, from the right provider, at the right time requires change by everyone: change in the way that health system leaders conceptualize healthcare



~ Lynn Corkum
2022 Council President

delivery, the way healthcare professionals practice it, and the way that Nova Scotians understand it will be provided to them.

As we look toward 2023, the NSCP is committed to ensuring that everyone in the province has access to safe, quality pharmacy care, and to doing all that we can to partner for solutions to our healthcare crisis.

We are committed to this not only because it is our mandate, but because we are Nova Scotians, and this is important to all of us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lynn Corkum".

Lynn Corkum
2022 Council President

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Beverley Zwicker".

Beverley Zwicker
Registrar & CEO

A Message from your Public Representatives

Public representatives on the NSCP Council have a unique role and perspective. While we bring skills in communications, economics, health IT, and nursing to the table, we also serve to voice the public perspective to support Council in making decisions that are in the best interest of the public.

Our role over the past year has been to ensure that the NSCP continued to respond to the province's healthcare crisis, ensuring that Nova Scotians benefited from the unique knowledge and skills of pharmacy professionals. Over the past year, we have contributed to important discussions on regulatory amendments and reform, pharmacy workplace environment and staffing challenges, and changes to pharmacist and pharmacy technician scope of practice.

We take our responsibilities seriously, ensuring that the NSCP provides pharmacy practitioners with direction that is sound and current, and that it is transparent and accountable to the public in all its regulatory activities.

As Lynn and Jill finish their terms in 2022, Council looks forward to welcoming two new public representatives in 2023. The diversity of perspectives and fresh voices strengthens the NSCP's ability to govern in the best interest of the public.

~ Your 2022 Public Representatives,
Lynn Guscott, Tunde Awoyiga and
Jill Rafuse (from left to right)



About the NSCP

Founded in 1876, the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists (NSCP) is the regulatory authority for the practice of pharmacy in Nova Scotia. Its legislated mandate is to maintain standards of practice and professional accountability in the practice of pharmacy, thereby supporting optimal patient care.

The NSCP's role is to regulate pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and the community pharmacies where they practice.

In accordance with the *Pharmacy Act* of Nova Scotia, the NSCP's key responsibilities include:

- registration and licensing
- quality assurance
- legislation and practice standards
- professional accountability

OUR MISSION | Governing the practice of pharmacy in Nova Scotia so that the care the public receives from pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, and the community pharmacies where they practice, supports them in realizing their health goals.

OUR VISION | All pharmacy practitioners recognize the impact of their roles in the healthcare system and practice to their full scope.

FOLLOW US



@NSPharmacists



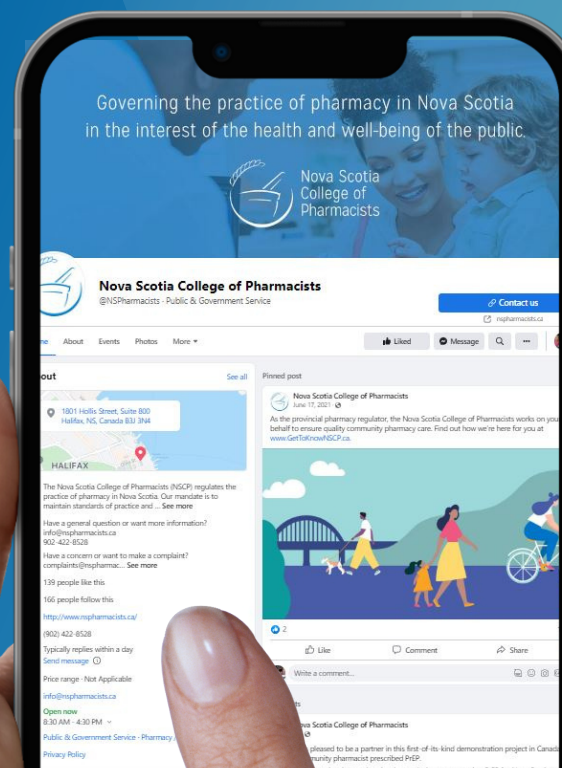
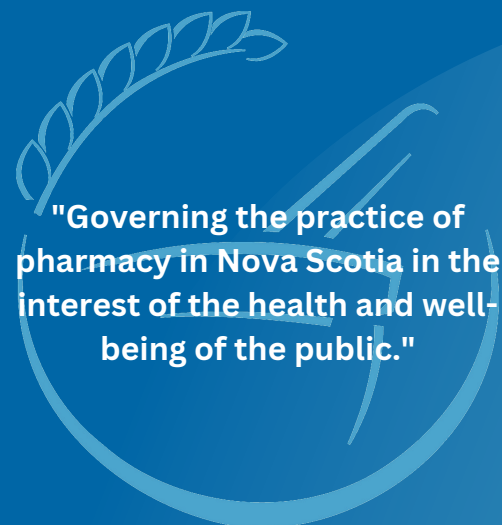
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What We Do

The NSCP's role is to regulate pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and the community pharmacies where they practice. In accordance with the Nova Scotia *Pharmacy Act*, the NSCP's key responsibilities include:

LEGISLATION & PRACTICE STANDARDS

- The NSCP establishes, maintains, and enforces appropriate regulations, standards, policies, and guidelines.
- The NSCP promotes a professional Code of Ethics to set out ethical expectations and obligations for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and to provide support for ethical decision-making.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- The NSCP ensures pharmacy practitioners comply with the rules that govern the practice of pharmacy, are competent to practice, and conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner.
- The NSCP investigates and addresses complaints and concerns, considering such matters in the context of the rules and expectations outlined in legislation, standards, policies, and the Code of Ethics.

- The NSCP follows the rules and processes set out in the Nova Scotia Pharmacy Act in dealing with these matters.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- The NSCP conducts inspections that protect, promote, and improve the quality of pharmacy care across the province.
- The NSCP audits the practice of pharmacy professionals.
- The NSCP ensures pharmacy professionals engage in ongoing professional education to maintain their competency.
- The NSCP requires pharmacies to be actively engaged in continuous quality improvement, including reporting and analyzing errors to learn how to improve the quality and safety of the services they provide.

REGISTRATION & LICENSING

- The NSCP ensures individuals licensed to practice pharmacy in Nova Scotia have the capacity, professional competence, and character to engage in the practice of pharmacy safely and ethically.
- The NSCP establishes and administers registration requirements and processes that are deemed fair, objective, thorough, and transparent.

Major Areas of Work

FINDING HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS FOR NOVA SCOTIANS

The NSCP worked alongside its healthcare partners to realize solutions and innovations in alignment with government's *Action for Health* plan. The NSCP worked with our health system partners, including the Department of Health and Wellness and the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia, on a number of system challenges throughout 2022 so that the benefits of pharmacists' broad, authorized scope are more fully accessible to Nova Scotians, supporting the critically needed transformation of primary care in the province.

- In addressing the need to test new models of pharmacist primary care delivery and to explore new prescribing scope, the NSCP established a provision in the *Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs* so that pharmacists could pilot applying their expertise to meet new care needs as part of an approved research or pilot project protocol. Evaluation data from these projects will be used by NSCP Council in future considerations of whether to more broadly authorize the researched scope to all pharmacists.
- Understanding the criticality of pharmacists having access to a patient's current lab results in providing safe and effective care, the NSCP pressed and supported Nova Scotia Health (NSH) throughout 2022 to prioritize NSH system enablement for pharmacists to order lab work for their patients. Additionally, the NSCP Council established its Position Statement: Routine Access and Consideration of Patient Lab Values. The statement outlines expectations that pharmacists routinely consult available patient laboratory values when making a determination that drug therapy is appropriate. While this has always been important, it has become all the more critical as pharmacists increasingly assume their drug therapy manager role and are more fully incorporated in primary care.
- Recognizing the capability of pharmacists to readily gain the skills need to administer vaccines to those under 2 years old and hence provide care to the whole family, the NSCP amended the *Standards of Practice: Drug Administration* to authorize pharmacy practitioners to administer the COVID-19 and influenza vaccines to children 6 months of age and older. Nova Scotia was the first jurisdiction in Canada to do so, ensuring improved access to these critical vaccines for some of the most vulnerable Nova Scotians.

ADDRESSING PRACTICE ENVIRONMENT RISKS TO THE PUBLIC

Like many other areas of the healthcare system, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the levels of burnout and attrition for Nova Scotia pharmacy practitioners.

Major Areas of Work

Recognizing the risk to quality and safety of pharmacy care that this creates, the NSCP continued its strategic work to address pharmacy practice environment concerns, with a renewed focus on addressing inadequate pharmacy staffing levels.

- Working with Davis Pier Consulting, the NSCP Council undertook a strategic reprioritization process throughout 2022 to sharpen the focus of its strategic work aimed at improving the practice environment. Using evidence collected through our literature search, pharmacy practitioner interviews and surveys, and with guidance from an advisory panel of subject matter experts, Council established a strategic objective to impact staffing levels established by business workforce models, and more specifically to, “ensure the staffing level of a pharmacy supports the consistent delivery of quality care in manner that can be sustained by the pharmacy staff team.”
- The NSCP continued work on intervention design in 2022, and is positioned to establish innovative staffing and quality assurance models in 2023 that will further enable pharmacy practitioners to deliver consistent, quality pharmacy care in a manner that is sustainable to practitioner wellbeing.

CONTRIBUTING TO REGULATORY AMENDMENTS AND REFORM

In support of the significant health system change and innovation occurring, the NSCP has been proactively identifying regulatory barriers and submitting needed regulatory amendments to government for approval.

- The NSCP submitted significant amendments to the Registration, Licensing and Professional Accountability Regulations and the Pharmacy Practice Regulations to enable the following:
 - Creation of a new pharmacy technician candidate registration category.
 - Re-establishment of a streamlined licensing pathway for pharmacy assistants to become licensed pharmacy technicians.
 - Provision for a pharmacy in NS to collaborate with a pharmacy in another province for centralized prescriptions processing; and
 - Enable virtual supervision of pharmacies.
- The NSCP, and a member and in partnership with the Network of Regulated Health Professions, significantly contributed to the government’s initiative to establish a common foundations legislation for regulated health professions. The NSCP emphasized to government the need for the new legislation to enhance the NSCP’s nimbleness in enabling innovation in health care and in responding to shifting healthcare priorities.

Milestones

JANUARY - MARCH

- NSCP amends the *Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs* to authorize pharmacists to prescribe for COVID-19 vaccines in accordance with protocols and guidelines established by the Department of Health and Wellness or Nova Scotia Health.
- NSCP submits amendments to the *Registration, Licensing and Professional Accountability Regulations* aimed at shoring up the pharmacy workforce and supporting practice innovation.
- NSCP Council establishes its *Position Statement: Routine Access and Consideration of Patient Lab Values*.

APRIL - JUNE

- NSCP amends the *Standards of Practice: Drug Administration* to authorize pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who hold a valid permit to administer the COVID-19 vaccine and influenza vaccines to children 6 months of age and older.
- NSCP Council undertakes a strategic reprioritization process as part of its work to address pharmacy practice environment risks to the public, with an updated strategic objective to impact “staffing levels established by business workforce models.”
- NSCP becomes a signatory on the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities’ *Cross-Jurisdictional Practice Memorandum of Understanding*.



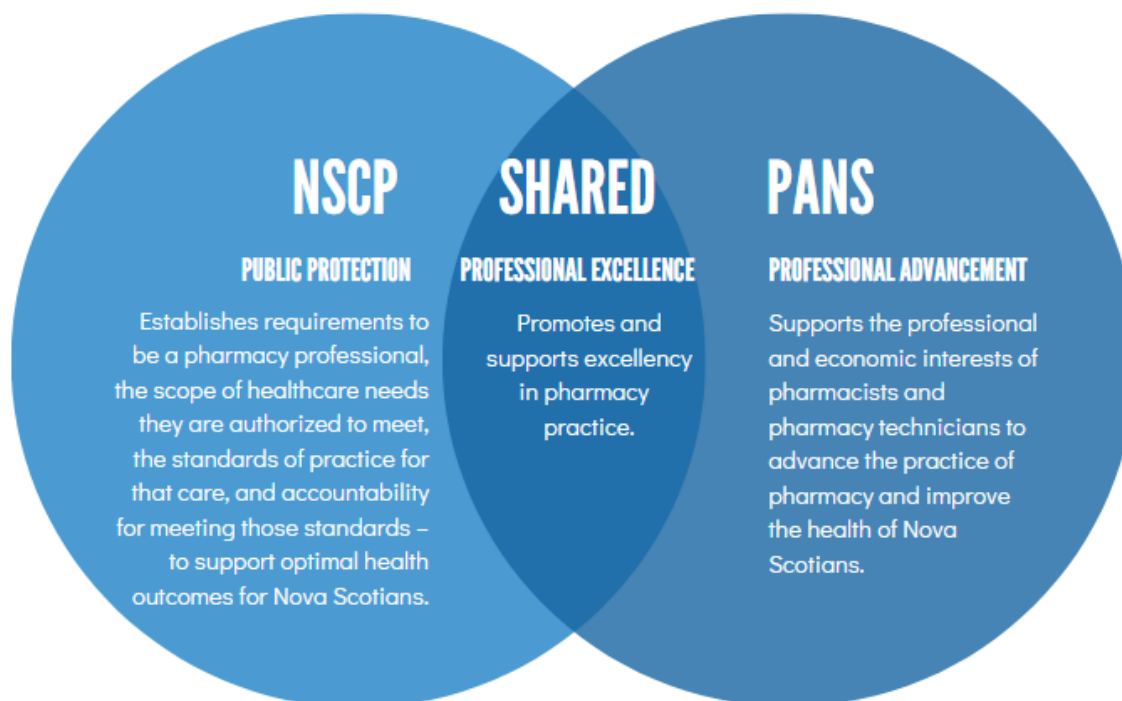
Milestones

JULY - SEPTEMBER

- NSCP works with government to allow influenza vaccination records to be submitted by pharmacy practitioners through the centralized CANImmunize platform rather than the Drug Information System (DIS) Immunization Module.
- NSCP Registrar attends the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy meeting in the United States to speak to innovative solutions being established by the NSCP in addressing inadequate staffing levels in community pharmacies.
- NSCP establishes provision in the *Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs* to authorize pharmacists to prescribe in accordance with approved research or pilot project protocols

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

- NSCP participates in the Primary Health Care Partner's Table with the Minister of Health and Wellness Michelle Thompson to propose innovative solutions to improve and strengthen Nova Scotia's healthcare system.
- NSCP hosts a joint webinar with the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia about the Evolving Role of Pharmacy in Primary Care.
- NSCP submits amendments to the Pharmacy Practice Regulations to enable a pharmacy in NS to collaborate with a pharmacy in another province for centralized prescriptions processing, and to strengthen oversight of patient records should a pharmacist establish a non-dispensing practice that is outside the jurisdiction of a pharmacy.





By the Numbers

Registrations and Licensing

315



Licensed pharmacies.

4



Pharmacies providing sterile compounding services.

217



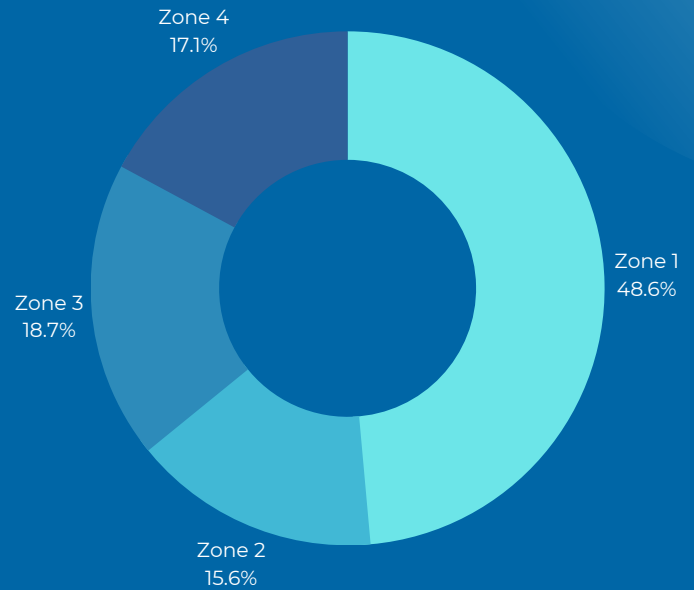
Pharmacies providing methadone services.

1449

Licensed Pharmacists

251

Licensed Pharmacy Technicians



NUMBER OF PHARMACIES BY ZONE

Zone 1 | 48.6% (n= 153)
Halifax, Lunenburg, and Queens Counties

Zone 2 | 15.6% (n= 49)
Cape Breton Island

Zone 3 | 18.7% (n= 59)
Antigonish, Guysborough, Pictou, Colchester, Cumberland Counties, and the Municipality of the District of East Hants.

Zone 4 | 17.1% (n= 54)
Hants, Kings, Annapolis, Digby, Shelburne, and Yarmouth Counties, excluding the Municipality of the District of East Hants



By the Numbers

Quality Assurance

The NSCP routinely inspects pharmacies and audits the practice of pharmacy professionals to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Pharmacy Act* and regulations. This process enables the public to be confident of the safety and quality of the medications and care they receive from pharmacy professionals in Nova Scotia.



111

Routine pharmacy inspections completed

Every pharmacy in Nova Scotia undergoes a comprehensive routine inspection approximately every 3 years.



157

Revisit pharmacy inspections completed

If deficiencies are identified during the routine inspection, a revisit inspection is conducted within six months to ensure that these deficiencies have been satisfactorily addressed.



3

Renovation inspections completed

A renovation inspection is completed when the location of the dispensary within an existing pharmacy changes or when alterations have been made that affect the diagram of the pharmacy.



96

Pharmacy manager interviews conducted

Interviews are conducted with new pharmacy managers to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities set out in the legislation. Existing pharmacy managers are interviewed approximately every 5 years to ensure they are aware of updates to legislation and standards of practice and that they continue to be aware of their responsibilities.



By the Numbers

Medication Incident Reporting



12,053

Medication incidents reported by pharmacies to the Canadian Medication Incident Reporting Program (CMIRPS).



135

Average number of pharmacies reporting per month



927

Average number of medication incidents reported per month by NS community pharmacies.



422

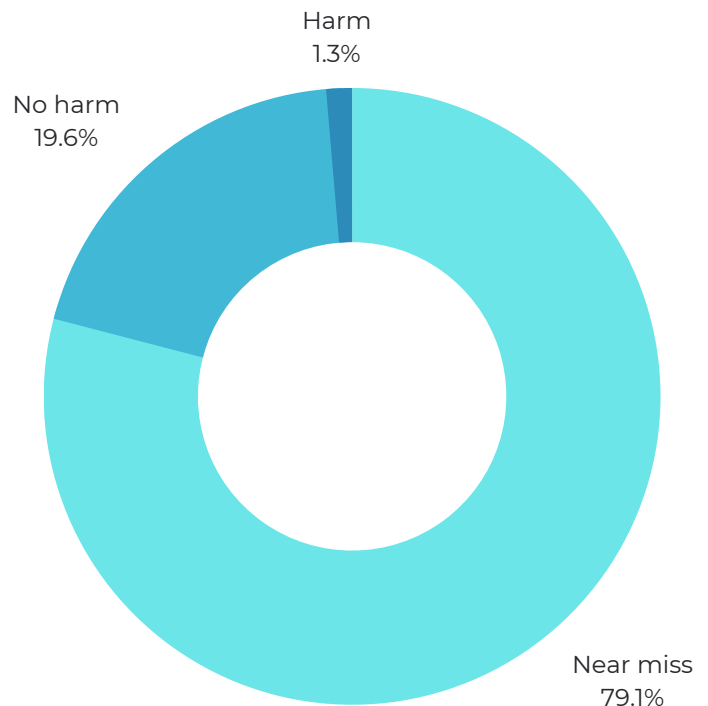
Continuous quality assurance meetings held in Nova Scotia pharmacies

TYPES OF MEDICATION INCIDENTS REPORTED

NEAR MISS: 79% (n=9,495) Incidents that could have caused harm but were intercepted prior to reaching the patient

No harm: 20% (n=2,354) medication error reached the patient; no symptoms detected, and no treatment required

Harm: 1% (n=162) Medication error reached the patient; symptoms detected and/or treatment required and includes mild harm, moderate harm, severe harm and death





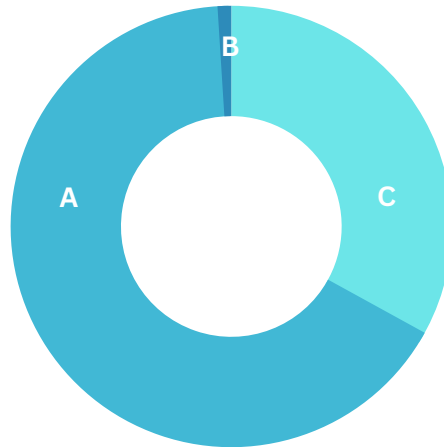
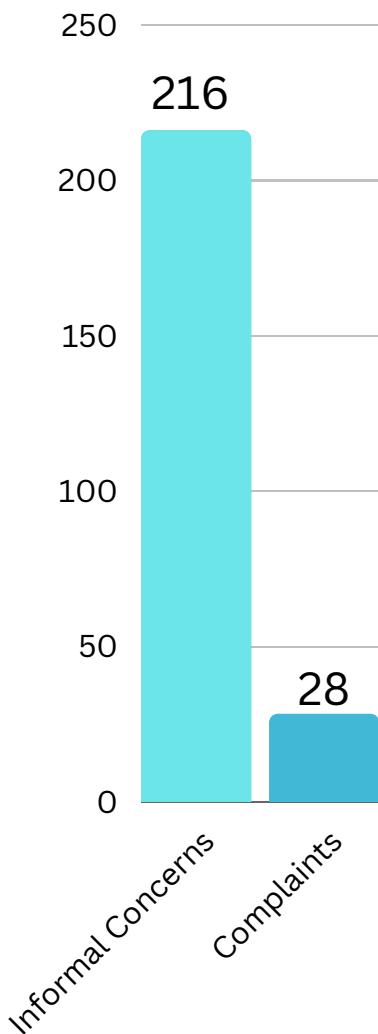
By the Numbers

Professional Accountability

244

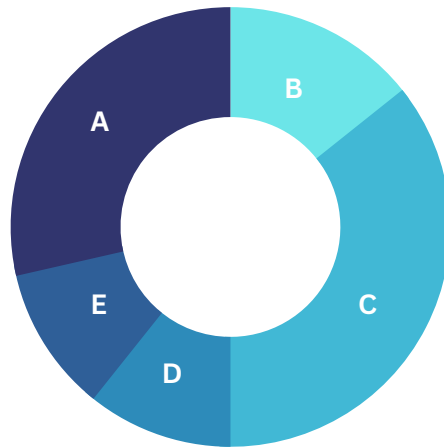


Informal concerns and complaints received.



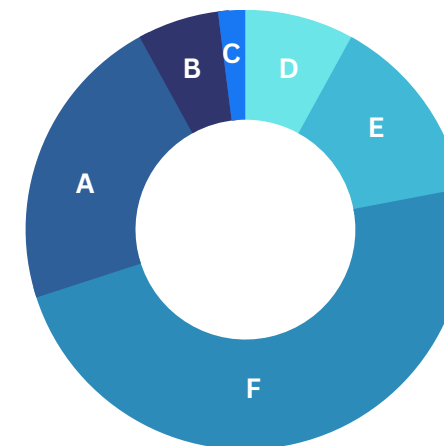
DISPOSITION OF INFORMAL CONCERNS RESOLVED

- A** Guidance provided: 66% (n=66)
- B** Referred to Investigation Committee: 1% (n=1)
- C** No further action taken: 33% (n=33)



SUBJECT MATTER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

- A** Lapsed Insurance: 28% (n=10)
- B** Unprofessional Conduct: 14% (n=4)
- C** Medication Error: 36% (n=10)
- D** Lapsed Injection Permit: 11% (n=3)
- E** Professional Judgment: 11% (n=3)



DISPOSITION OF COMPLAINTS RESOLVED

- A** Consent reprimand: 22% (n=22)
- B** Forward to Hearing Committee: 6% (n=6)
- C** Conditions (e.g. Essay): 2% (n=2)
- D** Dismiss: 8% (n=8)
- E** Counsel: 14% (n=14)
- F** Caution: 48% (n=48)



Financials

Independent Auditor's Report

The audit firm Baker Tilly Nova Scotia Inc. ("Baker Tilly") was engaged to audit the books and accounts of the NSCP for the 2022 fiscal year and to comment on the correctness of the annual financial statements of the College.

The audit was completed and Baker Tilly issued a clean, unqualified opinion for the year ended and as at December 31, 2022 on April 17, 2023.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FINANCIAL RESULTS

	General Fund	Reserve Fund	2022	2021
	\$	\$	\$	\$
REVENUES				
Memberships	2,734,671		2,734,671	2,446,955
Professional Accountability	4,500		4,500	9,472
Sundry	33,906		33,906	14,067
Investment Income Realized	12,931	76,221	89,152	59,289
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Investments		(6,794)	(6,794)	43,192
Loss on disposal of capital assets				(14,600)
Fair Value Adjustment for Unrealized Gain on Investments		(213,945)	(213,945)	77,699
	<u>2,786,008</u>	<u>(144,518)</u>	<u>2,641,490</u>	<u>2,636,074</u>
EXPENSES	<u>2,725,450</u>	<u>217,902</u>	<u>2,943,352</u>	<u>2,524,408</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<u>60,558</u>	<u>(362,420)</u>	<u>(301,862)</u>	<u>111,666</u>

The College maintains a reserve fund for these specific purposes:

1. As an operating reserve to manage the risks associated with possible cash flow interruptions.
2. To provide flexibility to fund new organizational priorities and unexpected needs.
3. As a reserve for extraordinary legal/liability costs.
4. A reserve fund for the costs associated with strategic initiatives and activities that support the mandate of the NSCP.

The reserve is funded by earnings on investments and operational surpluses. The funds balance at the end of 2022 was \$1,869,944.



NSCP Council 2022

The NSCP Council oversees the direction and policy decisions of the NSCP as a whole. Council's mandate is to ensure that the health interests of the public are protected and maintained in the delivery of pharmacy services.



PRESIDENT
Lynn Corkum
Zone 6 Representative



VICE PRESIDENT
Jon Wright
Zone 1 Representative



MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Jill Rafuse
Zone 6 Representative



COUNCILLOR
Michael MacDonald
Zone 1 Representative



COUNCILLOR
Sabrina McLean
Zone 1 Representative



COUNCILLOR
Tanya Howley
Zone 2 Representative



NSCP Council 2022



COUNCILLOR
Jennifer O'Brien
Zone 3 Representative



COUNCILLOR
Rami Saaloukeh
Zone 4 Representative



COUNCILLOR
Melanie MacInnis
Zone 5 Representative



COUNCILLOR
Lynn Guscott
Public Representative



COUNCILLOR
Tunde Awoyiga
Public Representative



COUNCILLOR
Susan Mansour, Director,
Dalhousie College of Pharmacy



NSCP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Executive Committee

Lynn Corkum, (Chair)
Jon Wright, (Vice President)
Jill Rafuse (Member-at-Large)

Audit Committee

Melanie MacInnis (Chair)
Rami Saaloukeh
Bernard Oche, Public Representative

Governance Committee

Jon Wright (Chair)
Sabrina McLean
Tanya Howley
Lynn Guscott

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee

Babatunde Awoyiga (Chair)
Michelle Patrick
Greg Richard
Samantha Darville
Cecil Skinner
Kristy Barnaby
Kenneth Oguzie
Leeann Walling

Fitness to Practice Committee

Aiysha Al-Wardian, Pharmacist (Chair)
Trina Organ, Pharmacist
Brian Wilbur, Public Representative

Hearing Committee

Harriet Davies, Pharmacist (Chair)
Susan Halliday Mahar, Pharmacist (Vice Chair)
Edith Menzies, Public Representative
Annette Marshall, Public Representative
Desiree Jones-Matthias, Public Representative
Kayla Ransome, Pharmacy Technician
Lisa Johnston, Pharmacy Technician
Leigh Noftle, Pharmacist
Tena Taylor, Pharmacist
Krista Trider, Pharmacist
Ellen Purves, Pharmacist

Investigation Committee

Cheryl Court, Pharmacist (Chair)
Gerri Allen, Pharmacy Technician (Vice Chair)
Pauline Tran-Roop, Pharmacist
Jennifer Tohme, Pharmacist
Rammah Mikhail, Pharmacist
Kristen Pulsifer, Pharmacy Technician
Lynn Guscott, Public Representative
Gary Clarke, Public Representative
Donna Moreen Smith Darrell, Public Representative





NSCP STAFF

2022 STAFF

Beverley Zwicker

CEO AND REGISTRAR

Sue Sampson

DEPUTY REGISTRAR AND DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Kate Wall

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

Shirin Shaikh

OFFICE MANAGER

Katie Sexton

IT OPERATIONS MANAGER

Anne Marentette

PHARMACY PRACTICE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER

Tracey Chiasson

QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSISTANT MANAGER

Andrea Bishop

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH MANAGER

Talent Ndlovu

POLICY ASSOCIATE

Tiffany Savary

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY MANAGER

Kate Davis

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ASSOCIATE

Anique Comeau

PHARMACY PRACTICE ASSISTANT MANAGER

Melissa Rhodes

REGISTRATIONS MANAGER

Bailey Dumville

REGISTRATIONS OFFICER

Leanne Lagsiar

COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR

Note: representative on December 31, 2022