



Expertise, Services  
and Support  
you can Trust.



HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION  
NOVA SCOTIA

LEADERSHIP. SERVICES. SUPPORT.

## ABOUT

# The Health Association

Health Association Nova Scotia is a not-for-profit, non-government, member-based service association for a wide variety of health and health-related organizations. Since our establishment more than fifty years ago, we have provided expertise, high-quality, high-value services and support that our members can trust.

## Our Mission

A member driven organization that promotes a high performing, sustainable health system by providing quality services, shared solutions and support

## Vision

Health System  
Excellence

## Strategic Directions

- Promote Leadership for Quality
- Enhance Shared Service Delivery
- Support the System Working Better Together to address shared issues



Michele Lowe  
Co-chair  
Homecare Network, Executive  
Director Northwood in the  
Community

## OUR Members

Our members come from a wide range of sectors whose mandates positively impact the determinants of health. These include the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK Health Centre, the majority of nursing homes in Nova Scotia, all government funded home care agencies and a growing number of private agencies, adult residential centres/regional rehabilitation centres, residential care facilities, and a wide variety of other health and community-based organizations. In total, we currently have over 130 member organizations, representing more than 200 facility/agency sites.

This broad-based membership makes Health Association Nova Scotia truly representative of the entire health continuum. Our diversity uniquely positions us to contribute system-wide perspectives on issues and to facilitate communication and collaboration among all sectors, supporting them to work together to address common issues and challenges.

“**Being a member of the Health Association provides you with an opportunity to make a difference through committee participation. The expert support from the Member and Partner Engagement Service has helped to raise the profile of the Homecare Network among stakeholders and has given members a voice in decisions that impact service delivery in Nova Scotia. Through a collaborative evidence-based position paper, “Rising to the Challenge,” the Network has identified the issues and recommended approaches to address the challenges facing Homecare delivery in Nova Scotia.**”

# VALUE OF Membership

Health Association Nova Scotia is a member-based association. As such, we not only work for our members, but with our members, in identifying solutions to the challenges they face, and ultimately, achieving their goals. We strive to fulfill this commitment to our membership through three main pillars:

We provide thought **leadership** on key health system issues through communication, collaboration and representation.

We deliver high-quality, high-value **Services** that are responsive to the needs of our members and support them to enhance the level and quality of services they provide while reducing overall costs.

We **Support** members to develop solutions to system challenges as well as respond to legislative, regulatory and policy developments through facilitation and a range of other activities, including research and policy analysis.

More information about our service offerings and benefits of membership are provided on the coming pages.



Janet Knox  
President/CEO  
Nova Scotia Health Authority

“ Health Association Nova Scotia offers its member organizations services and support they can trust. They work with members to develop innovative solutions to their challenges and are responsive to their changing needs as they evolve over time. We look forward to working with Health Association Nova Scotia, both as a service provider and partner in pursuit of our goal, Healthy People, Healthy Communities – for Generations. ”

# Services

## PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY, COST-EFFECTIVE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

A cornerstone of Health Association Nova Scotia is the provision of progressive, high quality, cost-effective services. As a member-based association, we seek out the best solutions for our members. We strive to build value-added programs that are responsive, client-focused and help our members reach their goals while increasing efficiency and reducing costs. Our core services are offered on a fee-for-service or cost-recovery basis, allowing members to choose the programs that best suit their needs.

- The Health Association's **Clinical Engineering Service** has specialized in the introduction and management of technology used in the delivery of patient/resident care services in health organizations for over 30 years. Our Service has been recognized nationally and provincially for quality, innovation, customer service and cost-effectiveness. With a team of knowledgeable, well-trained technologists and technicians working out of eight offices across Nova Scotia, we offer our members programs that are high in calibre, competitively priced and consistently delivered regardless of their location in the province.

- With over 40 years of experience of delivering centralized benefits administration services for Health Association members, our **Group Benefits Solutions Service** is the

largest provider of benefits in Nova Scotia's health system. We offer a range of competitive Employee Benefit programs, including long term disability, group life, extended health and dental. A menu of optional benefits, such as accidental death and dismemberment and critical illness, is also available to individual plan members.

- The **Labour Relations and Compensation Analysis Service** offers subscribing member organizations comprehensive labour law, human resources and compensation consulting support. Our team, including legal counsel and compensation professionals, have specialized expertise in the health and community services sectors. With over 40 years of experience, our service has developed a solid reputation for the delivery of high quality, cost-effective labour

relations services for Nova Scotia's acute care sector as well as long term care facilities, home care organizations adult residential centres/regional rehabilitation centres and other health-related agencies.

- Health Association Nova Scotia is a joint sponsor of the **Nova Scotia Health Employees' Pension Plan (NSHEPP)**. The NSHEPP is one of the largest pension plans that are registered in Nova Scotia. Its investment results have been recognized nationally, and it offers numerous advantages to Health Association members and their employees.

**Please read on to learn more about the range of programs and services available to Health Association member organizations.**



Annette Fougere  
RT,BScN, RN,  
Administrator  
St. Anne Centre

“ St. Anne Centre has been purchasing core services for many years- primarily Clinical Engineering Services, Labour Relations and Group Benefits. These services benefit the employer, employee and the residents of our facility. Clinical Engineering provide us with services that enable providers to keep residents and employees safe through regular inspections, education, and Alerts on a wide range of equipment and consulting services. Labour Relations enables the employer to have timely, and experienced consultation and education on contract issues - many of us are on a first name basis with our consultant. Group Benefits make it possible to provide employees with health and dental programs at the most reasonable cost possible. As a small long term care and emergency care service, it has provided us with a “one stop shopping” experience which is responsive, personable and a good fit for our facility. To seek out these services independently would be a huge challenge and possibly more costly. ”



Debra Boudreau  
Administrator  
Tideview Terrace

# Clinical Engineering Services

TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT  
YOU CAN TRUST

“ With Clinical Engineering as our Electro-Mechanical service provider, we have the peace of mind of knowing that our equipment is being properly maintained. Once the equipment has been inspected, we have confidence that it is working to its capacity. If a problem with the equipment arises, Clinical Engineering is very conscientious about taking it out of service until it is serviced or replaced. The Clinical Engineering team is responsive, client-focused and have expertise and experience that you can rely on and trust. ”

The Clinical Engineering Service has specialized in the introduction and management of technology used in the delivery of patient/resident care services in health organizations in Atlantic Canada for over 35 years. Our aim is to ensure that the technology used is safe, effective and appropriate. We offer our members programs that are high in caliber, aligned with national standards of practice, competitively priced and consistently delivered regardless of their location in Nova Scotia and in some cases, the Atlantic Provinces.

### **Core Services**

With a commitment to the principles of cost-effectiveness, quality, accessibility, risk management and innovative technology management, Clinical Engineering's Core Services are:

**Electromedical Equipment Support:** We provide full service and support of a range of electromedical devices, such as anaesthesia machines, infusion pumps, and EKG monitors. The service also includes provision of unbiased technical advice, allowing health professionals to make informed decisions related to equipment acquisitions and safety issues.

**Electro-Mechanical Technology Support:** Clinical Engineering provides technology management, independent inspection and acquisition support for ceiling lifts and a range of other Electro-Mechanical devices, including electric beds

and exit systems, stretchers and wheelchairs, resident lifts, geri chairs, blanket warmers, tubs and walkers, beds, stretchers and wheelchairs. We are currently the largest provider of lift load testing services in Atlantic Canada.

Integral **risk management services** embodied in both of these core programs are the provision of a Robust Alerts, Product Notification and Equipment Recalls filtering and distribution process; investigation and consultation around incidents; equipment replacement forecasting and reporting on dangerous and/or obsolete equipment safety issues, etc.

### **Other Services – Responding to Members Needs**

Additionally, Clinical Engineering offers a range of other valuable services in response to the needs of our members, such as an Asset Management Program, Microscope Program, Reverse Osmosis Systems, and Pipette Technical Support Program, Scope-Washer Program, N20 Monitoring and Vaporizer Program, Medical Gas Inspection Program, Electrical Outlet Inspection Program, Laser Safety Program and a Small Lab Program.

**For more information about Clinical Engineering's services and programs, contact Phil Bradfield, Technical Support and Development Officer, at [phil.bradfield@healthassociation.ns.ca](mailto:phil.bradfield@healthassociation.ns.ca)**



# Group Benefits Solutions

MITIGATING LEGAL AND FINANCIAL RISKS FOR MEMBER EMPLOYERS; OFFERING A RANGE OF COMPREHENSIVE AND COMPETITIVE BENEFITS AND VALUE-ADDED SERVICES FOR MEMBER EMPLOYEES

“ Our organization receives tremendous value from participation in the Health Association benefit plans. The administration services provided by Group Benefits Solutions are excellent and offered at an affordable cost. The staff provide exceptional customer service and have the knowledge, expertise, and experience in this complex field that you can trust. They are true industry leaders. ”



Millie Colbourne  
CEO  
Breton Ability Centre

The Health Association Group Benefits Solutions Service has been a provider of centralized benefits administration services for our member organizations since 1961. We offer a broad range of Employee Benefit Plans, including Long Term Disability (includes the early intervention program, EASE), Group Life, Extended Health, and Dental.

In addition, a menu of optional benefits is available to individual plan members. The benefits are 100% employee paid and include accidental death and dismemberment, optional life and critical illness.

In total, we administer benefits for 85 member employers and their more than 23,000 employees as well as 2,800 retirees. This makes us the largest provider of benefits in Nova Scotia's health care system and potentially the largest third party administrator in the province.

### **Providing Exceptional Value**

Our team of experts in benefits administration deliver a comprehensive package of services to participating employers, such as:

- Full disability program management
- Plan design, expertise and claims management
- Enrollments, billing and reconciliation, and contract management
- Plan member communications and website
- Day-to-day support for benefit administrators at member sites

In addition to all-inclusive third-party administration services at an extremely affordable cost, participation in these plans provides a number of advantages to member organizations, including:

- Excellent coverage as well as competitive and sustainable rates through economies of scale.

- Reduced exposure to the legal and financial risks associated with the delivery of employee benefits through ongoing training.
- Employer and Plan Member training education sessions.
- Access to preferred provider arrangements, (i.e. preferred rates for home/auto insurance, pharmacy loyalty cards).

### **Plan Governance**

The LTD Plan is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised equally of union and employer representatives. As part of their commitment to ensure that disability benefits remain available to health care workers in Nova Scotia at a reasonable cost, the Long Term Disability Trustees introduced EASE (Early Assistance and Support for Employees) in 2000. This province-wide early intervention program is funded by the LTD Fund and is available to employees enrolled in the Plan.

The Provincial Benefits Administration Committee, which is also comprised equally of union and employer (acute and continuing care) representatives, provides advice and makes recommendations regarding the remaining group benefit plans.

### **Other Services**

Group Benefits Solutions also offers extended administration services. Under this contracted service arrangement, the Health Association's benefits specialists administer benefits for the participating organization's employees. Members can choose to have Health Association staff travel to their site to meet with employees or opt for a new innovative approach providing remote access through technology and reducing the costs associated with travel.

**More information regarding the Health Association's Group Benefits Service, including information regarding eligibility and coverage is available at [www.healthassociation.ns.ca/benefits](http://www.healthassociation.ns.ca/benefits).**



Anthony Taylor  
CEO  
Oakwood Terrace and Chair,  
Continuing Care Council

# Labour Relations and Compensation Analysis

PROVIDING SPECIALIZED LABOUR  
RELATIONS EXPERTISE IN THE HEALTH AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES SECTORS SINCE 1973.

The Health Association has been providing labour relations services to the health sector in Nova Scotia since 1973. The service was created following the first union certification in the hospital sector. Since that time, the role of the service has evolved to include leadership in provincial bargaining processes, facilitating forums for regular consultation and collaboration amongst health care employers, and the provision of comprehensive labour law and compensation consultation support to subscribing member organizations. Our team of legal counsel and compensation professionals have specialized expertise and focus solely on Labour Relations in the health sector.

### **Labour Relations Services**

**Collective Bargaining:** With over 40 years of experience, collective bargaining on behalf of individual healthcare employers remains the backbone of the Labour Relations Service. Our team of highly experienced, well-respected labour negotiators act as chief negotiators for member organizations in the collective bargaining process, both for new and the renewal of existing collective agreements. This also includes day-to-day legal and labour relations advice on the interpretation and application of member organizations' contracts.

### **Arbitrations and Additional Labour Relations Representation:**

The Labour Relations Service prepares and presents cases on behalf of member organizations at arbitration hearings as well as at mediations, in judicial review hearings, and in Labour Board hearings.

**Other Consultancy Services:** Our professional team assists member organizations in the development of effective human resources policies; researches and provide legal opinions on an array of labour relations issues; and plays a significant role in assisting members with strike planning.

The Labour Relations and Compensation Analysis Service also offers an annual Labour Relations conference as well as a range

of webinars, helping to ensure that member human resources managers have access to efficient and cost-effective education on relevant labour relations issues.

All of these services are provided as part of the annual contract fee.

### **Compensation Design and Analysis Services**

The Compensation Design and Analysis Service leads the design and delivery of a comprehensive Compensation Program for Acute Care and provides specialized compensation consulting across all areas of the Health Sector. The Service plays a pivotal supporting role in collective bargaining and undertakes special, sector-wide projects on behalf of the Departments of Health and Wellness and Community Services.

**“ The Health Association provides a Labour Relations Service that exceeds my expectations and is one that I expect to continue using for many years to come. I access their expert advice from anything from those quick “need-to-know” questions right through to collective bargaining. They have saved my organization considerable time and money over the years, improved my knowledge of labour relations issues and have promoted a productive and positive labour relations environment. The final, yet very important factor, is that service is provided at a very reasonable cost. My organization is community governed and not-for-profit so we have to get good value for money from all external services. ”**



**Helen Marsh**  
**Executive Director**

**New Waterford Home Care  
Service Society & Co-Chair,  
Home Care Network and  
Continuing Care Council Member**

# Member and Partner Engagement

PROVIDING EXPERTISE AND  
SUPPORT

The Member and Partner Engagement Service is comprised of a team of professionals with expertise in policy development and analysis; research, data analysis and decision support; and public relations. The service provides policy support to three Health Association continuing care forums (Continuing Care Council, Home Care Network, and the ARC/RRC Association) helping them to develop solutions to system challenges through representation, facilitation and a variety of activities, including analyzing policy impacts on members/sectors, information/data collection, research, analysis and reporting.

The Member and Partner Engagement Service is also responsible for overseeing the Health Association's core internal and external strategic marketing and communication functions.

**“ The Health Association plays an important role in bringing its continuing care members together to discuss common issues, share information, and develop solutions to the system challenges that we face. The Member and Partner Engagement staff are professional, understand the issues impacting our sectors, and have a breadth of expertise in policy analysis, research and facilitation. The policy support they provide to the continuing care forums is key to effectively responding with one voice to emerging issues (issues impacting home care, long term care, ARC/RRCs or the sector as a whole) and, ultimately, promoting positive change in Nova Scotia’s continuing care sector. ”**

# Nova Scotia Health Employees' Pension Plan

Established on January 1, 1961 for employees of Health Association Nova Scotia members, the Nova Scotia Health Employees' Pension Plan (NSHEPP) is a comprehensive and competitive defined benefit pension plan. It serves over 29,000 active members who work with more than 85 employers across the province, over 9,300 pensioners who receive a monthly income from the Plan, and over 950 former employees who elected a deferred pension when they left employment.

The NSHEPP offers participating employers the benefits of lower costs through economies of scale, professional investment management and plan administration, and effective member communications.

The Plan offers its members the benefits of a secure, tax-effective way to enhance their retirement income at a reasonable cost, and thereby provide for a brighter financial future through a lifetime pension. The plan also provides a number of other valuable features, including:

- Generous early retirement provisions;
- Supplemental monthly bridging benefits;
- Assistance with inflation protection for pensioners through regular cost-of-living adjustments;
- Comprehensive survivor benefits (including pre-retirement and post-retirement survivor benefits); and
- Portability options for eligible members who leave the Plan before retirement.

The NSHEPP is jointly and equally sponsored and governed by employers (through Health Association Nova Scotia) and the four major health care unions (NSGEU, NSNU, Unifor and CUPE).



# Publications, Resources and Information Sharing

## PROVIDING THE BEST INFORMATION FOR YOU

Through a variety of mediums, Health Association members have access to information, data and resources, supporting evidence-based decision making and keeping them abreast of emerging industry trends within Nova Scotia, Canada and beyond.

**Bulletins:** Most Health Association services publish regular bulletins, providing members with relevant and timely information on pertinent issues, such as labour relations and human resources matters, alerts on patient safety/equipment issues, or emerging trends in the field of benefits administration.

**Environmental Scans/Health System Research:**

We conduct literature reviews and environmental scans of specific health care topics as part of our role to provide policy support to our continuing care members.

**The Resource Centre:** The Resource section of the Health Association's website is host to a range of valuable and useful information, including health system conference proceedings/presentations, research papers on pertinent health system issues, toolkits, guides, policy papers, templates, and much more.

**Your Association Reports:** This monthly membership newsletter provides updates on recent health care news happenings, highlights Health Association activities, and promotes our member organizations.

**Board of Directors and Continuing Care Council Meeting Highlights:**

Produced following regular meetings of the Health Association Board and Continuing Care Council, these updates keep members informed of pertinent governance decisions, activities and progress in advancing issues on behalf of the membership.





**HEALTH  
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