

AWARE NS

Nova Scotia Health + Community Services Safety Association



Annual Report 2016/2017

Safe and Healthy People; Safe and Healthy Workplaces



AWARE-NS VISION

Safe and healthy people; safe and healthy workplaces.

Mission

Working with stakeholders and partners to promote and improve health and safety in Health and Community Services workplaces.



AWARE-NS BELIEFS

- A healthy and safe workplace is every person's right.
- All workplace injuries are preventable.
- Everyone has a role and responsibility for workplace health and safety.

AWARE-NS VALUES

Our core values guide our work with partners and stakeholders:

Leadership

- We strive for every person to be a leader in health and safety in their workplace, and together to be accountable for promoting change to the health and safety culture

Collaboration

- We encourage collaboration by engaging and enabling all stakeholders to work together, sharing knowledge and expertise

Diversity

- We build trust and respect by valuing everyone's contribution and recognizing diverse needs

Courage

- We support every person to have the courage to make health and safety a priority in their workplace

Report from Chair of the Board

» Jenna Brookfield



The past year has been momentous for AWARE-NS. While the dedicated staff continue to deliver much needed health and safety training across the Health and Community Services sectors this year has also seen an unprecedented level of engagement in workplace safety. AWARE-NS has the right people and the right tools to effect change in the sector but we must acknowledge the scope of the challenge before us. The sectors we serve are dedicated to protecting and serving the people of Nova Scotia; they are the caring professions. As such, they have developed workplace cultures that put their patients'/clients' wellbeing first. Unfortunately, over time this approach has regularly seen worker safety put last. AWARE-NS is helping to rebuild the Internal Responsibility System with organizations in these sectors and is helping to change the culture to one which recognizes that the safety of patients and clients will be optimized when both the staff and those they care for are safe and healthy.

Culture shifts take time but there is a pressing need to accelerate this process; ***injury rates are increasing at an alarming rate***, particularly in Home Care and Long Term Care. These injuries are compounding staffing shortages, taking valuable dollars away from operations, and taking a large human toll on those that suffer the injuries. Nova Scotia needs its care givers and we need them to be physically and mentally safe so they can continue to provide the high standard of care that the people of Nova Scotia have come to expect.

There is hope on the horizon. This year stakeholders from across the sectors are coming together to form an action plan to address the health and safety challenges in these sectors. AWARE-NS, the Departments of Health and Wellness, Community Services, and Labour & Advanced Education, along with the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, employers from across the sectors, and the unions that represent these workers, have come together as never before to confront this challenge. It will take the collective efforts of all of these organizations to effect the change that is needed.

AWARE-NS is ready to lead the sectors to a safer tomorrow. The action plan will reveal specific actions that are needed at all levels to foster and promote health and safety in the sectors. AWARE-NS will play an integral role not only in bringing everyone together, but also in addressing the specific actions and resources that will enable meaningful improvements in safety performance. To enable AWARE-NS to fulfill this role, the board of directors has worked extensively on a sustainability plan to ensure the financial resources are in place to support this important work; the sectors will need to invest in manifesting this vision. This is our chance to make the necessary changes and investments but we cannot do it alone and it is time to reach out to our stakeholders and supporters once more and ask you to join us; join us in the vision of a safer tomorrow. ***Join us in recognizing safety is an investment not an expense.*** Join us and together we will make our workplaces safe and healthy. I also extend my gratitude to the entire board and in particular those who have completed their terms; your efforts have been critical in getting us to where we are today.

Report from Executive Director

» Susan Dempsey



It is my pleasure to present the eighth annual report of AWARE-NS - The Nova Scotia Health and Community Services Safety Association.

The Health and Community Services sectors are of critical importance to all Nova Scotians. With some 40,000 employees, it is the largest employer in NS and it is driving the core of health and safety outcomes in the province. Ensuring that workers in these sectors are safe and healthy is not only the primary goal for AWARE-NS, but should be a concern for every Nova Scotian.

Our Mission – ***Safe and Healthy People; Safe and Healthy Workplaces*** has never been more important than it is today. In the last 3 years, we have seen a decline in the overall WCB injury rate, however for the same time period, there has been an increase in the health and social services sectors. Long Term Care and Home Care in particular are seeing an upward trend of injury rates and claim costs with 30% of the sector payroll, but 60% of time loss claims and costs. ***How do we begin to reverse these trends?***

In the spring of 2016, a new conversation started that has launched the development of a five year targeted Workplace Safety Action Plan. AWARE-NS as project lead, working in collaboration with sector partners, is the guiding force to ignite the leadership that is necessary to demonstrate the significant investment in our people that moves our current model of safety from reaction to prevention. Against competing priorities, this change will take time and courage to stay the course. We are all in this together and we all need to be examples so others may see what is possible. So much is riding on this for all of us. Ultimately, the sustainability of the entire Health and Community Services system, which affects all Nova Scotians, depends on it.

AWARE-NS posted a very busy and exciting year representing our continuous effort in helping to build safer workplaces. We are pleased with our many accomplishments. We've done significant work in program development; offering over 200 classroom training sessions with focused attention on ***JOHS Committee training, Safety for Supervisors and Managers, Safe Handling and Mobility and Workplace Violence Prevention***.

A highlight has been the completion of the Safety Management System (SMS) that is now ready for implementation in your organization. Additionally, AWARE-NS has been able to expand our role with some targeted work of auditing and consulting services, helping to build capacity for safer workplaces and the prevention of injuries.

At a national level, AWARE-NS continued to demonstrate leadership by playing a key role in the development of a national organization, ***The National Alliance for Safety and Health in Health Care***. This alliance will work in collaboration on a shared Health Care safety agenda.

AWARE-NS is your safety association and we will continue to provide you with assistance in meeting your requirements for a safety management system. I am very pleased with the accomplishments and productivity of AWARE-NS in 2016. As we look to the future, we must continue to be diligent, work together, and work towards our vision of ***Safe and Healthy People; Safe and Healthy Workplaces***. Let us know how best we can assist you in creating a Culture of Safety in your workplace.

Workplace Safety Action Plan

for Nova Scotia's Health and Community Services Sectors

A Call to Action...

The Health and Community Services sectors play a critical role in the health and well-being of all Nova Scotians. It is very concerning that **workers in these sectors are more likely to be injured on the job than any other type of worker.**

Did you know? Three out of ten time-loss claims originate in these sectors.

We've started the conversation

Stakeholders are coming together to help bring about a change. With the growing awareness of injury rates, the safety and security of all workers is critically important to clients, patients, residents and their families. The time is right for change. Facing these challenges head on has demanded a new vision and greater collaboration.

Led by AWARE-NS, the Departments of Health and Wellness, Labour and Advanced Education, and Community Services, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, IWK Health Centre, WCB Nova Scotia, employers and organized labour are working together to develop a five-year targeted *Workplace Safety Action Plan for Nova Scotia's Health and Community Services Sectors*. This plan will focus on improving occupational health and safety outcomes, specifically for Home Care, Long-Term Care, and Community Services sectors.

Knowing that these work environments are very complex, extensive research and a best practices review has been conducted. Stakeholder engagement sessions were undertaken to better understand what causes injuries and how we can work together to identify opportunities to prevent them from occurring.

We all share the same vision for a safer system for workers, patients, clients, and residents. Through education, collaboration, and a willingness to look at things differently, change is possible.

For more information on the Workplace Safety Action plan, go to www.awarens.ca/actionplan

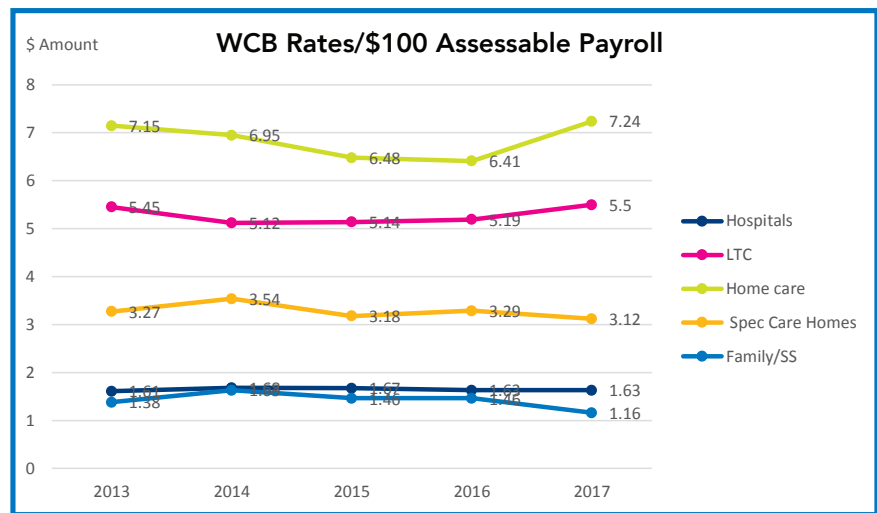
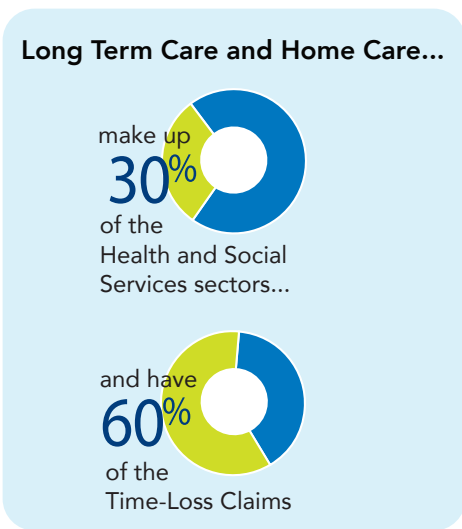


2016 Provincial Health & Social Service Injury Rates

In 2016, the equivalent of **450 Fulltime Employees** were absent from work for **1 Full Year** due to work related injuries. **113** in Acute Care, **279** in Long Term Care & Home Care and **58** in Special Care Homes & Family and Social Services.

In 2016, there were **1680 new time loss claims** and **5038 new WCB claims** directly affecting:

- Staffing, retention, hiring
- Quality and safety of care for clients/residents
- Quality of work life, family life, community life for staff



80% of time-loss claims reported to WCB of Nova Scotia by Health Care workers involve **1348** musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs).

Over **50%** of these are linked to the lifting, transferring, and repositioning of residents, patients, and clients.

Given the current health care financial burden, the high human resource needs, and the escalating costs and impacts of worker illness and injuries, **we clearly have an urgency for change - Leadership is needed more than ever.**

Working to Advance Our Strategic Priorities

Leadership in Support of a Sustainable Safety Culture

AWARE-NS works to foster leadership in the development of strategies to build health and safety capacity, through the Communities of Safe Practice (COSP) initiative that informs programs and service needs.

► Safety Management System

A comprehensive Safety Management System (SMS) ensures the health and safety of employees. The SMS helps organizations proactively identify and control hazards. **A workplace safety culture cannot be achieved without an effective SMS.**

AWARE-NS has developed a *Safety Management System (SMS)* of 13 elements, complete with program content, tools, templates and forms that will support the needs of the Nova Scotia Health and Community Services sectors.



SMS content available at www.awarens.ca

» AWARE-NS Safety Audits

AWARE-NS has developed an audit process to determine overall performance of an organization's occupational health and safety system. The audit process was rolled out to targeted organizations in Long Term Care and Home Care. AWARE-NS looks forward to supporting organizations to further develop their Safety Management Systems in 2017/18.

► Safe Handling & Mobility

Assisting clients to move is the main source of workplace injuries in Health and Community Services sectors. **Why is this a concern?**

The best way to protect the safety of both workers and clients/residents is through a Safe Handling and Mobility Program – a comprehensive prevention initiative that extends to all levels of the organization. WCB and AWARE-NS have adapted the *NSHA Soteria Strains Safe Handling and Mobility Program* for Long Term Care, Home Care and Community Services.

AWARE-NS and WCB continue to work together to make the program materials available through workshops and working directly with individual organizations.

One element of the program is the PACE risk assessment tool that has been rolled out to the province. PACE is designed to assist workers with identifying and managing the risks associated with client/resident handling. The pre-mobility check allows the workers to verify if the mobility status of the client/resident has changed.

WCB, AWARE-NS and the Eastern Zone Home Support Agencies have worked very hard to customize the *Safe Handling and Mobility Program* and PACE to be adapted for the Home Care environment. It was this work that led to AWARE-NS delivering **11 sessions** with **312 participants**, which has helped to fine-tune the program and has laid the foundation for the development of an evaluation framework.



SHM

Safe Handling and Mobility

In 2016 we:

	11
Offered 11 classroom sessions	
	312
Had 312 Participants	




Building Health and Safety Capacity Through Programs and Training

Classroom Training

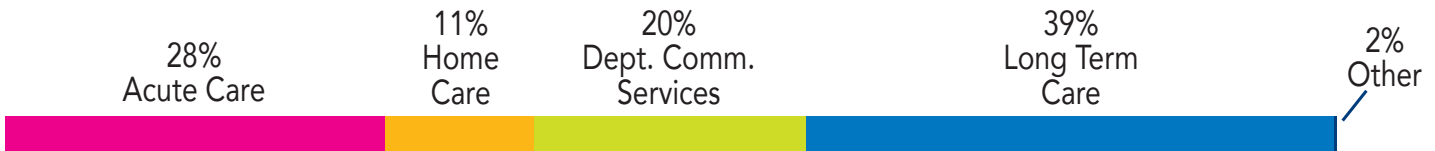
AWARE-NS aims to inspire organizations to have a continuous improvement model to move them beyond legislative requirements and take an integrated and proactive approach to safety. **AWARE-NS is becoming the trusted source for education and training** and the 'knowledge hub' for high quality resources to support OHS program development, implementation and organizational decision-making.

Did You Know?
 Since 2013, participation in Classroom Training has increased by **over 250%**.

In 2016 we:

-  **204**
Offered 204 classroom sessions
-  **3781**
Had 3781 Participants
-  **225**
Worked with 225 Organizations


Sector Breakdown






JOHSC Training

AWARE-NS has developed a 2 day JOHS Committee certificate training program delivered in a classroom setting. JOHS Committee supports the employer's duty to ensure a healthy and safe workplace. **Training and education is mandatory and a key aspect for an efficient and effective committee.**



JOSHCH 
 Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

In 2016 we:

-  **82**
Held 82 JOHS Committee training sessions
-  **1255**
Had 1255 Participants
-  **400**
Over 400 of the participants completed the certification requirements

➤ Safety for Supervisors and Managers

Safety leadership happens when we each take initiative to make a positive choice about how we will impact others. When our passion for safety is part of the normal conversation and we model safety leadership qualities, we are building a work safe culture.

AWARE-NS developed a 2.5 day training program for Supervisors and Managers, working in partnership with Dr. Kevin Kelloway's research on the *S.A.F.E.R. Leadership* model. This program integrates the *S.A.F.E.R. Leadership* skills and practical application of the *Safety Management System (SMS)*.

» S.A.F.E.R. Leadership

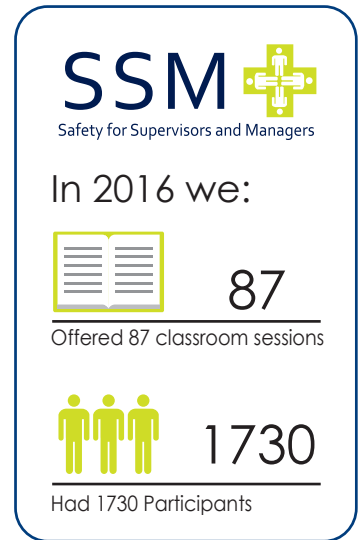
The model comprises **S**peaking of safety, **A**cting safely at work, **F**ocusing on maintaining safety standards, **E**ngaging others in safety initiatives, and **R**ecognizing individuals who adhere to safety.

➤ Workplace Violence

The Steps for Safety Working Committee completed the final step of the 6 Steps for Safety: Preventing Workplace Violence. Completed in the Fall, this final step covered two best practices:

- Bullying
- Domestic Violence.

AWARE-NS and WCB would like to acknowledge the dedicated work of all the Working Group members over the past 3 years .



Did You Know?
Health Care workers are 3x more likely than any other occupation to experience workplace violence?
Even more than Police and Corrections Officers!







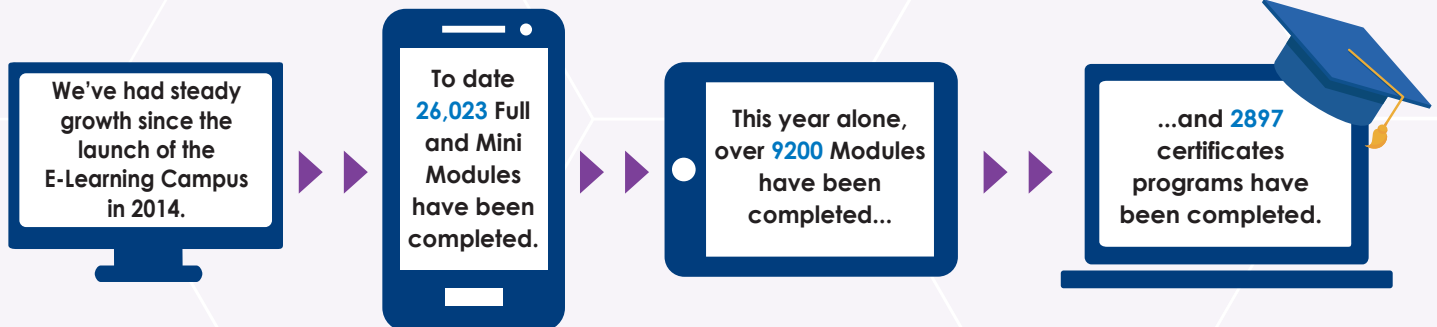
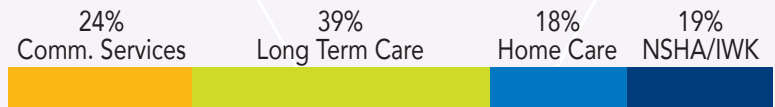
Self-Directed Learning

The Self-Directed Learning platform continues to provide readily available OHS education and training on key topics to organizations. This year, we added three new courses:

- Blended WHMIS
- Lock out/Tag out
- Contractor Safety



	2014	2015	2016
SDL Self Directed Learning 			
Topics Available 	5	8	11
Organizations Using the Training 	40	135	170
Modules Completed 	2,100	18,000	26,023



Website Engagement

In 2016 the AWARE-NS website had:

- 107,490 Page Views** (310% increase since 2014)
- 8,779 Total Users** (130% increase) **48% are New Users**
- Average Session Time of **10 minutes** (329% increase)

Social Media platforms allow AWARE-NS to engage with individuals and other organizations in the Health and Community Service sectors and across the country.

It is encouraging to see stories being shared that support and promote safe and healthy people; safe and healthy workplaces.

Follow us on Twitter: @AWARE_NS
Like our Facebook Page: AWARE-NS

Stay informed!
 Visit our website www.awarens.ca to subscribe to the AWARE-NS Newsletter.

Foster and Enhance Relationships and Partnerships to Support Success

► Our Work Together



"The commitment from the AWARE-NS team provides invaluable encouragement and focus to our JOHS Committee. They care for our success and have the experience and knowledge we can depend on."

-St. Vincent's Nursing Home



"With serious efforts and sincere dedication, AWARE-NS was sure to help us succeed. Safety is something that we have worked at for years and you have brought it all together to work more efficiently for everyone. May you always keep up the good work! Thank you AWARE-NS for all you have done."

**-Scott Wier, Building Supervisor
Valley View Villa**

"The JOHSC at Bay Side Home in Barrington, NS is very excited to be starting fresh with the skills we need to move forward with the confidence and supportive safety partnership for all at Bay Side Home."

-Melanie Atwood, Bay Side Home



"Heather Matthews has provided Bay Side Home's JOHS Committee, Senior Leadership team and Nursing Supervisors with the tools to increase the importance, knowledge and understanding of a safe workplace for both the staff and residents. Thank you."

-Paula Hatfield, Bay Side Home



"Challenging behaviour is a sector-wide problem. Grand View Manor is fortunate to have formed a partnership with Heather Matthews through AWARE-NS. She helped us develop our Code White and she facilitated the roll-out to staff. We've had multiple sessions in 3 days that trained over 100 staff members. The need for Code White is loud and clear and our partnership with AWARE-NS made all the difference in why we are seeing such a successful turn-out. Thank you for being responsive to the sector's needs and we are hoping to see more codes implemented."

-Laura Williams, Director of Environment and Support Services, Grand View Manor

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AWARE + NS

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