



Nova Scotia Health + Community Services Safety Association



Annual Report 2019

Our Strategy

MISSION

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

WE BELIEVE THAT

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

VISION

Safe and healthy people; safe and healthy workplaces.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- o Provide Leadership to Support a Positive and Sustainable Culture of Health and Safety
- o Building Health and Safety Capacity through Programs and Training
- o Foster and Enhance Relationships and Partnerships

Report from

Board Chair & Executive Director

This year was a year of significant activity and achievement for AWARE-NS and 2020 is shaping up to be a year like no other. We are all experiencing a dramatic shift in our personal and work lives as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to unfold, taking the highest priority in all aspects of life.

The collaboration and efforts of our partners and stakeholders represents solid progress in meeting the needs of our members for safety programs and services. Over the past few years, WCB time loss claims and rates have been on the rise. However, **we are seeing progress in a reduction in both time loss claims and costs in Long Term Care and Home Care.** Our combined efforts are beginning to show promise!

We are proud of our team who has achieved key deliverables in meeting set targets in our programs and services; the promotion of the safety management system, our tools and resources, targeted outreach and providing required safety education and training.

We are very proud to have highly engaged employees. **Over 8000 participants accessed our training via classroom, customized engagements, and Online Learning formats.** Our **Targeted Outreach Program** (TOP), pivotal in building a culture of safety through engagement, safety audits, coaching and support is embraced by leaders, safety committees and frontline staff. The key deliverable of TOP, is showing promising progress and outcomes of success in injury reduction, and building a safer workplace for their employees.

AWARE-NS, as a strategic partner, worked to advance the Workplace Safety Action Plan, with the development of a road map to implement the 21 recommendations with significant work completed on the **Workplace Violence Prevention** and **Safe Handling and Mobility** programs.

Coming into the year, the Board of Directors identified some key priorities. Those included working extensively to ensure the financial resources are in place to meet operations and continued progress towards the need for a long term funding model to support our important work.

While most of this report will focus on what AWARE-NS has achieved or planned, know that we see you rising to these challenges and we continue to be here to help. The COVID-19 pandemic has strained our sectors, but it has also demonstrated our resilience. **We thank everyone in the caring sectors for all that you have done and all that you will do to keep everyone in Nova Scotia healthy and safe.** While you are protecting the health of our society, we will continue to advocate for your safety and health at work.

Jenna Brookfield,
Board Chair

Susan Dempsey,
Executive Director

Thank you to the AWARE-NS Board of Directors for being the guiding light, and to our industry partners who have dedicated their resources, time and talents and worked hand-in hand with us, so that we are able to accomplish our goals.

Provide Leadership

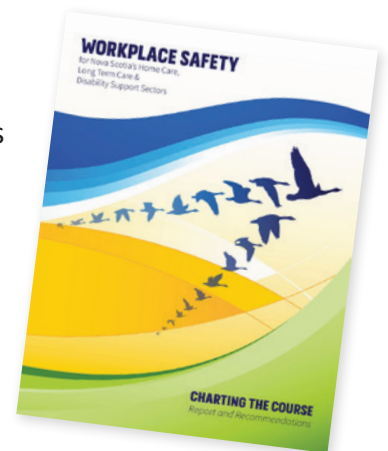
to support a positive and sustainable culture of health and safety

Workplace Safety Action Plan

The health and community services sectors are more than ready for action to take place – specifically the 21 recommendations outlined in the Workplace Safety Action Plan that was developed in 2018. AWARE-NS is your strategic partner.

Our Progress

- Work has started on **building a leadership engagement strategy**, supported through a summer student project.
- **Increased Safety Leadership competency** among senior leaders and managers through engagement, training and a supportive coaching model.
- **Performance-based reports were created** based on WCB data within the health care sector.
- **Working Groups were established** for both the Provincial **Safe Handling and Mobility (SHM)** and Provincial **Workplace Violence Prevention (WPV)** Programs. Both groups completed the program standards and requirements.
- Significant work achieved in the SHM program implementation.



▶ Safety Management System-Targeted Outreach Program (TOP)

The AWARE-NS **Safety Management System** (SMS) provides a foundation for goal setting, planning, and measuring performance. The SMS becomes a part of everyday work, fostering a strong safety culture and is promoted through our **Targeted Outreach Program** (TOP).

Our Progress

- **Five organizations** participate in TOP
- **14 Safety Audits** conducted
- **Launched a comprehensive Safety Improvement Initiative** with VON Canada that is already showing **results in the reduction of time loss injuries** and a positive shift in safety culture

Looking Ahead

- Continue to amplify and advance the work related to VON Safety Improvement Initiative
- Identify organizations that would be ideal TOP participants

▶ Healthcare Safety Collaboration Committee

AWARE-NS, the Department of Labor and Advanced Education (DLAE) and WCB Nova Scotia collaborate on a shared agenda to support workplaces within the Health and Community Services sector to achieve and maintain OH&S compliance.

Our Progress

- AWARE-NS **designed an engagement strategy** for DLAE Compliance Officers
- **Provided customized training** to 40 DLAE Compliance Officers in all four zones
- **Developed a working group** to create DLAE Officer standardized inspection tools and guidelines, specific for Long Term Care, Home Care and Disability Support Program workplaces
- **Drafted and piloted long term care inspection tools**

Looking Ahead

- Will initiate training for new Department of Labour and Advanced Education Officers
- The Working Group will focus on developing and testing inspection guidelines for the Home Care and Disability Support Program sectors



Building Health and Safety Capacity through Programs and Training

▶ Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee Training

Training **Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee** (JOHSC) members is one of AWARE-NS' most popular core programs. This education is not only a requirement, but is essential for an effective and efficient Committee.

Looking Ahead

We have had to look at a number of different options to continue to safely offer this training in the midst of a global pandemic. These options include:

- Continue to deliver in a community setting with the precaution of physical distancing and masking
- Continue to offer cohorting opportunities with organizations with the precaution of physical distancing and masking
- Develop and deliver JOHSC training virtually, as four half-day sessions

JOHS Committee training reached:

10 Communities **67** Organizations **1358** Participants

▶ Safety Leadership Training

Building the health and safety competencies needed to support leaders within the Health and Community Services sectors.

Looking Ahead

- Continue to build safety leadership competencies through our engagement and coaching model
- Transition the 2.5-day **Safety for Supervisors and Managers** (SSM) program into a 2-day program
- Offer community setting training with precaution and cohorting opportunities
- Explore offering virtual learning sessions

Safety Leadership training reached:

9 Communities **67** Organizations **1372** Participants



Musculoskeletal Injuries and Prevention

Sprain and strain injuries continue to be the leading reason for staff missing time from work.

AWARE-NS, in partnership with WCB Nova Scotia, have developed an engagement strategy, programs, education/training, tools and resources that protect the safety of both residents/clients and workers. In 2018 the **Safe Handling and Mobility** (SHM) program rollout began and in 2019, the **Lifting and Moving Safety** (LAMS) program was successfully launched.

In 2019 we have seen a reduction in MSI time loss claims across the Long Term Care, Home Care and Disability Support Program sectors.



Safe Handling and Mobility Program

The best way to protect the safety of both workers and residents is through a **Safe Handling and Mobility** (SHM) program – a comprehensive prevention initiative that extends to all levels of an organization.

Our Progress

- Continued the SHM Program roll-out and training
 - **55 new organizations** signed-on
 - A total to **109 organizations** are at various stages of SHM program roll-out
 - **275 trainers** were trained and **2450 front line workers** received **PACE** training
- Since 2018, over \$1.5M has been invested by DHW and WCB Nova Scotia to address risks to workers related to resident/client mobilization
- The Department of Health and Wellness funded Small Equipment Grants for Home Care agencies

Percentage of organizations in Nova Scotia
AWARE-NS engaged with for Safe Handling and Mobility:



Safe Handling and Mobility Sustainability Best Practices

While a significant amount of work was focused on the program elements, education and training, this year, AWARE-NS and WCB Nova Scotia closely examined the types of supports that will be needed for organizations to continue to progress and stay motivated.

Through a new working group, a structured plan and guideline for the sustainability of the SHM program was developed that will support organizations to remain active in implementing best practices.

22 organizations are now actively participating in this next phase

▶ Lifting and Moving Safely (LAMS)

Creating awareness on incidents of sprains and strains among support service workers in the health care environment was a key deliverable this past year.

Working with WCB Nova Scotia, we designed and delivered a **Lifting and Moving Safely (LAMS)** program on how to prevent MSI's for non-care tasks and activities for support staff, managers/supervisors and JOHS Committee members.

LAMS training reached

6 Workshops **40** Organizations **137** Participants

Looking Ahead

- Design a SHM readiness survey to all organizations who have completed the **Train-the-Trainer** program, to determine the next steps for each individual organization
- Develop individual plans to support the implementation of SHM programs
- Update SHM program content for the **Train-the-Trainer** program, based on lessons learned
- Create content and materials for a refresher training program in various training formats
- Continue to offer the LAMS workshop with the added features, and examine developing a virtual option



Workplace Violence Prevention

Code White Responder Training is a key component of a **Workplace Violence Prevention (WPV)** program. Having a clearly defined process for situations that involve extreme aggression positively influence the competence and confidence of staff when responding to Code White situations, while most importantly, promoting safety for all involved.

AWARE-NS continues to support organizations in the completion of their Workplace Violence Risk Assessment, as well as **assisting them in developing a plan** to address the areas for action. This year, **AWARE-NS worked with four organizations** in their WPV risk assessment work.



Looking Ahead

Once the provincial standards and guidelines for Workplace Violence Prevention are approved, AWARE-NS will update the **Steps for Safety WPV Prevention** program to reflect the requirements and will then move on creating a communications strategy to inform the sector.

In 2019 we have seen a significant increase in WCB time loss claims and costs in the Disability Support Program sector, whereas the Home Care, Long Term Care and Acute Care sectors have remained relatively steady.

Foster and Enhance Relationships and Partnerships

THANK
YOU

Department of Health and Wellness, WCB Nova Scotia, Department of Community Services, Department of Labour and Advanced Education, Community of Safe Practice (COSP), Sustainability Committee, Workplace Violence and Safe Handling and Mobility Working Groups, Healthcare Safety Collaboration Committee, Nova Scotia Residential Agencies Association, Continuing Care Association of Nova Scotia, Health Care Human Resource Sector Council, Diverse Abilities NS, Health Association Nova Scotia, Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association, NSGEU, CUPE, NSNU, UNIFOR and National Alliance for Safety and Health in Healthcare

2019 Provincial Health & Social Services Injury Data

In 2019, the equivalent of **642 fulltime employees were absent from work for 1 full year** due to work related injuries. (155 Acute Care, 231 Long Term Care, 173 Home Care and 83 from Disability Support)

Health and Social Services Base Rate Trends

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	*2021
Hospitals	1.63	1.63	1.62	1.63	1.55	1.61
Long-Term Care	5.19	5.50	5.87	5.79	5.98	6.00
Home Care	6.41	7.24	8.05	8.80	10.04	10.19
Special Care Homes	3.29	3.12	3.23	3.41	3.95	3.98

*Claim costs data suggests that Long Term Care and Home Care base rates will likely stabilize and may begin to trend downward. There is some indication that the rates for Special Care Homes may be trending up.

Health & Social Service* (HSS) Employers:

- Account for **19.3% of NS Assessable Payroll** but **31.6% of all Time Loss Claims**
- **Will pay an estimated \$76,600,000.00** to WCB Nova Scotia in 2020

*HSS employers include Long Term Care, Home Care, Ambulance, Hospitals and Family & Social Services.

Injury Types:

80% – Musculoskeletal
18.6% – Slips, Trips & Falls
8.3% – Violence



2019 Trends

- A reduction in new time loss claims
- A reduction in cost of claims in Home Care and Long Term Care
- A reduction in time loss claims in the Disability Support Programs sector, however costs of claims are higher
- A reduction in MSI time loss claims across the Long Term Care, Home Care and Disability sectors, whereas Acute Care and Ambulance services are experiencing an upward trend
- A significant increase in workplace violence time loss claims and claim costs in the Disability Support Programs sector, while other sectors remain relatively steady

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Millie Colbourne - Vice Chair

Member at Large

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Corey MacKenzie

Acute Care

Katrina Philopoulos

Front Line Representative

Tracy D'Entremont

Facility-Based Disability Support Program

Judy Heffern

Facility Based Long Term Care (DHW)

Denise Turnbull

Community-Based Disability Support Program

Shannon McLellan

Ex-Officio

Andrea Vardy- WCB Nova Scotia

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