

# Connecting Voices

Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers



Sheshatshiu, NL. Photo submitted by Kelly Sheppard MSW, RSW

## Feature

# Shifting the Lens and Changing Expectations: A Critical Reflection

BY KELLY SHEPPARD MSW, RSW

My social work career in the child protection field began in 2009, when I made the leap from working for 10 years with not-for-profit organizations. As a child protection social worker with the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD), I have worked in several offices around rural Newfoundland and have worked in all program areas as a front-line social worker.

As most social workers would acknowledge, working with CSSD can be rewarding but very challenging. For me, the balance of these rewards and challenges is what continues to pique my interest in the child protection field and motivates me to learn and do more.

In 2017, I decided to broaden my scope within CSSD and took on a role with the Training and Development Unit. Building my skills and knowledge at this level again broadened my views and lens on child protection within our province. In February 2019, I began my role as one of the Fly In-Fly Out Clinical Program Supervisors for the Innu Service Delivery Model in Sheshatshiu. Excited to see where this path would take me, I knew there would be much learning and growing, however, not to the extent that I have experienced over the past 2 years.

As social workers, we are taught to be culturally competent and understand its textbook definition. What we are not taught, is how cultural competency and

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This edition of **Connecting Voices** is dedicated to the 14 women who were murdered at École Polytechnique in Montreal on December 6, 1989.

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## Editorial Policy

**Connecting Voices** is a publication of the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers that facilitates information sharing among the membership. It is published two times a year (January and July).

The NLCSW Editorial Committee accepts articles throughout the year. However, the deadline for article submissions for the January edition is November 1 and for the July edition the deadline is May 1.

The Editorial Committee is interested in articles, commentaries and book reviews that address some of the following areas:

- social work practice and promotion
- professional issues
- social and legislative issues
- social work research, theory, practice and education
- ethics
- community development
- social work leadership

The editorial committee reserves the right to reject any article or return it to the author for revision prior to publication, as well as to edit submitted material for clarity and conciseness.

Article submissions and photographs must be submitted electronically.

Advertising space by organizations, groups or businesses is available in the **Connecting Voices** publication.

Publication of articles and advertisements does not imply endorsement by the NLCSW.

A complete copy of **Connecting Voices Editorial Policies** are available on the NLCSW website

<https://nlcsw.ca/practice-resources/connecting-voices>

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## Editorial

# Social Work is Essential in Newfoundland and Labrador

BY DEANNE M. O'BRIEN  
BA, MSW, RSW

Going into the second year of a global pandemic, social workers have been busy navigating public health guidelines to safely continue to provide services and supports to the people of our province. Over the past year we have once again been tested and had to re-evaluate how to deliver services within regulations that, at times, transformed our services to virtual and accommodative delivery. One thing is for certain, the work that social workers do is essential and the services that are provided benefit individuals, families, and communities of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**The Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) (2005) Code of Ethics**, which is core to social work, states that "The social work profession is dedicated to the welfare and self-realization of all people; the development and disciplined use of scientific and professional knowledge; the development of resources and skills to meet individual, group, national and international changing needs and aspirations; and the achievement of social justice for all" (p. 3). Social workers throughout our province work in a multitude of practice areas from policy development, child protection, mental health and addictions, and community development, and are dedicated to upholding the values of the profession. To provide this array of services it is imperative that continued learning be a large part of our professional growth as issues and societal trends change and evolve, as evidenced by our shift in service delivery throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.



The Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers (NLCSW) provides an abundance of educational and professional development resources on the [NLCSW website](#). Also found on the NLCSW website are a listing of all upcoming educational opportunities and events. Stay tuned for Social Work Month in March 2022 and all the wonderful education events that will happen. Social work month is a time for social workers across the province to come together to celebrate our profession, network, share experiences, and attend virtual educational events. The theme for Social Work Month in 2022 is **In Critical Demand: Social Work is Essential**.

This edition of **Connecting Voices** highlights some exciting new initiatives and services that our colleagues are involved in throughout the province. In this edition, you will find a variety of diverse articles written by registered social workers who are making an impact across our province, delivering services that are essential, and working in diverse areas of practice that pertain to ethics, advocacy, service delivery, policy and program development, clinical practice and community development. Rick Parsons provides information on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people with eating disorders. Megan Edmunds highlights issues regarding Inuit children who are in care. She also provides valuable information

regarding the Caring for Our Children Project, a partnership between the Nunatsiavut Government's Department of Health and Social Development and the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD). Stephanie Bennett provides information on the Adult Central Intake (ACI) with Eastern Health, noting how referrals are processed and who can complete referrals for program entry. In this edition, Simone Pelley provides valuable insight into private practice, as she discusses ethical considerations and the application of the CASW Code of Ethics in her own private practice in Central Newfoundland. This is just a snapshot of some of the enlightening articles written by social workers across the province in this edition.

A goal of the **Connecting Voices** Editorial Committee is to continue to provide a newsletter that informs social work practice, as well as highlights the essential work of social workers in a variety of program and service areas across Newfoundland and Labrador. The committee encourages all registered social workers to consider submitting an article for future editions to highlight the important work that you do. You can find information on submitting an article in the **Connecting Voices Writing Guidelines** document that was developed by the Editorial Committee as a helpful resource. We hope that you enjoy this edition of **Connecting Voices** and have a healthy and happy new year!

## REFERENCE

Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW). (2005). *Code of ethics*. [https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/attachements/casw\\_code\\_of\\_ethics\\_0.pdf](https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/attachements/casw_code_of_ethics_0.pdf)



Executive Director

# A Values Based Profession

BY LISA CROCKWELL LL.M, MSW, RSW

As social workers we are quite familiar with the [Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#) (2005) which outlines the values of our profession. Students at the Memorial University School of Social Work pledge to uphold these values during a lovely ceremony titled Pledge of Professionalism. Every individual who applies to become a social worker signs a declaration to uphold the Code of Ethics and at annual renewal attests an ongoing commitment. Social work is often referred to as a "values-based profession" grounded in the six values of the current CASW Code: Respect, Pursuit of Social Justice, Service to Humanity, Integrity, Confidentiality and Competence in Professional Practice.

Values are usually discussed in the context of relationships with clients and colleagues, however at the last strategic planning session, the NLCSW Board of Directors spent time thinking about how values relate to the regulation of the profession and specifically to NLCSW as an organization.

The three sectors of social work (practice, education, and regulation) are often considered distinct however the foundation of their intersection is values and respect for the code of ethics. All sectors strive to ensure that clients defined by the CASW Code as "a person, family, group of persons, incorporated body, association or community on whose behalf a social worker provides or agrees to provide a service..." (p.10) receive the highest quality of intervention.

The board of directors integrated four values into the strategic plan which shape how we approach regulation. Like the values outlined in the [CASW Code](#)



of Ethics, the NLCSW values intersect.

**Integrity:** Leading with integrity ensuring that actions and processes are clear, impartial, and ethical. This speaks to a commitment to ensure registration and renewal processes are continuously evaluated. Integrity in the CASW Code requires that as social workers we maintain a high level of professional conduct, act fairly, honestly and are accountable to the ethics and standards of the profession. At NLCSW, we interact with social workers, members of other organizations, professions, and the public with integrity.

**Respect:** Valuing the perspectives and dignity of all people. Respect is a core ethical value of the profession. The Code emphasizes that "social workers recognize and respect the diversity of Canadian society and take into account the breadth of differences which exist" (p.4). Respect for the public and for the profession is demonstrated through our work to ensure that only those who possess the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired through education are identified as social workers. Initiatives to support professional practice such as the development of practice resources and facilitating continuing education events are also intended to enhance understanding and support the CASW Code of Ethics Value 6: Competency in Professional Practice.

**Collaboration:** Building purposeful relationships based on mutual respect and co-operation. NLCSW

collaborates with many individuals, groups, and organizations to promote an understanding of social work regulation, to advance the diversity and scope of social work and to pursue excellence in regulatory governance. This organization depends on the commitment and skills of over 100 provincial volunteers and collaboration with organizations like the Canadian Association of Social Workers, the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators, the Association of Social Work Boards, the Health Regulators Network, the provincial government, the health authorities, and the School of Social Work at Memorial University.

**Social Justice:** Valuing fairness, inclusivity, and equity. Work is viewed through this lens. The CASW Code of Ethics Value 2 speaks to the importance of the equitable distribution of resources, reducing barriers especially for those who are marginalized and opposing prejudice and discrimination. These values are present in the [NLCSW Standards of Practice](#), the resources which are produced, the continuing education sessions selected and the commitment to advancing the social determinants of health through a social justice framework. Ensuring all have the right to qualified social work practice is a connection between social justice and regulation.

As we begin 2022, I wish all social workers health, happiness, and peace. May we all be grounded in our values as we pursue the important work of this profession.

## REFERENCE

Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW). (2005). *Code of ethics*. [https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/documents/casw\\_code\\_of\\_ethics.pdf](https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/documents/casw_code_of_ethics.pdf)





## Cover Story continued

working cross culturally plays out in the field and what this really looks like. To be culturally competent, social workers must be open to constantly learning, unlearning, and relearning about diversity (National Association of Social Workers, 2015). Being culturally competent is hard work.

Having the opportunity to work and learn alongside the Innu people and Innu community agencies of Sheshatshiu has made me reflect and focus on my own cultural competence and sensitivity. One of the hardest things I have come to realize is how ingrained my own white privileges are and how there is a constant personal battle that goes along with that. Thinking about Innu and colonization as something that is about me, and not something just about others, constantly weighs on me. As much as I think I may understand, I do not. It is difficult to want to help and being told that I cannot help in the way I think I can. I do not and cannot truly understand what Innu have faced and are continuing to face.

As social workers, we want to help and support others in making positive change, and I truly believe there is potential for social workers to do that in our Indigenous communities. The biggest question is who decides what that change looks like? Social

workers need to utilize a lens which acknowledges differences and focuses on culturally based discussions. We may have suggestions but we cannot decide what change looks like for Innu; that is a difficult pill to swallow in the child protection field.

As part of my work in Sheshatshiu, I am constantly examining why I need to be the decision maker and why there is this inherent need to be in control. Our policies guide practice. However, I have been challenged and positively pushed to work collaboratively with Innu families and agencies on a much different level than I have ever experienced in my previous work; a level that does make me question why there is this drive or need for me to be in control.

Over the past 2 years, my practice has changed and shifted focus, and I contribute this to the learning I have received from the Innu and Innu agencies I work alongside. I acknowledge my inherent and internal need for control, but have shifted to allow Innu families, community members, and agencies to tell their stories, teach, and allow us to collaboratively work toward solutions and change. What I did not fully anticipate were the challenges to my own way of thinking (internal and external), nor the impact that different perspectives and life experiences shared with me would have. However,

this has allowed me to strengthen my personal and professional values and shift how I learn and perceive the world.

Social workers need to shift their lens and change expectations -- **learn** about personal privileges, inherent need for control, and be open to truly wanting to understand culture and diversity; **unlearn** practices, expectations, and internal conflict that has/is impacting others; and **relearn** ways of collaboratively working together, genuinely listening to and connecting with one another in working toward change and reconciliation.

In writing this article, I am again reminded how this is about me and us as social workers. I do want to acknowledge the horrible hurt and pain that is ever present in Innu families and the community as a whole; a hurt and pain we can never comprehend.

I want to thank and acknowledge the Innu people and agencies of Sheshatshiu for allowing me the opportunity to work in community, to learn and to continue to grow. I wish the Innu of Sheshatshiu an abundance of health, happiness, and healing.

### REFERENCE

National Association of Social Workers. *Standards and Indicators Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*, Washington, DC, 2015, p. 25.



## 2022 Online Registration Renewal

**MyNLCSW.ca**

- MyNLCSW will begin accepting renewals for the 2022 registration year mid-January.
- Members will be notified by **email** when the online system is opened.
- The deadline to complete renewal is **February 15, 2022 (midnight Island time)**. A late fee will be applied to renewals received after this date.

## Ethics

# Private Practice: Translating Ethics into Action When Working on One's Own

**BY SIMONE PELLEY MSW, RSW**

For a little over 10 years my practice was working in public programs, hospital and community health. I decided to start a part time sole practitioner private practice during my training and certification process in Cognitive and Behavior Therapy. And five years later I decided to take the leap into the unknown and work solely in private practice when I moved to Gander, NL. This move has proven to be a giant developmental milestone for my professional practice as it clarified my own professional values and grounded me further in the values outlined in the [Canadian Association of Social Workers \(CASW\) \(2005\) Code of Ethics](#).

Working as a sole practitioner tested the strength of my own conviction in the profession's values outlined in the Code and forced me to put what I thought I knew and understood into action. I no longer had the checks and balances of in-office supervision, immediate colleague consultation or the safety net of agency policy to inform my professional practice. There proved to be a significant difference between the intellectually "knowing" I used in my early social work practice to the "knowing" when I set out all on my own.

The CASW (2005) Code of Ethics says, "A Code of Ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Ethical behavior comes from a social worker's individual commitment to engage in ethical practice. Both the spirit and the letter of this Code of Ethics will guide social workers as they act in good faith and with a genuine desire to make sound judgements" (p.2). The Code of Ethics requires that members uphold the

values and principles outlined in the Code. Frederic Reamer, Professor of Social Work and Ethics Scholar said, "Over time, the profession has nurtured and refined a set of values that has given meaning and purpose to generations of social workers' careers" (Reamer 2006, p.ix). Values are what we aim for and are the lens through which we view the world. Values give us "THE WHY" we do what we do.

Engagement in Cognitive Behavior Therapy is a highly collaborative process where the therapist and client work together to formulate a plan which integrates the client's self-identified needs and goals with the therapist's knowledge and skill for meeting those goals. This process is initiated upon the first contact with the client through the process of informed consent and it continues throughout the course of treatment. Informed consent is an ongoing process that is built into each session through the process of feedback on previous sessions, negotiation of the session's agenda and feedback at the end of each session. Thus, upholding the client's right to self-determination, respecting the right of individuals to their unique beliefs consistent with the rights of others and respecting the client's right to make choices based on voluntary, informed consent (CASW, 2005).

Respecting the client's right to make choices also carries a new challenge when venturing into private practice. A client is a paying consumer and, if they are not satisfied with the level of service, services can be purchased elsewhere. There is an inherent risk of financial stress that accompanies private practice and,

as for anyone, in times of increased stress a private practitioner's own professional judgement can become distorted and service to the client can become compromised. It is an ethical imperative that a private practitioner is continually aware of their own professional scope of practice and operates within these limits regardless of any financial pressure that exists to secure and maintain a regular income. Communicating and enforcing the limits of scope of practice are part of the process of informed consent that continues throughout treatment. As outlined in Value 6 of the CASW Code of Ethics, Competence in Professional Practice, "Social workers demonstrate due care for client's interests and safety by limiting professional practice to areas of demonstrated competence" (p.8).

Not only can there be financial pressures to maintain an income but there are also social pressures to provide services that may be outside one's scope of practice. Providing services in areas where private practitioners are less available can give rise to third party payer programs, who are often large employee assistance businesses, placing pressure on providers to expand one's practice into areas where one may have less skill, training or experience. The public can also place pressure on private providers when community options are limited, and scope of practice must be continually enforced through the process of informed consent.

One final consideration that I have encountered in private practice is the constant clarification of client confidentiality. Value 5 of the CASW Code of Ethics, Confidentiality in

Professional Practice, outlines the conditions in which client information can be shared. In working with youth, I have had to clearly outline the boundaries of confidentiality and the limits around information to be shared, if at all, with parents. It can prove to be a challenge to explain to parents of youth that while they are paying for the service, they may not have any access to content covered in therapy sessions. This can be particularly challenging for parents of youth where there is some level of risk, and this particular area of intervention can test the risk tolerance of even the most seasoned professional. It has been my experience that concerned family members push professional boundaries because they simply do not know where the limits lie in matters like confidentiality, privacy, duty to

report, dual relationships, and conflict of interest.

These are only a few things to consider when making the decision to provide social work services privately. The Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers (NLCSW) has an abundance of resources online such as the [Resource Guide for Private Practice, Informed Consent with Children & Youth: Practice Guidelines for Social Work, Ethical Decision-Making in Social Work Practice, Self-Assessment Tools for Informed Consent and Documentation](#) and the [Practice Matters and Ethical Compass](#) publications covering various practice and ethical issues that may arise.

No one needs to be an island. Even though I work as a sole practitioner,

I endeavour to maintain regular consultation time with colleagues and volunteer with the NLCSW to stay connected with the regulatory body as means of accountability while I operate independently. There is a particular draw for the independence and flexibility of private practice, however one cannot forget there remains an equal, and often greater, measure of accountability and professionalism to clients that are served.

## REFERENCES

CASW. (2005). *Code of ethics*. [https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/documents/casw\\_code\\_of\\_ethics.pdf](https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/documents/casw_code_of_ethics.pdf)

Reamer, F. G. (2006) *Social Work Values and Ethics*. Columbia University Press



## NLCSW Private Practice Roster

The NLCSW maintains a voluntary roster of social work private practitioners. The following social workers have elected to be included on the roster. They meet the criteria for private practice in the profession of social work in Newfoundland & Labrador. Contact information for these social workers is available on our website - <https://nlcsw.ca/social-work-in-nl/private-practice>

Kayla Baker MSW, RSW  
Maureen Barry MSW, RSW  
Mona Budden MSW, RSW  
Angel Compton-Osmond MSW, RSW  
Agatha Corcoran MSW, RSW  
Tobias Dunne MSW, RSW  
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Trudy Smith MSW, RSW  
Neil Stokes MSW, RSW  
Lisa Wade MSW, RSW



**Deadline for submission for the next edition of Connecting Voices is May 1 • 2022**



Community

# The Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre of Hope: A Beacon of Light and Hope to the Community and an Excellent Learning Site for Social Work Students

**BY MARLENE GEORGE MSW, RSW  
& HAYLEY HILLIER BSW, RSW**

The Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre of Hope (COH) officially opened its doors December 2020. The Commitment Statement of the Centre of Hope states it exists to "promote opportunity for personal growth and empowerment by responding to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the individual" (The Salvation Army, 2020). While this Commitment Statement refers to the personal growth and empowerment of the individuals availing of the Centre's services, for the social work students that have chosen the COH for their field placement, their experiences have been one that fosters personal growth and empowerment and an excellent opportunity to hone social work skills and knowledge.

Hayley Hillier, former social work student, reports, "As a social work student completing a required practicum, one's learning is dependent on two principles: the opportunities of learning that the practicum location offers and the amount of effort the student contributes to their own learning experience." The Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre of Hope is not limited in providing learning opportunities through the diverse programs and services it offers as a community centre in the downtown core of St. John's, NL.

Services offered at the COH include Community and Family Services, which provides monthly food hampers to individuals and families, as well as clothing vouchers to The Salvation



L-R: Jacob Cole, Major Marlene George, Hayley Hillier



Army Thrift Stores as needed. Through the Community and Family Services Department, the Pathway of Hope initiative offers case management and spiritual care to individuals and their families providing service connections to job training, health services, childcare, education, housing, and legal services. In the beautiful new and spacious dining hall at COH, community meals are provided every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11:30 am – 12:30 pm for anyone needing a hot meal and a welcoming atmosphere. Through the work of the COH social worker/ community navigator, individuals are assisted with obtaining identification cards, applying for income support, completing housing applications, given support with navigating the housing and healthcare systems, and completing referrals to additional programs and services. Through the COH Corrections and Justice Services, support is offered to those navigating the court system, incarcerated individuals, and post-release. There is an on-site clinical counsellor at the COH available to support mental health and addictions concerns of clients.

As the Salvation Army Ches Penney COH is a faith-based organization and believes in a holistic approach in response to human needs, an integral part of the services offered include spiritual care with an onsite Spiritual Care Director. The Spiritual Care Director offers compassionate support through individual spiritual counselling sessions and prayer to promote personal healing, growth, and connection for those clients who value spiritual practises and provide spiritual resources and referrals to local faith communities as needed.

The COH has a section of the building dedicated to the provision of health services which currently include chiropractic services two mornings each week, a nurse practitioner who is

available five days a week, and a foot care nurse on site 4 days a week, all to meet the many health issues of the clients. As well, in collaboration with the College of the North Atlantic, an Employment Training Program is offered at the COH. This program takes place in the Fry Learning Centre at the COH and is available to individuals who are in receipt of income support and would like to enter or re-enter the workforce. The two training programs that are currently offered are building custodial services and retail sales services. In addition to the above services, COH also has 20 housing units located on the third and fourth floor of the building that are beautifully equipped to provide a home for those in need of supportive housing. These units are anticipated to open soon.

These wrap around services all under one roof at the COH make it possible to provide holistic care from the moment a potential client walks into the door. As Hayley recalls, "I was able to meet individuals at the first point of contact, often the food bank, and then together, navigate other needs and ways to meet those needs through the Centre. The same individual who came for a bag of food also left with an appointment for counselling, an application for a new photo identification card, and a craft completed through an afternoon craft class and as the student, I played a role in it all."

The manifold services that are provided for clients at COH is reflected in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs starting with meeting the basic needs of food and shelter which then pave the way to the higher needs of self actualization and finding meaning and purpose (Koltko-Rivera, 2006). William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, followed this idea in the early days of Salvation Army social services when he coined the phrase, "soap, soup and salvation," indicating that a person cannot possibly attend to higher needs

of meaning and purpose when they are hungry – meeting these basic needs must come first. The Salvation Army COH seeks to do just that.

Current social work student, Jacob Coles says, "The Centre of Hope offers an extremely rewarding experience for social work students and staff because its vast array of services gives many opportunities to meet the needs of individuals on multiple levels of need, ranging from the most basic level of need to the most complex."

Danita Vokey, former social work student, adds "Because of the diversity in its programs and services, I was able to learn new skills that I can carry into my future practice."

Hayley concludes, "The Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre of Hope really gives social work students the space to learn so much in the short three-month practicum, by being able to provide such a diverse learning experience."

Given the welcoming attitude and encouragement of staff at the COH and the continued commitment to field learning from off site field instructor, Major Marlene George, MSW, RSW, The Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre of Hope continues to be an excellent teaching and learning site for social work students and a beacon of hope in the city for many people who avail of its services.

## REFERENCES

- Koltko-Rivera, M.E. (2006). Rediscovering the later version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Self-transcendence and opportunities for theory, research and unification. *Review of General Psychology* 10, no. 4: 302–17.
- The Salvation Army (2020). *Mission Statement for The Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre of Hope*. St. John's, NL



## Clinical

# Eating Disorders and COVID-19

**BY RICK PARSONS MSW, RSW**

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, many emotions have likely surfaced for us all, such as anger, sadness, helplessness, hopelessness, and loneliness, even more so for many individuals with eating disorders. Eating disorders can be life-threatening and require years of committed treatment to maintain recovery due to the unique nature and complexity of their illness. While eating disorders center on food, the cluster of mental illnesses that include Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID), Other Specified Feeding and Eating Disorders (OSFED), and Binge Eating Disorder include a variety of common factors, such as anxiety and low self-esteem.

The National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC) was contacted 609 times during March 1–April 30, 2020 (72.1% individuals affected by disordered eating, 20.4% caregivers). NEDIC reports that the number of total contacts significantly increased from 2018 to 2019 and 2018 to 2020. Among affected individuals (80.4% women), the number of contacts during the pandemic are significantly higher compared to 2018 and 2019 (Richardson et al., 2020). NEDIC indicates there were higher rates of eating disorder symptoms, anxiety, and depression in 2020 compared to previous years. NEDIC states "Thematic analysis from the pandemic year revealed four emerging themes: 1) lack of access to treatment, 2) worsening of symptoms, 3) feeling out of control, and 4) need for support" (Richardson et al., 2020). These themes have also been seen in practice.

Research has shown that the pandemic has raised people's level of stress and contributes to increases in anxiety and

depression (Salari et al., 2020). As a result, programs in health care systems and clinicians within private practice have seen a dramatic increase in referrals for eating disorder treatment. For some who have an eating disorder, their illness has worsened. Globally, clinicians working in the area of eating disorders have observed that more people have developed an eating disorder for the first time, and others who thought they had recovered have relapsed.

It has been proven that eating disorders are rooted in the avoidance and suppression of uncomfortable and difficult emotions. For many who were already experiencing a difficult relationship with food (i.e., restrictive food intake, bingeing and purging behaviours, laxative, and diuretic use, etc.), the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an exacerbation of symptoms due to isolation, anxiety, fear, low self-esteem, and a disruption in daily routines; thus resulting in eating disorder symptomatology being used to numb their emotions. Stay-at-home orders and limited food selection in stores may enable some to rationalize meal-skipping or calorie restriction, thus exacerbating restrictive tendencies.

The pandemic stripped away the structure and routine on which humans thrive and replaced it with isolation thus creating a troubling potential for eating disorders to rise. International research has been emerging on eating disorders and the COVID-19 pandemic and has supported the idea that the disruption to daily life increased barriers to getting help (Weissman et al., 2020). In addition, the pandemic forced an abrupt change in the delivery of services due to safety protocols.

Many services worldwide were

forced to move to virtual platforms while some programs offered therapy services via telephone only. Many inpatient programs were unable to offer their regular stepped-care model where individuals would be provided with passes to go outside the unit, treatment facility or to go home and practice the skills they were learning in inpatient treatment. Some programs have reduced the number of patients in meal supports due to safety protocols associated with COVID-19. While a limited number of programs moved to virtual meal supports, others did not due to concerns with not being able to adequately monitor the successful completion of a patients' meal. Many eating disorder patients continue to feel isolated as they are only provided with virtual care and groups. During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many national and international eating disorder programs moved to self-monitoring of eating behavior, creating many challenges with reliability and the impacts of the therapeutic alliance. The changes in eating disorders services have resulted in exacerbated eating disorder symptoms.

For an individual with an eating disorder, seeing mirror images of themselves on virtual platforms can be extra challenging as they are viewing themselves on screen while challenging cognitive distortions or body dysmorphia in treatment. Viewing oneself on screen can inadvertently reinforce eating disorder cognitions and behaviors (Weissman et al., 2020).

Another impact of the pandemic is the lack of family-based treatment which is the most evidence-based practice toward recovery from an eating disorder. Emotion-Focused Family Therapy (EFFT) is influenced by

the theory and science of interpersonal neurobiology (LaFrance & Delahunty, 2021). EFFT supports caregivers and increases their role in their loved one's recovery by providing them with emotion and behavior coaching skills to assist with validating emotional experiences and using these skills in the meal support process. The EFFT clinician believes that it is most therapeutically worthwhile to empower parents to help their children, regardless of age, given that they are "wired" together (LaFrance & Delahunty, 2021). The EFFT clinicians main responsibility is to support parents and caregivers to increase their involvement in interrupting symptoms and supporting recovery-focused behaviors, helping their child to process underlying emotions that may be fueling eating disorder behaviors, and leading the repair of relational injuries, if applicable. During the pandemic, many aspects of applying EFFT to family meal supports have been difficult to facilitate due to pandemic protocols.

The pandemic has impacted many major economic sectors and has exacerbated eating disorder symptoms due to increased economic strain resulting in food insecurity (i.e., limited access to food due to economic hardship). Oftentimes, individuals who lack adequate resources to regularly purchase enough food to meet their nutritional needs undergo cycles of food restriction. Eating or economic stress may also promote binge eating. Government recommendations to buy enough food for a week or two at a time to reduce trips to the grocery store and promote social distancing may be stressful for individuals with eating disorders, who may be confined to their homes surrounded by large quantities

of food (Weissman et al., 2020).

According to the Eating Disorders Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (EDFNL), in July 2020, referrals to the pediatric eating disorder program at the Janeway Hospital started to surge causing wait times to move from approximately three months to well over a year (CBC, 2021). EDFNL reports that while the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on those struggling with an eating disorder and their families, one positive change has been to the delivery of education sessions and family support groups through virtual programming. Services that were once available in-person only within the St. John's area are now attended by families across the province, and some families are reaching out from other provinces and countries. The acceptance of virtual programming has created a new environment and ways of doing things and has reached a broader audience when supporting families.

With the ongoing pandemic, many emotions are felt, and our mental health and wellness continues to be tested. Although we have moved back to some level of normalcy in NL, we can attest that our workplaces and delivery of services continue to be challenging and anything but "normal" as we continue with safety protocols. While there have been some positives associated with virtual programming, those experiencing eating disorders and their families continue to struggle due to the backlog of referrals, increased wait times, changes to service delivery, and a lack of family involvement in treatment and care. Many individuals faced with an eating disorder experience eating disorder-related medical comorbidities

and our COVID-19 care, interventions, and policies may need to be adjusted in light of their psychopathology (Weissman et al., 2020).

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**Social Work Month March 2022**  
**In Critical Demand – Social Work is Essential**



## Reflections

# A Reflection on Cultural Competence

**BY ANNETTE JOHNS MSW, RSW**

Many of us come with preconceived notions of what culture is and who belongs to a particular culture. My 14-year-old daughter has white skin, blonde hair, and blue eyes. She was recently asked by a health care professional if she belonged to an Indigenous group. This was part of the intake form that had to be completed. When she answered yes, she was met with a look of disbelief and skepticism. The health care professional proceeded to ask which group she belonged to, and my daughter proudly responded Mi'kmaq. I was proud of my daughter, but it immediately got me thinking about the perceptions and judgments people have about other people's ancestry and cultural belonging based on their physical appearance or other characteristics. As social workers, this is something that we need to be thinking about and discussing.

Respect for diversity is a fundamental value of the social work profession; it is something that we as social workers embrace and promote. In 2016, the NLCSW produced [Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice](#), which is a key companion document to the [NLCSW \(2020\) Standards of Practice for Social Workers](#) in NL. As the staff lead on this project, I remain incredibly proud of the work that was accomplished in creating and launching these standards at an event with our Indigenous partners, and in all the wonderful continuing professional education sessions on diversity, equity and inclusion that has ensued.

"Culturally competent practice requires a commitment to increasing one's knowledge and appreciation for diverse cultures, embracing culture as a central focus in social work practice, and becoming aware of one's own culture, values and beliefs and how this impacts cross cultural practice" (NLCSW, 2020, Standards of Practice, p. 13). The use of the word cultural competence is used in a thoughtful and purposeful way. It is an umbrella term to reflect the knowledge and skills social workers require in working with diverse cultures. It incorporates cultural sensitivity, awareness, humility, and safety, and recognizes cultural competence as an on-going process (not an end point) of learning, reflection, and professional growth. This language is also consistent with the [Canadian Association of Social Workers \(CASW\) \(2005\) Code of Ethics](#) and the value of Competence in Social Work Practice and best interest of the client principle.

Social workers are committed to providing the highest quality care services in the best interest of clients. Culturally competent practice focuses on the importance of individualizing care within the cultural context of clients. This is highlighted in the NLCSW (2020) Standards of Practice: "Social workers seek to understand the values, beliefs, traditions and historical context of clients and incorporate this knowledge into social work assessments and interventions" (p. 13).

People experience culture differently and many people identify with multiple cultures that intersect to shape their experiences, values, and

beliefs. Pre-conceived stereotypes and generalizations about one's culture can impact negatively on the therapeutic relationship. Therefore, we must practice within the framework of cultural humility. This means creating space to learn from clients about what culture means to them, cultures they identify with, how culture impacts their health and well-being, and how we can best help them achieve their goals. It is only by asking the questions in a genuine way that we can foster open communication and collaborative dialogue. We must do this for all our clients by checking our assumptions about culture, and a client's experience of culture, at the door.

As we reflect on cultural competence, we also need to be willing to engage in a personal journey of introspection on what culture means to us and how we experience culture. It is by understanding our own culture that we are better equipped to invite others to share their experience of culture, with the goal of building meaningful and respectful therapeutic relationships and cross-cultural understandings.

We must also continue to avail of opportunities to engage in training and education that fosters cultural competence in service delivery. This is in keeping with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.

I look forward to our continued discussions and I will continue to challenge my own learning and how I can continue to embrace diversity in my work and personal relationships. It truly is a journey of personal reflection and professional growth.

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Update My CPE

A streamlined version of the **Update My CPE** feature will be released as part of 2022 renewal. This version will transfer over all CPE details, regardless of if tracking is done based on the calendar or registration year.

**New to this feature or need a refresher?** Follow these easy steps:

- Log into MyNLCSW.ca and access **Update My CPE** directly on the Welcome page.
- Record
  - event completion date,
  - category (see NLCSW's CPE Policy for a breakdown of required and elective categories),
  - event title, and
  - the number of credit hours associated with the event.
- During annual renewal, use the transfer button located on the CPE step to transfer over all CPE recorded under the **Update My CPE** feature.
- At the time of transfer, the **Update My CPE** feature will be wiped and members can proceed to start tracking CPE for the next registration year.
- Any member wishing to retain a copy of their CPE record can use the print option available under **Update My CPE** prior to using the transfer button.

## School

# News from the Memorial University School of Social Work

### Leadership News

Dr. Paul Banahene Adjei was appointed interim dean effective July 1, 2021 to Sept. 30, 2021, and was subsequently extended until June 30, 2022, or upon completion of a successful search for a permanent dean, whichever occurs first.

Dr. Sulaimon Giwa was appointed associate dean of undergraduate programs, effective August 1, 2021, for the next three years.

Dr. Gail Wideman was appointed interim associate dean of graduate programs and research, effective October 1, 2021 until June 30, 2022, or until Dr. Adjei returns to his permanent role as associate dean, whichever occurs first.

More information on all three can be found at: <https://www.mun.ca/socialwork/about/people/faculty/>

### New Faculty Members

Following the recommendations of the School's Faculty Search Committee and Memorial's provost and vice-president (academic), two tenure-track faculty positions at the rank of assistant professor have been filled. Dr. Laura Pacheco joined the School January 1, 2022, and Ms. Ami Goulden will start on July 1, 2022.

### In-person Learning

Following public health guidelines, Memorial classes were largely offered in-person for the fall term. We were excited to safely welcome back our students, and our dedicated staff and faculty are continually adapting to offer the best possible learning experience to our students. Memorial continues to assess the evolving public

health environment and will make adjustments if necessary.

### Educational Equity Initiative

The School of Social Work strives to enrich its teaching, research and scholarship through the contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds with different attributes.

For many applicants, institutional processes and cultural and racial differences exist which have presented barriers to learning. In keeping with the Canadian Association for Social Work Education Standards for Accreditation, the mission of Memorial University of Newfoundland, and the mission, vision and values of the School of Social Work, the School has developed an Educational Equity Initiative. The intent of this initiative is to encourage applicants with diverse identities, experiences and backgrounds to apply. It also aims to correct conditions of disadvantage in professional education.

The School offers a minimum of 5% of the seats in the Bachelor of Social Work program to eligible applicants who have met the minimum requirements for admission and who identify as: First Nations, Inuit or Métis (minimum of 5% of seats), members of a racialized group (minimum of 5% of seats) and/or as members of another equity group (minimum of 5% of seats).

### BSW, MSW and PhD News

Twenty BSW students were named to the Dean's List and three to the Dean's Award of Academic Excellence in Social Work. The School awarded 24 Scholarships, Awards & Bursaries for the 2020-2021 academic year. The list of awards and recipients can

be viewed at <https://www.mun.ca/socialwork/alumni/awards/ScholarshipsAwardsBursaries.php>.

Congratulations to all recipients and a huge thank you to all our generous donors!

The BSW and MSW curriculum review process is ongoing.

Thirteen MSW students graduated during Memorial's fall in-person convocation.

Congratulations to the following MSW fall 2021 graduates who have been awarded the title Fellow of the School of Graduate Studies: Deanna Lankhaar, Jordanna Comeau and Jocelyn Plane. This award is made in recognition of their continued academic excellence throughout their program.

Congratulations to Deanna Lankhaar who was awarded the Wesley and Jeanne Drodge Award in Public Policy for the 2021/2022 scholarship year in the amount of \$1,156. This award is conferred to a student in their graduating year in the Master of Social Work program who demonstrates the value of collaborative engagement with other health and social science student(s) in the advancement of public policy.

Congratulations to PhD student Siham Elkasseem who received the Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Doctoral Scholarship valued at \$105,000. This scholarship aims to develop research skills and assist in the training of highly qualified personnel by supporting students who demonstrate a high standard of scholarly achievement in undergraduate and graduate studies in the social sciences and humanities.



## Field Education News

Sincere gratitude to the social work practice community for ongoing exceptional support throughout the pandemic – including hosting BSW student placements during the spring 2021 term. We are back on track with the usual BSW practicum schedule of first placements in the fall term and second placements in the winter term.

We are thrilled to have Joan Davis-Whelan back with the field education team part-time to support the BSW program, while Cheryl Mallard is engaged with the Bachelor of Social Work, Nunavut Cohort.

Graduate students continue to have a variety of interesting placements across the country. All students this semester are on-site.

### Announcing the Lucille Crégheur Graduate Scholarship in Social Work

The School is pleased to announce the establishment of a scholarship via a generous gift from the Estate of Dr. Lucille Crégheur. Dr. Crégheur taught at Memorial's School of Social Work and dedicated her life to helping those in need. This scholarship, valued at \$10,000, is awarded to a full-time Master of Social Work student. We are pleased to congratulate Ms. Abiba Mohammed, the recipient of this scholarship awarded for the first time for the 2021/2022 scholarship year.

### Bachelor of Social Work, Nunavut Cohort

The Bachelor of Social Work, Nunavut Cohort is well under way, having started in September in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

As part of the broader partnership between Nunavut Arctic College (NAC) and Memorial University, the School of Social Work is offering this BSW to graduates of NAC's Social Service Worker Diploma.



**Nunavut Arctic College – New Kitikmeot Campus Cultural Area**  
L-R: Anna Wolki, Larrie Soberano, Vanessa Totalik, Linda Uvilluk, Charles Zikalala, & Pauline Pauloosie

The first cohort of six students are extremely engaged, passionate and proud to be furthering their education in social work. Faculty from our school have been travelling to Nunavut to teach in the program and, at the same time, have enhanced their understanding of Inuit culture, history and social context.

Students completed the Field Preparation Seminar course in September and we will be organizing a Pledge of Professionalism event for them in May 2022.

During the first term, students were particularly excited to have several guest speakers from Nunatsiavut and St. John's, all Memorial alumni or

current students, including a graduate of our Inuit Bachelor of Social Work Program. For most students, it was the first time they had met an Inuk social worker. One student commented: "I can and am able to fight for our Inuit customs to be considered to make change in the outside world. I have learned that there are Inuit social workers who are doing this and I would like to be like them."

### Stay in Touch!

Update your profile at <https://www.mun.ca/alumni/info/> and be sure to follow us on social media - Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MUNScwk](https://www.facebook.com/MUNScwk), Twitter: @MUNScwk for all the latest news and events.



## Initiatives

# Supporting Foster Parents: Community and Government Working Together

**BY KELLI DAWE BSW, RSW**

As of March 31, 2021, Newfoundland and Labrador had 580 foster homes providing care to the children and youth of the province (Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, 2021). Foster parents play an integral role in child protection, providing vulnerable young people with a safe home, nurturance, emotional support, and connections to positive relationships and supports.

The challenges of fostering are well-documented in research and are echoed by foster parents who communicate their experiences to our staff at the Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association (the Association). Historically, these have included access to training, challenges working with birth families, navigating government policies, coping with grief and loss, and feelings of being undervalued as a member of the professional team.

In 2013-2014, a need was recognized by the Association and community stakeholder, Waypoints, for foster parents to receive enhanced supports. Foster home placement breakdowns were increasing, and young people were being placed in group care and Alternative Living Arrangement (ALA) placements as a result. The Association

and Waypoints advocated to the provincial government to support a community-based initiative aimed at addressing the need for increased foster parent support, with the goal of preventing placement breakdowns and foster home closures. Government responded to the need and on September 30, 2015, the Supporting Foster Parents Pilot Program was launched.

The Supporting Foster Parents Program is a voluntary program intended to complement a foster parent's existing skills and competencies. It offers crisis management, 24-hour emergency support, debriefing opportunities, self-care support, training opportunities, in-person intervention around the needs of the children in the home, and ongoing support provided via text, e-mail, and phone calls. The service is provided by experienced, highly trained Child and Youth Care Workers employed by Waypoints.

Since the inception of the Supporting Foster Parents Program, over 100 foster families have participated, and the feedback received from participants reflect its' success. Foster parents value the consistent support of an individual who understands the challenges of fostering and has

the resources to provide meaningful, timely support. When foster parents feel supported, they are better equipped to navigate the challenges, ultimately contributing to more successful placements and fewer disruptions for children and youth.

The Supporting Foster Parents Program moved from the pilot phase to operational in 2021 as the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development has committed to continued funding. Additionally, a new Waypoints position was created in October 2021 to support delivery of the program in communities as far west as Gambo. The Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association is thrilled with the success of the Supporting Foster Parents Program and our vision is to see it expanded province wide. Foster parents provide an essential service and investing in their support and success is an investment that contributes to the wellbeing of our children and communities.

## REFERENCE

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Did you know? **NLCSW's YouTube channel** is a valuable source of continuing professional education (CPE). Any webinars viewed through the channel can be claimed as required credits under the workshop category.

## Perspectives

# Social Workers Stepping onto the Sports Field

BY BRANDON ST. CROIX MSW,  
RSW

When we think about vulnerable populations, we are often quick to think about the elderly, Indigenous populations, minority groups, and individuals who are living with low-income. All of which are correct, yet we do not think about athletes as a vulnerable group of individuals. Society may be quick to label them as "elite", "entitled", and "invincible". These labels are just some of the reasons why athletes may be vulnerable. Some of the stigma placed on athletes is powerful enough to prevent them from accessing mental health supports in the sport community (Gill, 2008).

There is often a perception that athletes are warriors and are taught to show no weakness. The warrior mentality may impact athletes' willingness to speak about their battles with stress, depressive thoughts, self esteem concerns, and negative coping techniques. A current lack of representation of social workers in the sport community to provide support and validate concerns will continue to be a disservice to our current and future athletes.

So, what role do social workers have in the sport community? Social workers have a responsibility to advocate and seek social justice against systems that do not properly support the wellbeing of athletes. It is our duty to advocate for change in the sports culture with administration, coaches, and league officials to promote a culture which fosters mental well-being and a safe environment to speak without judgment or reprimand. As social workers, we know the importance of standing with various populations against an act of injustice (Moore,



2016). Take a moment to reflect on how the social work skill set of advocacy and intervention could be used to support even elite athletes such as Simone Biles, who spoke about her mental health during the Olympics, or Kyle Beach, who disclosed sexual assault by a former Chicago Blackhawks' video coach. Elite athletes are a unique population compared to the general population due to the mindset and demand on their schedule developed by sports culture. It is important to note that 35% of elite athletes face a mental health crisis at some point of their life (Purcell et al., 2019). This demonstrates the important role social workers have in meeting the mental health needs of athletes.

A simple solution to improve sport culture may be to build a connection of athletes to social workers. This would make sense in terms of bridging supports for an individual's mental health. The concern would be if a social worker does not have the knowledge around an athlete's sport and how the culture of their sport is built into their identity. It is therefore important that social workers build rapport with athletes they are working with so that their concerns can be addressed and collaborate with the athlete to advocate for change.

Over the span of my social work career, I have spoken and consulted with various social workers across

Canada and USA who understand the gap in our current system and have knowledge around athletic culture. Social work is the prime profession to work with athletes due to our person-in-environment perspective and seeing an individual for more than their label. Various individuals and associations have banded together to highlight these concerns such as Bill Vanderwill, Dr. Emmett Gill, The 1in4 Project, and the Alliance of Social Workers in Sport just to name a few. I feel that it is our time to shine a light on the concerns of our athletes and step off the sidelines to lend our skills and recognize the vulnerability of our athletes.

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Culture

# The Caring for Our Children Project: Strengthening Supports and Recruiting Inuit Foster Families

BY MEGAN EDMUNDS BSW, RSW

## BACKGROUND

Inuit children make up a high percentage of children involved in the foster care program in Newfoundland and Labrador (Office of the Child and Youth Advocate Newfoundland and Labrador, 2019). From this, we acknowledge there is an identified need for more Inuit foster homes within the Nunatsiavut and Upper Lake Melville region. In 2009, the Nunatsiavut Government submitted a proposal to the Health Services Integration Fund (Health Canada) for funding. The aim of the project was threefold:

- To develop and implement a foster home promotional campaign that focuses specifically on Indigenous foster parents
- To adapt the PRIDE Pre-Service foster parent training to reflect Indigenous families and culture
- To plan a symposium for all foster parents in Nunatsiavut the following year, 2010

Once funding was granted for the **Caring for Our Children** pilot project, a collaborative process began with a number of stakeholders. These included but was not limited to the Provincial Department of Health and Community Services, Labrador Grenfell Health, the Innu Nation, the Child Welfare League of America, community members, and current and former foster parents.

A large piece in identifying the needs of foster families came from the



interviews of all past & present foster parents that reside in Nunatsiavut. These families provided valuable insight into how services could improve. In addition, the foster families symposium held in Hopedale with provincial representatives provided valuable information and an impetus in moving forward, particularly with the adapted PRIDE training for foster parents. The current **Caring for Our Children** project came from these initial processes and recommendations.

We are eager to share that the program has been established to help support Nunatsiavut children, youth and families. Today, we continue to evolve and grow as we empower Inuit to have a voice in what is needed for children to remain within their communities and culture.

## WHO WE ARE TODAY

As it currently stands, the **Caring for Our Children** project is a partnership between Nunatsiavut Government's Department of Health and Social

Development (DHSD) and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador's Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD). **Caring for our Children** project staff work in partnership to ensure that Labrador Inuit knowledge is at the forefront of the engagement between Inuit foster parents and their collaboration with CSSD, as we recognize we have unique social determinants of health in the Nunatsiavut region.

Within this program, we are often reviewing and assessing placement options for Inuit children that are placed outside of their communities. In the recent **A Long Wait for Change** report on Inuit child protection services within Newfoundland and Labrador, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate states, "[Inuit] young people in care told us they miss home terribly, and fear losing their culture connections and sense of Inuit identity. We repeatedly heard the significance of culture" (p. 3). It is essential for children to have a right to practice their culture and remain connected to their family, community, and region.

## OUR PROGRAMS

The current **Caring for Our Children** project with funding support from CSSD secured social work staff in June 2019 and it is now composed of two focus areas: recruitment and retention/support.

Our recruitment program has a social worker who is able to complete Regular and Significant/Other Foster Homes assessments. Through this, we have been noticing barriers in assessing and

approving foster placements. One of the largest has been the lack of housing or space in homes to accommodate a child in care and/or custody of CSSD. We also provide training, when available, to prospective and current Inuit foster parents.

The second area of our program offers support to Inuit foster parents in the Nunatsiavut and Upper Lake Melville Region. Through this program we are able to help Inuit foster parents build on their current strengths, advocate for services and to develop an individualized support plan that outline their needs and goals.

Currently, our team consists of two foster home recruitment and retention social workers that are located in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL. We collaborate internally and externally with CSSD and other service providers to ensure the continuity of recruitment and support.

Much of our travel has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, however we have been a virtual support to our Inuit foster parents. We are now travelling to the Nunatsiavut communities to offer in-person supports and outreach.

**IMPACT**

To date, we have served approximately 25 foster homes and we have had multiple applicants interested in being assessed as foster families. We have also supported Kinship caregivers when needed.

We have also been working on culturally relevant training for caregivers and although PRIDE training is now offered online, we have the ability to provide in-person PRIDE sessions on an as needed basis. On October 23rd, 2021, our team, with the help of the DHSD's mental wellness division were able to facilitate a Pathways to Reconciliation training

day for the Foster Families Association Board of Directors in Happy Valley Goose Bay, as well as for any foster parents and social workers who were interested in attending.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information, please contact a member on our team. Nakumeeek (Thank You).

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Megan Edmunds, BSW, RSW:  
(709) 896-5829

**REFERENCE**

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## 2022 Registration Renewal Deadline

February 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

**Avoid All Late Fees**  
 Renew online at [MyNLCSW.ca](http://MyNLCSW.ca) by  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022**  
 (midnight Island time)

## Promotion

# Field Instruction: A Labour of Love

**BY NICOLE BROWNE BSW, RSW**

Do you remember when you were a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) student? When you reflect on that time, do you think about feeling excited to start your career and help others? Did you feel nervous?

For my first field practicum, I was paired with a passionate field instructor who prioritized challenging me to think outside the box in community work. She also challenged me to recognize power imbalance and strive for humanity in my practice. Having followed my own interest in community settings, I am now proud to be a part of the student-to-field connection each time the opportunity arises.

Social workers balance many responsibilities. The importance of time management and self-care (at times self-preservation) is never lost on us, including managing our work-life balance. Why would social workers want to undertake this additional responsibility of field instruction? Why should you be the one to teach students the realities of the field?

We all enter this profession with a burning desire to help people. Critical thinking and theoretical approaches are taught to us, with an emphasis on a conflict perspective and structural barriers to equity. We know that we are committed to pursuing social justice, and this means seeking ways to change our society for the better. If you think about the challenges of your work, you probably see the need for passionate and dedicated

social workers in the field. It can be challenging to keep our passion for social justice alive and well under the policy constraints of day-to-day practice. Instructing students is a meaningful contribution to the profession. You can be part of ensuring that students are engaging in self-reflection, self-awareness, and most importantly learning how to challenge oppression in effective ways.

Memorial University's School of Social Work has excellent resources to help social workers transition to field instructors. The field instructor training and required documentation is all available online, making it user friendly and accessible. Additionally, the Field Education Coordinators help to match students with instructors, bridge any gaps, offer creative solutions, and support field instructors whenever needed.

Field education training emphasizes that learning is reciprocal between students and field instructors. However, it wasn't until recently that this completely resonated with me. I was fortunate to work with a student that challenged me in ways I had never considered. The student helped me make the connection between anti-oppressive theory and practice. In fact, the student helped me to deconstruct my assumptions and privilege with respect to whiteness and social work. I recently read an article by Donna Jeffery which captures some of the paradoxical issues between anti-racist social work education and practice. Jeffery (2005) asserts "whiteness as a set of

practices very much resembles social work as a set of practices; when we teach people to be self-reflective and critical of whiteness, we are, at the same time, inviting them to be critical of social work" (p. 410). I was able to learn from a student during practicum, much more than my BSW classrooms could teach me about decolonizing institutions and indigenizing the academy (i.e., educational institution).

Students are diverse, creative, and they bring a wealth of experience to apply to the work. Field instructors from all backgrounds have much to teach and share. However, with an open mind and a willingness to learn, field instructors can gain new perspectives on their work from students. Students can be parents, people with lived expertise, excellent advocates, and most importantly students can be eager to dive into the work and get their hands dirty. Students can help us refocus and rekindle our fire. They often remind us of why we chose this profession - because we believe in working toward a better world. We believe in the inherent worth and dignity of people (Canadian Association of Social Workers, 2005).

## REFERENCES

Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW). (2005). Code of ethics. Ottawa, ON: Author.

Jeffery, D. (2005). 'What good is anti-racist social work if you can't master it?': Exploring a paradox in anti-racist social work education. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, 8(4), 409-425.



## Topics

# Adult Central Intake (Eastern Health)

BY STEPHANIE BENNETT MSW,  
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I have worked as the Clinical Lead for Adult Central Intake (ACI) for the past 2 years and I would love to tell you all more about our program. ACI is a centralized hub where individuals can be referred for a variety of mental health and addictions services within Eastern Health. The program was started in 2015 with the goal of streamlining mental health and addictions referrals and improving waitlist management.

Referrals are accepted from service users (self-referrals). Individuals over the age of 18 years old in the metro area (from Trepassey to Pouch Cove and out as far as Conception Bay South) can call one central phone number if interested in self-referring for most mental health and addiction services. In addition, physicians and other health and community professionals can submit referrals via fax and e-mail. Please note, referrals for adult outpatient psychiatry are only accepted from medical doctors or nurse practitioners. We process referrals for a number of services including mental health and addictions counseling (individual, group based and couples/family), psychology, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) group, therapeutic recreation, occupational therapy as well as our specialized teams including Traumatic Stress Services, Concurrent Addictions Specialized Treatment (CAST) and outpatient psychiatry. We have an interdisciplinary team of intake clinicians that include social work, occupational therapy, and psychiatric nursing.

“As a team we are client-centered and apply solution focused techniques while implementing systems theory. Our goal is to provide clients with low barrier services at the right time and in the right place.”

Once referred, our intake clinicians will conduct a 15-to-20-minute intake assessment via telephone with clients. We will also make accommodations for clients when required, for example, conducting an in-person intake assessment. As well, we have the ability to use a language translation program when clients require it. The purpose of the intake assessment is to collect important information from clients such as positive patient identification, consent, geographic information and historical details related to current and past service use and to assess for the clients current level of functioning. We also assess for clients strengths and supports. Collaboratively, a decision will be made regarding which service(s) will

best meet the needs of clients as well as a client's priority level. The referral and intake assessment are then forwarded on to the accepting team.

We encourage a stepped care approach to service utilization and provide clients with information for emergency services, Doorways walk-in counseling and Bridge the Gapp. Intake clinicians provide education to clients about the benefits of a stepped care model which places clients on a continuum of services ranging from least intensive (self-directed learning) to most intensive (inpatient services). Clients are encouraged, when appropriate, to begin with the least intensive service that effectively meets their needs and to move up as indicated. As an example, it may be recommended that a client with a lower priority level start with self-directed learning/skill development that can be accessed through Bridge the Gapp. Whereas a client with a higher priority level and extensive service utilization may be referred directly to a counseling/specialized program. As a team we are client-centered and apply solution focused techniques while implementing systems theory. Our goal is to provide clients with low barrier services at the right time and in the right place. As part of my role, I am happy to provide consultation and information to service providers and clients who are unsure which service may be the best fit and to provide further information regarding community resources within and outside of Eastern Health. Please visit [mha.easternhealth.ca](http://mha.easternhealth.ca) to learn more about our program as well as other mental health and addictions services within Eastern Health.







The Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers (NLCSW) has a wealth of practice resources available to social workers. Members can easily access the full range of resources at [www.nlcsw.ca](http://www.nlcsw.ca).

Make these resources part of your everyday social work toolkit!

Standards of Practice

Explanatory Documents

Guideline Documents

Interpretative Documents

## YOUR SOCIAL WORK TOOLKIT EXPLAINED

Standards of Practice	<p>Outlines the practice requirements that must be adhered to by social workers in Newfoundland &amp; Labrador to ensure safe, ethical, and competent social work practice. These are informed by the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) Code of Ethics and Guidelines (2005).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards of Practice for Social Workers in Newfoundland and Labrador (2020)</li> </ul>
Explanatory Documents	<p>Provides information and direction on the Standards of Practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Use in Social Work Practice Explanatory Document (updated 2021)</li> <li>Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice Explanatory Document (2016)</li> <li>Social Work Recording Explanatory Document (2014)</li> <li>Supervision of Social Work Practice Explanatory Document (2011)</li> <li>Child Custody and Access Assessments Explanatory Document (2007)</li> </ul>
Guideline Documents	<p>Provides information and guidance on issues related to social work practice and affirms professional responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informed Consent with Children &amp; Youth (updated 2021)</li> <li>Medical Assistance in Dying: What Social Workers Need to Know (updated 2021)</li> <li>Guiding Framework for Social Workers Concerned About the Professional Practice of a Colleague (updated 2021)</li> <li>Social Workers and Diagnosis Using the DSM-5 Practice Guideline (2020)</li> <li>Resource Guide for Private Practice (updated 2020)</li> <li>Enduring Power of Attorney, Substitute Decision-Maker: What is the Role of Social Work (2019)</li> <li>Social Work and Decision-Specific Capacity Assessments (2012)</li> <li>Complementary and Adjunct Therapies and Techniques: A Guide for Registered Social Workers (2011)</li> </ul>
Interpretative Documents	<p>Provides information, clarification, and commentary on professional and ethical issues in social work practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ethical Decision-Making in Social Work Practice (updated 2021)</li> <li>Self-Assessment Tools for Informed Consent and Documentation (updated 2021)</li> <li>Practice Matter Series</li> <li>Ethical Compass Series</li> <li>Documentation Matters Series</li> </ul>