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Strategic Priorities

Collaboration, Partnerships, Leadership

Awareness, Promotion, Advocacy, Communication

Education and Training, Facilitating Effective Practices

Sustaining AWARE-NS. Progress in the System

MISSION, BELIEFS, VISION & VALUES

Mission:

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

Beliefs:

A healthy and safe workplace is a basic right
All workplace injuries must be prevented
Everyone must be a leader in workplace health & safety

Vision:

Safe and healthy people; safe and healthy workplaces.

Values:

EXCELLENCE

ACCOUNTABILITY

COLLABORATION

RESPECT

COURAGE

STAKEHOLDER REVIEW: A NEW CONVERSATION

In 2013, AWARE-NS entered its fifth year of operation. It was time to step back, check in with the sectors we serve and ask how we're doing.

A Review Steering Committee was established to guide the process and to provide recommendations to the Board of AWARE-NS. The committee included members of the Board of Directors and ex-officio members of the Board of Directors from the Department of Health and Wellness, Community Services and the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia. Susan Smith of Wayfinder Consulting conducted the review, including over 40 interviews and an online survey to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Several key themes emerged and a number strategic recommendations were made. AWARE-NS is embracing this opportunity to reorient our strategies to better meet the needs of our stakeholders. We are developing a new leadership model, strategic operational plan, and a service delivery focus that better responds to the rapidly changing OHS environment.

Highlights include:

- The Review affirmed the value of a safety association for the health and community service sectors, to support the workforce in these areas.
- The health and community services sector represents over 55,000 workers; AWARE-NS should remain focused on its strategies for workplace safety and injury prevention in Home Care/Home Support, Long Term Care and Community Services to support manageable and realistic deliverables within the current approved resources.
- Fine tune AWARE-NS operational plan to balance resources and optimize service and program delivery to reduce workplace injury and resulting costs.
- The *Community of Safe Practice* initiative was seen by stakeholders to be a key value-add in supporting their efforts in workplace safety. The review proposed that AWARE-NS transition to a new service model, shifting to a front-line focus as demonstrated in the COSP model; building safety leadership culture through the integration and alignment of OHS programs and services that reflect the needs of our stakeholders.
- Maintain stakeholder engagement by fostering supportive relationships. Meet stakeholders, in their own communities, to help define services, identify program and service needs and seek feedback.
- Optimize OHS resources and build capacity across organizations to support program delivery.
- Ensure the composition of the Board of Directors reflects the sector we serve to better support and guide the complex and strategic work of the Association.

The Stakeholder review and recommendations provide a guide for our development. They identify key areas and new measures for our success. Our strengths as an organization will be maintained and opportunities for improvement will be incorporated in the coming year. We will explore enhancements through a refreshed strategic plan, the development of effective operational initiatives and a supportive human resources strategy that focuses on program development and services that are responsive to stakeholder requirements. Our success will have a positive impact on workplace safety for our stakeholders.

KATHY MACNEIL

BOARD CHAIR



In the words of Winston Churchill **“Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential.”** For the Board of Directors of AWARE-NS, this past year has represented continuous effort in the name of unlocking the potential of this small, but mighty organization- your safety association.

This year marked AWARE-NS's fifth year of existence. It was an opportunity to take stock of the impact our stakeholders identified that the work of the organization had in your workplaces. It took courage to ask how we needed to change to better meet your needs. Your feedback through the stakeholder review helped the Board and staff focus efforts in the areas of continued development of communities of safe practice in long term care, and community based care, building on the strength of the home care experience. It also enabled us to focus on service delivery to the members of the sectors who identified they could benefit from the collaboration that AWARE-NS represents- long term care, home care/home support and community based residential homes. The operational model of the organization was shifted to allow for focused expertise to be available in the areas of Health and Safety. These focused efforts for change were enabled by strong leadership, from the members of the Board who contributed much time and energy to ensure success, to the staff who demonstrated agility and flexibility in making changes quickly.

This year also saw us saying good-bye to Mary Lou MacDonald who provided courageous leadership in the infancy of AWARE-NS and who provided the vision to get us launched. We welcomed Susan Dempsey as our Interim Executive Director and who has provided incredible energy and enthusiasm to fuel our collective efforts and who has worked to build relationships across the many members of the health and community services sectors. On behalf of my Board colleagues, I would like to thank both Mary Lou and Susan for their passionate leadership.

It has been an exhausting and an exhilarating year to be part of this transformation. We look forward to the work ahead to refresh our strategic plan, always in partnership with those we serve. I would like to thank my fellow Board members, each of whom have demonstrated tremendous commitment to the people we all care about- those who deliver care and services in health and community services workplaces across this province. It is an honour to work with these dedicated leaders and I look forward to our continued work with our partners to have the safest workplaces for those we serve.

SUSAN DEMPSEY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It gives me great pleasure to be able to report on the work of AWARE-NS in 2013/2014.

Building a safety culture is about people caring for people. Our values of Excellence, Accountability, Collaboration, Respect and Courage are our intrinsic motivators in making a valuable contribution to facilitate and support best practices in health and safety. It is our commitment and hope of making a positive impact in incident and injury reduction by fostering leadership practices in each and every organization.

In this year's annual report, we have taken the opportunity to report on our activities, demonstrate outcomes and discuss work that remains in progress on our key initiatives: Community of Safe Practice (COSP), Steps for Safety: Preventing Workplace Violence and Soteria Strains; building OHS educational and training resources to support these initiatives and of prime significance, lending our voice by leading advocacy and awareness efforts that advance our Mission to improve health and safety in the health and community services sector.

Of great value was the Stakeholder Review and engagement process by an Independent Consultant of our Stakeholders and Partners who provided powerful input and advice giving us greater clarity in our work. It helped us concentrate on the operational direction of AWARE-NS, and the importance of relationship building in this rapidly changing environmental capacity for OHS in the Nova Scotia.

We shifted our operational plan to focus on Long Term Care, Home Care/ Home Support and Community Services that included the refinement of goals, and objectives that best respond to stakeholders needs and outcomes that will guide us well into 2014-15.

Our efforts involved greater attention to the development and delivery of OHS programs and services to organizations at the front line in your community, while leveraging our resources to build a collaborative model that supports an integrated approach to safety programs.

The work in COSP for Home Care/Home Support continued with the Pilot Agencies which included the provincial roll out of the programming developed to date. The expansion of this program has been well received by the stakeholders and our model going forward.

AWARE-NS joined the working group of Steps for Safety: Preventing Workplace Violence, in May 2014. Since that time we have worked very closely with our partners to develop the framework for a resource guide that address both compliance and best practices.

We continue to support the work of Soteria Strains which has made significant progress with the completion of the first draft of the program.

We will continue to engage you, our stakeholders and partners allowing for continuous input and feedback that informs us of our work plan and measures of success.

I believe successful outcomes are achieved through positive interactions, and strong relationships. We are committed to working in collaboration to achieve shared objectives in helping to build a safety culture in your work place.

COSP

Community of Safe Practice

AWARE-NS continued its mandate of developing a strategic OHS prevention collaboration with Homecare/Home Support Agencies and WCB. The COSP Health & Safety Management System was implemented province-wide. This included the development of practical tools, and resources and in addition, 'Train the trainer' teaching modules for front line staff. All material was posted to the AWARENS website for easy access of stakeholders. The future focus will be to customize the program for Long Term Care and develop an engagement and implementation plan.

OHS Topics Developed

- Safety Accountability
- JOSH Committee Effectiveness
- Hazard Management System
- IRS - Exploring NS OHS Legislative Structure
- IRS - Improving Safety Outcomes Through a Safety Management System
- Hazard ID - HomeCare Specific
- Incident Investigation/Root Cause Analysis
- Return to Work/Stay at Work

WHERE WE'VE BEEN, WHAT WE'VE DONE

COSP HomeCare/ Home Support Information Sessions

10 Sessions
21 Agencies
37 stakeholders

COSP Long-Term Care Pilot Group Selected

10 LTC were selected to guide the development of the COSP program.

Internal Responsibility System Train-the-Trainer

9 Sessions
13 Agencies
27 stakeholders

Summary of Training Engagement

9 Communities
32 Sessions
69 Organizations
165 Stakeholders
6097 kilometers



8 Webinars
200+ Participants

Webinars

COSP

- Safety Accountability
- JOHS Committee Effectiveness
- Hazard Identification
- Internal Responsibility System, delivered in partnership with WCB

Soteria Strains

- Project Overview Soteria,
- The Making of a Provincial Strategy
- Initial Engagement Phase Results
- Progress Report, delivered in partnership with the Soteria Strains Working Group

Winter Driving, delivered in partnership with Safety Services Nova Scotia (SSNS)



Safety Accountability Train-the-Trainer
9 Sessions, 18 Agencies
47 stakeholders

OUR INITIATIVES:

Working to Advance our Strategy

We continued along the journey this year, guided by our Strategic Directions making notable progress forward.

Safety is a team effort. We acknowledge our stakeholders and key partners who have worked in collaboration with us leveraging resources to transform system challenges into opportunities.

Workplace Safety Strategy

At the provincial level, AWARE-NS continued to engage leaders around a shared agenda for change by lending its voice to support the health and safety issues representing the Health and Community Services sector at many venues and engagement opportunities. The launch of the Workplace Safety Strategy in the Spring of 2013, marked a tipping point in establishing strong goals and provincial investment to champion safe workplaces. AWARE-NS's role in this strategy will be to develop and deliver education training.

Stakeholder Engagement & Communication

We share a burning ambition for safety; through effective communication networks and strong relationships helping foster the safety culture we all desire. 'Asking, Listening and Talking' are part of our conversation and necessary to ensure our decisions and priorities reflect the needs in programs and services that frame our pathway to your success.

We use a multi-level communication approach to create awareness, build knowledge and sharing know how to build upon the foundation that encourages our stakeholders to have confidence in and contribute to our growing knowledge and expertise.

Outreach through Conference and Workshops:

AWARE-NS continues to bring the safety messages and its value proposition to both the Health and Community Service sector and those external to our industry through numerous presentations, provincial conferences and networking sessions.

Building Online Capacity:

AWARE-NS website was upgraded to be more responsive and an interactive platform facilitating the development of original content through articles and videos. Both the face to face training sessions and online communication initiatives of Facebook, Twitter and Linked-In have been very beneficial in driving traffic to the website for resources, information, our newsletter, and other industry news.

Top 3 Pages Viewed

- Scheduled Webinars
- Mainstay Award
- Workplace Violence Prevention Tools

Website Traffic

- Average 1200 visits per month
- Over 3900 page views per month
- 38% of visitors are first time visitors.

Customized Educational Resources:

We continue to add new resources to the website in response to stakeholder's expressed need for no-cost, practical, and easily accessible tools. We responded by going to the 8 regions in the province and delivering the Train the Trainer program designed to increase and strengthen the core safety competencies. Each organization can customize the program resources to their own unique needs.

Building our Stakeholder Contacts

- 1700 contacts
- A 30% increase the last six months
- 642 followers on Twitter

The AWARE-NS Monthly e-newsletter features OHS tools, upcoming industry events, OHS news, updates on AWARE-NS's strategic priorities and projects. On average, over 1600 of our stakeholders receive our electronic updates directly. Hotline Support continues to be available for inquires and for expert OHS advice, information and knowledge solutions.

Webinars are a key delivery model for timely and relevant hot button topics. AWARE-NS hosted a number of webinars, with our industry partners. Webinars can be accessed from our You Tube Video library.

AWARE-NS Online e-Campus continues to be available to our stakeholders. In response to your feedback of the e-campus survey, we added the following courses have been added to the Online Campus:

- Pandemic Influenza
- Workplace Hazards: Identification, Assessment and Control

E- Campus – Most Popular Courses

- Staying Safe while Working in the Community
- Infection Control
- WHMIS
- Joint OHS Committee
- Respectful Workplace
- Incident Investigation

Workplace Violence Prevention

Steps for Safety - Preventing Workplace Violence

AWARE-NS continues to work in partnership with WCB in addressing the provincial 2013-2017 Workplace Safety Strategy through the identification, development and implementation of programs to create violence free workplaces.

Given the gradual rise in the number and severity of workplace injuries resulting from violence in the workplace, a group of safety leaders from the healthcare and community services sectors most affected has been convened. This group is known as the Workplace Violence Prevention Working Group (WVPPG). In June 2013, several organizations from the adult residential care, long term care and community residential services sector agreed to collaborate on the development of tools to address the concerns they are facing in their sector.

Steps for Safety

Preventing Workplace Violence



The working group consists of WCB-NS, AWARE-NS, Riverview Home Corporation, YACRO, Colchester Residential Services Society, Valley View Villa, MacLeod Health Care, Shannex Health Care, Northwood.

The objective of this group is to share best practices and to develop a resource guide that can be shared with all sectors in health and community services to create awareness of the issues and offer prevention strategies.

They looked at the elements of the incident investigation and the root cause analysis process to determine the area of best practices that will feed into a continuous improvement model.

The working group has completed the first three deliverables of this initiative:

- A Review of Workplace Violence Programs
- Development of Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Tools
- Framework for the Six Step Resource Guide

A key step in this initiative was the "branding" process of the materials being produced and distributed to AWARE-NS and WCB stakeholders. "Steps for Safety - Preventing Workplace Violence" was the slogan and tag line created as a result of the branding process. The intention of the brand is to ensure that the material would be easily recognizable and illustrate the steps required for an organization to create a violence free workplace. The material developed for each step has and will continue to be posted on the AWARE-NS website for use by stakeholders.

Step One of the Resource Guide has been developed and released. The WPVPG will continue with the completion of the remaining 5 steps deliverables.

"Aware NS has demonstrated a commitment as a collaborative partner to develop resources for workplace violence prevention and facilitate engagement within the sector to advance this initiative."

~ Louise Barker, B.Sc., M.P.P.A.L., CRSP,
Workplace Consultant Health and Social Services
Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia

SOTERIA STRAINS



As a member of the executive team and project leads team, AWARE-NS continues to be an active partner in developing a provincial program to reduce musculoskeletal injuries within DHA/ IWK. This past year, in the research and development phase of the Soteria- Strains Initiative, AWARE-NS provided expertise and leadership related to perception surveys, provincial legislation and best practices analysis.

This partnership helps all to work in collaboration to support the goal of lowering workplace injuries in health care, helping to ensure more people return home safely at the end of each workday. A safe environment for our workers helps ensure a safe environment for patients, clients, residents, and their families – it benefits us all.

The Soteria Strains key project deliverable is the development of a multi-factorial program for safe patient lift, transfer and repositioning. This will be a 'made in Nova Scotia' solution that works in our health care workplaces. The learnings and process improvements from Soteria Strains will be shared with all health care sub-sectors in Nova Scotia. The goal is to achieve safer health care workplaces. AWARE-NS continues to play a pivotal role in communications disseminations.

The work being done through Soteria Strains will provide a significant contribution to the advancement of preventing workplace injury in Nova Scotia, not limited by geography, industry or employer.

As with all of the safety initiatives, through our communication hub, we ensure awareness, promotion and dissemination of information regarding project progress, resource development and knowledge transfer to and among all of our stakeholders.

With a separate gateway link to the Soteria Strains project we have provided the following:

- A continued and significant web presence as a communication tool with the stakeholders which provides for dissemination across the Aware-NS network of safety associations and stakeholder groups.
- A direct link to the Soteria Strains web site
- Tools and resources - designed to create a one stop shop for Soteria stakeholders including; resource information, new research, tool kits and links to surveys such as the Soteria Strains Perspective Survey Report, Findings and Recommendations from face to face consultations, the Choice Book and Soteria Strains Program Guide and webinars on Soteria progress reports.
- Promotion - AWARE-NS regularly markets Soteria News and Updates through our email data base as well as social media

"AWARE-NS has been a strong contributor to the Soteria Strains MSI prevention strategy. AWARE-NS never loses sight of the larger vision of safer work places for all workers in Nova Scotia's healthcare and community services sector."

~ Mark Williams PT, B.Sc.PT
Project Leader, Soteria Strains

BOARD MEMBERS & AWARE-NS OFFICE

Board of Directors

DISTRICT HEALTH AUTHORITIES

Kathy MacNeil, Capital District Health Authority
Sheila Rankin, Annapolis Valley Health

COMMUNITY CARE

Denise Halloran, Guysborough County Home Support Agency
Patricia Bishop-Grant, New Waterford Homecare Service Society

FACILITY BASED LONG TERM CARE

Shelley James, Northwood
Millie Colbourne, Breton Ability Centre
Patricia Bland, Riverview Home Corporation

FRONT LINE WORKERS

Angela Croft, Northwood Homecare
Randy Royal, High-Crest Home

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Janet Everest, HCHR Sector Council

LABOUR

Joan Jessome, NSFL/NSGEU

EX OFFICIO

Carmelle d'Entremont, Department of Health and Wellness
Dennita Fitzpatrick, WCB
Judy LaPierre, Department of Community Services

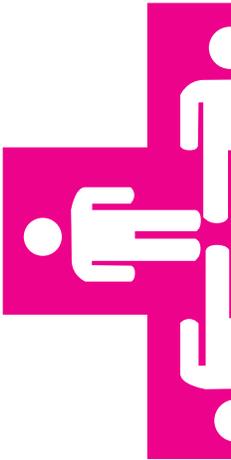
Our Office

Susan Dempsey
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Occupational Health And Safety Specialist

Scott Bennett
OHS Program Development Coordinator

Valerie MacLeod
Executive and Stakeholder Relations
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AWARE-NS is funded by the Nova Scotia
Department of Health and Wellness