

Connecting Voices

Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers



Corner Brook, NL. Photo submitted by Bert Bennett MSW, RSW.

Feature

Clare's Law

BY EMMA DUKE BSW, RSW

The Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol Act, or Clare's Law, was proclaimed on November 2, 2023. Newfoundland and Labrador is the third province to pass the legislation, named after Clare Wood, a British woman who was killed by a former intimate partner in 2009. The Act "gives people who feel they are at risk of intimate partner violence a way to get information about their current or former partner so they can make informed choices about their safety" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

What is interpersonal violence?

The Act defines interpersonal violence as actual or threatened acts of violence in an intimate partner relationship that may include a single act of violence

or a number of acts forming a pattern of abuse. It includes one or more of the following: physical abuse, sexual abuse, criminal harassment, threats to harm children, other family members, or pets, property damage, exerting control over an individual's movements, communications, or finances, and emotional and psychological abuse (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

How is information shared?

Right to Ask: means that members of the public can apply for the disclosure of information about their risk for interpersonal violence. In Newfoundland and Labrador, applications are processed by the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) or

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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.

Newfoundland & Labrador College of Social Workers

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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: A Profession of Excellence

BY DEANNE O'BRIEN
BA, MSW, RSW

Social work encompasses various areas of practice and is a profession that has been regulated in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) for over 30 years. With approximately 1800 registered social workers across the province, we bring a professional, ethical and essential skillset to all practice areas. As evidenced by the articles in this winter edition, social workers across NL work in many professional practice settings including hospitals, government departments, statutory offices and agencies, court systems, private practice settings, educational institutions and non-profit organizations, just to name a few. The knowledge and skills that social workers provide to clients and service users are essential, extensive and aligned with the code of ethics that sets forth principles and values that guide our professional conduct. Social workers continue to make an immense impact on the lives of the people of the province in their areas of practice, from administration and policy to specialized clinical practice settings (CASW, 2005).

The Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers (NLCSW) provides extensive information on practice areas in which registered social workers are employed across the province. We would encourage you to explore the new NLCSW website, linked below, where you will find an abundance of continued educational information, practice resources, regulation material and information specific to practicing social work in the province. The NLCSW site also provides a listing of upcoming educational opportunities and networking events, especially during the month of March, which is social work month. Social work month provides opportunity for all social workers to come together to network, share experiences, attend educational events and celebrate our

profession. Stay tuned for the social work month listing of events and we hope you participate in activities to promote our profession. The Editorial Committee encourages all social workers to take part in some of the educational and networking activities occurring throughout the month. Please take a moment to review some of the resources available at <https://www.nlcsw.ca/>.

This edition of **Connecting Voices** highlights some exciting new initiatives that our colleagues are involved in throughout NL. In this edition, you will also find an array of articles written by social workers who are making an impact across our province and working in diverse areas of practice that pertain to ethics, advocacy, service delivery, evaluation, policy and program development, clinical practice and community development. Emma Duke discusses **Clare's Law**, commonly known as the **Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol Act** that was proclaimed in NL on November 2, 2023. Shari Fitzgerald explores evaluation considerations in social work practice and the importance of evaluation in policy and programming. Wilma MacInnis provides information on the significance of advocacy work and highlights the important work that is happening at the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA).

There are also several articles within this edition that highlight some of the programs and services offered throughout the province that you may find beneficial to your own area of practice. Shelby Wright, in the article titled Being PrEPared, provides information regarding the AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador (ACNL) and discusses Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) which is a highly effective prevention tool in decreasing the transmission of HIV. Melanie Hickey highlights the services

provided by the Brian Martin Housing Resource Centre (BMHRC) at Stella's Circle that are aimed at assisting individuals with finding and maintaining housing while breaking the cycle of homelessness. Kim Kelly reflects on her social work practice at Memorial University and highlights aspects of her role throughout her lengthy career as a social worker. This edition also includes reflections of BSW student, Hannah Drover, who shares some insights regarding her field placement completed at Planned Parenthood Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Health Centre (PPNLSHC). This is just a preview of some of the informative articles written by social workers working in diverse practice settings across the province.

Connecting Voices continues to provide a forum in which registered social workers are able to share their knowledge, experience, and information regarding areas of practice and showcase their commitment to the profession. We hope you enjoy reading all of the articles in this edition of **Connecting Voices** and that you learn something new about the significant and impactful work that our fellow colleagues are involved in across the province. The committee encourages all registered social workers to consider submitting an article for publication in a future edition.

Information on article submissions can be found in the **Connecting Voices Writing Guidelines** document that was developed by the Editorial Committee as a helpful resource.

We hope you enjoy this edition of **Connecting Voices**! Have a healthy and happy New Year!

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Executive Director

Always Advance

BY LISA CROCKWELL
LL.M, MSW, RSW

I had the privilege of being a member of the board of directors of the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) between 2016 and 2020. It was a position elected by the sixty-four jurisdictions throughout Canada, the United States and its territories which form the membership of the organization. NLCSW is one of those members. My time on the board of directors, working with various committees, and facilitating training for new board members from both countries has provided me with an unparalleled opportunity to view the professional regulation of social work from a broad perspective. Working with ASWB, the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) and the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators (CCSWR) has continuously opened my eyes to the various perspectives which have shaped the journey of the social work profession and how it is regulated. That journey has taken us through peaks and valleys, twists and turns, periods of bright sunshine and dark days.

As I reflect on where we are at this moment, we refer to this period as a unique time. However, we know that the world has faced pandemics, wars, restructuring of systems and labour shortages previously. The inequities which result in poverty and homelessness has been a focus of this profession since its inception. These are the social issues upon which we need to reflect, to learn and to continually address with unwavering commitment in order to move to a better future. Forward momentum was the reason that the ASWB board of directors would never have a "retreat" to reflect on what was happening, they would have an "advance".

As we think about where this profession needs to "advance" we see change and by association opportunity on the horizon. The world needs social workers and social workers need to have the knowledge and skill to continuously face considerable complexities. This is the essence of why social work is a regulated profession.

Thinking about how we advance in a

spirit of truth and reconciliation, CASW has taken important steps to apologize to all Indigenous people of Canada and create a new code of ethics which is set to be released. The **CASW Code of Ethics (2024)** will incorporate principles of the previous code of ethics and place them within the values of inclusion, truth, and reconciliation. As a member of CASW, the new Code will be reflected in the documents and work of this organization.

2024 will be an important year for NLCSW, a year of opportunity and change as we develop a new strategic plan for 2024-2027. This one will focus on how we continue to advance as a regulated profession understanding our responsibilities to the public we serve and to one another. Thinking about the knowledge, skills and abilities that are required to be a social worker in this next phase of the world and collaborating with others provincially, nationally, and internationally to achieve that goal.

I wish you joy and peace as we approach this new year and advance together.



NLCSW Private Practice Roster

The following social workers have opted to be included on NLCSW's voluntary roster for private practitioners. Contact information for these social workers is available on NLCSW's website – <https://nlcsw.ca/nlcsws-private-practice-roster/>

Melinda Aspell MSW, RSW
Kayla Baker MSW, RSW
Nicole Baker MSW, RSW
Mona Budden MSW, RSW
Angel Compton MSW, RSW
Agatha Corcoran MSW, RSW
Edwina (Wendy) Cranford MSW, RSW
Debbie Dale MSW, RSW
Amanda Devlin MSW, RSW
Shannon Furey MSW, RSW
Wanda Green MSW, RSW

Cassandra Guye MSW, RSW
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Darrell Hayward BSW, RSW, M.Ed.,
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Lance Jackson MSW, RSW
Jamille James MSW, RSW
Rosemary Lahey MSW, RSW
Barbara Lambe BSW, RSW
Denise Lawlor MSW, RSW
Greg McCann-Beranger MSW, RSW
Sheri McConnell PhD, RSW

Cyril McLaughlin MSW, RSW
Georgina Mercer MSW, RSW
Catherine Morris MSW, RSW
Wanda O'Keefe MSW, RSW
Marjorie Parsons MSW, RSW
Ruth Parsons PhD, RSW
Maxine Paul MSW, RSW
Michelle Power MSW, RSW
Michele Shears-Rumbolt MSW, RSW
Trudy Smith MSW, RSW
Ruby White MSW, RSW



Cover Story continued

or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), depending on where you live (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

Right to Know: is when a member of the RNC or RCMP proactively discloses information directly to a person at risk of intimate partner violence. If the police become aware that someone is at risk of intimate partner violence from a current or former partner, the police are empowered to provide information directly to that person (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

How Can Someone Make a Clare's Law Application?

The person at risk can apply for disclosure either online, or in person at a police station. Online applications can be found here: www.gov.nl.ca/claeslaw. Support persons can also apply on behalf of the person at risk, with consent, and accompany them to the disclosure meeting with police. Parents/guardians of an individual who are under 16 or a court-appointed guardian of an individual declared to lack capacity by a court may also make an application (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

What Information Will Be Disclosed?

There may be a pre-disclosure meeting with the police prior to receiving disclosure. This may include a discussion about safety, confirming consent with a support person, and going over any remaining details before receiving disclosure.

The police will review information available to them to complete their risk assessment on the person of disclosure. This may include performing relevant record checks (e.g., convictions, relevant criminal charges, cases not proceeded with, patterns of violent behaviour known to police, police warnings), and reviewing internal police databases.

Once information is collected by the police, they will determine the level of risk of interpersonal violence faced by the person at risk. The four categories of risk are:

1. Insufficient Information: There was insufficient information for the police to determine a specific risk level. Insufficient information does not mean a risk of interpersonal violence is not present. The behaviour of the person of disclosure may still be consistent with interpersonal violence or abuse and indicate a risk for interpersonal violence.

2. Low: Low risk means that the available records and the information provided or received did not show relevant information or enough information for the medium- or high-risk categories. Low risk does not mean that there is no risk of violence. Based on the information known to police, there may be incidents of past interactions with the police and/or the justice system but no indications that the person of disclosure has a violent or abusive past. The person of disclosure would have no history of convictions for an offence related to interpersonal violence or abuse. The person of disclosure has no other recorded incidents or information that indicates that their behaviour may cause harm to a current or former partner.

3. Medium: Medium risk means that the available records and the information provided or received caused the police to be concerned that the person at risk may experience interpersonal violence. Completed records checks indicated that past interactions with police and/or the justice system involved applicable incidents of violence or abuse by the person of disclosure. Known behaviours could indicate an elevated risk of violence to the person at risk. In addition to telling the person at risk that there is a medium risk, police may also verbally disclose relevant criminal convictions to the person at risk.

4. High: High risk means that the available records and the information provided or received caused the police to be concerned for the safety of the person at risk. Records checks indicate that past interactions with police and/or the justice system involved applicable incidents of violence or abuse by the person of disclosure. These incidents are consistent with an elevated risk of interpersonal violence. Immediate victim safety and risk mitigation strategies should be implemented. In addition to telling the person at risk that there is a high risk of interpersonal violence from the person of disclosure, police may also verbally disclose relevant criminal convictions to the person at risk (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

How Does the Journey Project Support Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence?

The Journey Project has a goal of enhancing and strengthening legal supports for survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence. The Journey Project is provincial in scope, meaning people of all ages living anywhere in Newfoundland and Labrador can access our services. It also means that anyone who has experienced sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence in Newfoundland and Labrador can access our services - even if they are living in another province, or another country.

The Journey Project has a dedicated team of Legal Support Navigators who offer legal information and system navigation to survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence. Our staff are based in St. John's, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and Corner Brook. Support from the Journey Project may include accompanying a survivor to court, a legal appointment, or the police station. It may also include offering community connections and referrals to resources, organizations, or professionals that offer support around the unique aspects of their experience.

The Journey Project runs the Journey Project Legal Support Service (JPLSS), a lawyer referral program where eligible participants can receive free legal advice. It is available to people who have already started a legal process and to those who are interested in exploring what their legal options may be in relation to their experience(s) of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence.

Survivors who are eligible for our program, or currently connected with our program can receive support when making a **Clare's Law** application. This may include providing the survivor with legal information, a referral to a lawyer for free legal advice, or accompanying people to the police station when possible. **The Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol Act** has identified representatives of organizations that support people at risk as support people, including Legal Support Navigators with the Journey Project.

Practice Considerations

Clare's Law legislation recognizes registered social workers as support persons. Support persons are required to sign a confidentiality agreement if they accompany the person at risk to the disclosure meeting. Disclosure will only be provided verbally by police and may not be recorded or written down. Registered social workers who are accompanying a person at risk to the police station should seek employer or agency consultation and review agency

policies and procedures pertaining to any legislative requirements or documentation standards and how they may impact the self-determination of the person at risk. This is consistent with one's ethical responsibilities as outlined in our **Code of Ethics** and **Standards of Practice**. Both police and social workers maintain a duty to report information that a child or youth is or may be in need of protective intervention under the **Children, Youth, and Families Act**.

A Tool, not a Solution

Clare's Law is a small step forward. However, it is a tool, not a solution. A report by the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability (2020) noted that one woman or girl is killed in Canada every 2.5 days, with 41% involving a current or former intimate partner relationship. Intimate partner violence in Canada is an epidemic (Taylor, 2023). Yet, rates of intimate partner violence are vastly underestimated (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2018). People who perpetrate harm are not always known to police, nor do they always have a criminal record. Intimate partner violence is pervasive and insidious. It is our role as social workers to think critically about the systems in place, the systems we work in, or alongside with. Social workers are positioned to prevent and respond to intimate partner violence through our **Code of Ethics**. It is our duty to pursue social justice and uphold the self-determination of the

people we support, while advocating for systemic change (CASW, 2005).

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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.



Ethics

A New Code of Ethics for the Social Work Profession

BY ANNETTE JOHNS MSW, RSW
NLCSW ETHICS COMMITTEE

Exciting news!! The **Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW)** has just released a new **Code of Ethics**, which replaces the **CASW (2005) Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Ethical Practice**. This new **Code of Ethics** has been adopted by the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers (NLCSW) and will be implemented for use in this province beginning March 1, 2024. To coincide with the implementation of the new **Code of Ethics**, the NLCSW Standards of Practice have also been updated and both the **Code of Ethics** and the **Standards of Practice** will guide social work practice in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A code of ethics sets forth the ethical values and principles that are foundational to a profession. It provides an ethical framework to inform practice, support professional decision-making, and guide professional conduct and behavior.

The **CASW (2024) Code of Ethics** outlines 7 core ethical values that social workers must uphold in their practice. These values hold equal importance and promote unity amongst the profession:

1. **Respecting Dignity and Worth of Persons**
2. **Promoting Social Justice**
3. **Pursing Truth and Reconciliation**
4. **Valuing Human Relationships**
5. **Preserving Integrity in Professional Practice**
6. **Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality**
7. **Providing Competent Professional Services**

Social workers have a responsibility to be familiar with and adhere to the ethical values and principles of the **Code of Ethics**. "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** guide social workers as they act in good faith and with a genuine desire to make sound judgements" (**CASW Code of Ethics, 2024, p. 2**).

Social workers are dedicated to ensuring cultural competence in practice and addressing issues related to colonialism, oppression, racism, and discrimination. While this responsibility has been inherent in previous codes of ethics, the **2024 Code of Ethics** highlights the value of Pursuing Truth and Reconciliation. This is important from a national and provincial context as social workers have an important and crucial role in providing culturally safe social work services and promoting social justice and systemic change. This also aligns with the **NLCSW Standards of Practice for Social Workers in NL**, and social workers can refer to the **Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice Explanatory Document**.

Social workers practice in complex and challenging environments where ethical dilemmas often arise in relation to dual and multiple relationships, boundaries, conflicts of interest, client confidentiality and privacy, informed consent, and documentation. When navigating these dilemmas, reviewing the **Code of Ethics** to tease out the ethical principles that apply, is an essential component of the ethical decision-making model outlined in NLCSW's **Ethical Decision-Making in Social Work Practice** document. When documenting professional decisions, it is important to be able to articulate the rationale for the decision based on the ethical decision-making process that was used and in keeping with the ethical responsibilities outlined in the **Code of Ethics**.

It has been over 40 years since CASW adopted the first **Code of Ethics** for use by social workers in Canada. Each revision and update has reflected the evolution and growth of the profession and the environment and social context in which social workers practice. The release of the **2024 Code of Ethics** is an important milestone in our profession. Take some time to consider how you will use the new **Code of Ethics** in your practice, in conversations with colleagues, and in mentoring future social workers. It is also important that people who avail of social work services understand the professional and ethical obligations of social workers as outlined in the **Code of Ethics** and **Standards of Practice**.

CASW will be offering a series of webinars on the Code of Ethics. These sessions will be added to the continuing education section on the CASW website, and details will be shared through CASW's communication channels. Social workers in NL are encouraged to take in these learning opportunities in advance of the **Code of Ethics** being implemented for use in NL so that you can become familiar with the content and practice guidelines and reflect on how this **Code of Ethics** will guide your social work practice.

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Value 1: Respecting the Dignity and Worth of All People

- Respect the inherent dignity and worth of all people.
- Promote the self-determination and autonomy of all people.
- Uphold the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people consistent with applicable rights and legislation.
- Respect the status, rights, diversity and needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.
- Uphold the rights of all people to receive services in a manner that considers intersecting factors of exclusion and respects all manner of diversity.
- Respect the rights of service users to make decisions based on voluntary consent when possible.
- Social workers uphold the rights of every person, group, and community to be free from violence or threat of violence.

Value 2: Promoting Social Justice

- Uphold the principles of social justice related to the rights of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to receive fair and equitable access to services, resources, and opportunities and to be free of oppression, racism, and discrimination.
- Advocate for the rights of Indigenous Peoples to be free from racism, systemic racism, and discrimination as stipulated in the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.
- Advocate for the rights of all individuals, families, groups, and communities to be free from oppression, exclusion, racism, and discrimination.
- Advocate for the stewardship of natural resources and the protection of the environment for the common good of all people.

Value 3: Pursuing Truth and Reconciliation

- Social workers uphold the values and principles of reconciliation.
- Social workers acknowledge Indigenous world views in their practice.

Value 4: Valuing Human Relationships

- Place the well-being and interests of all people at the centre of their relationships.
- Continually develop self-awareness and practise self-reflection to guide their practice and personal well-being.

Value 5: Preserving Integrity in Professional Practice

- Act with integrity are honest, responsible, trustworthy, and accountable.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with service users.
- Are aware of potential conflicts of interest and avoid situations where their personal interests may interfere with their professional obligations.
- In private practice act with integrity in all business practices.

Value 6: Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

- Uphold the interests of service users, members of the public, and other professionals in developing and safeguarding the trust placed in the confidential relationship.
- Are transparent about the limits of confidentiality in their professional practice.
- Disclose confidential information with valid consent in accordance with applicable legislation or without consent when required by law or court order or allowed by legislation.
- Preserve privacy and confidentiality in the provision of electronic social work services.

Value 7: Providing Competent Professional Services

- Continuously develop their professional knowledge and skill at the level required to provide competent professional services.
- Practise within their level of competence and seek appropriate guidance when services required are beyond their competence.
- Contribute to the ongoing development of the social work profession and current and future social workers.
- Contribute to the knowledge base and advancement of knowledge in the social work profession.

Book Review

The Set Boundaries Workbook: Practical Exercises for Understanding Your Needs and Setting Limits (2021)

BY SIMONE PELLEY
MSW, RSW

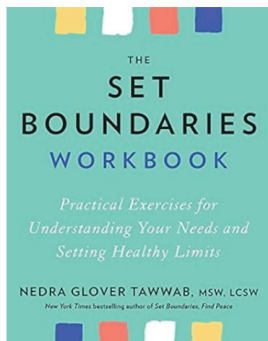
In **The Set Boundaries Workbook: Practical Exercises for Understanding Your Needs and Setting Limits (2021)** the

author, Nedra Glover Tawab, MSW, LCSW defines boundaries as,

"ways to communicate our needs to others via words and actions. They are perimeters that we establish with ourselves and others. Therefore, boundaries aren't just about telling other people what to do but are also about holding yourself accountable for creating your life" (p.1).

As a social worker in private practice, I work with people whose lives have become unmanageable. Clients report they have exhausted every personal avenue to make changes on their own and therefore they are seeking outside help. No matter what the presenting need that brings someone to therapy, it is inevitable that some sessions focus on identifying and changing unhealthy boundaries that often cause and maintain feelings of distress.

Tawab's workbook is an excellent resource for social workers working with people who are looking to balance the interpersonal challenge of maintaining diverse and complex relationships while also maintaining a sense of self-respect. Throughout the book she clarifies what are healthy and unhealthy boundaries. She explores why people may have



unhealthy boundaries, the consequences of having unhealthy boundaries, how to set boundaries and coping with the discomfort of setting boundaries. She focuses on communicating boundaries and boundary enforcement. She discusses the challenges of setting boundaries in family systems, with life

partners, friends and in work settings. She has a chapter focused on boundaries and social media and technology. The workbook has self-assessments, reflection exercises and practice exercises. The format is readable, accessible and each section flows well into the next section building on the work from previous chapters.

This resource is not just valuable for clients, but this is also a useful tool in a social worker's professional self-care toolbox. As registered social workers maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with clients is an ethical obligation and it is outlined in the **Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) (2005) Code of Ethics, CASW (2005) Guidelines for Ethical Practice**, and **Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers (NLCSW) (2020) Standards of Practice**. The **CASW Code of Ethics** states, "Social workers establish appropriate boundaries in relationships with clients and ensure that the relationship serves the needs of clients" and the **CASW Guidelines for Ethical Practice** states, "Social workers maintain

appropriate professional boundaries throughout the course of the professional relationship and after the professional relationship." Maintaining healthy personal and professional boundaries can fortify against harm to the client but also against the effects of compassion fatigue and burnout for the social worker. It is a worthwhile exercise for social workers to use regular self-reflection to identify any personal challenges that may serve as roadblocks to boundary enforcement in professional relationships with both colleagues and clients.

This workbook serves as an excellent tool for self-reflection for clients as part of social and emotional recovery and even supporting social workers in upholding the values of the profession in the **CASW Code of Ethics (2005)**.

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Deadline for submission for the next edition of Connecting Voices is May 1 • 2024

Practice

The Pursuit of Knowledge through Continuing Professional Education

BY NLCSW REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

January is the time of the year in Newfoundland and Labrador when social workers count our Continuing Professional Education (CPE) hours to submit for registration renewal. For those of us who use the **Update MyCPE** online tracking system feature available through **MyNLCSW.ca**, that process is pretty simple. For those of us who go through paper and electronic calendars to determine what we have completed, that process can be tedious. As members of the Registration Committee responsible for the oversight of the CPE Policy and registration renewal, we thought this would be a good time to reflect on the bigger picture. Why do all professions have some form of continuing education criteria and how do we ensure that this is not an exercise of simply checking a box?

Importance of CPE

As the new **CASW Code of Ethics** is being launched in 2024, we note that every version of the code of ethics has a reference to the importance of lifelong learning as an ethical and professional obligation. This foundational statement is rooted in the commitment to ensure the highest quality of practice which exists throughout the entire scope of professional practice whether that is counselling and therapy, management and supervision, policy analysis and administration or research and education. It is about competence; defined simply as "the ability to fulfill the requirements of a job or obligation" (Barker, 2014, p.84). More broadly in social work it is the "possession of all relevant education

and experiential requirements... achieve social work goals while adhering to the values and goals of the profession" (Barker, 2014, p.84).

Completing a BSW and/or MSW is the educational foundation for the practice of the profession in North America. This establishes the base upon which we must all build over time. We know that the world and by extension the profession changes rapidly. CPE is one way of keeping up with those changes.

Assessing our own CPE Needs

We know that on an individual level, meaningful CPE that will advance social work practice is a product of many factors. These include years of experience, previous education, opportunities for supervision and consultation and individual strengths. NLCSW's CPE self-assessment tool is intended to assist with the self-reflection process inviting social workers to think about our own knowledge, skills, and future career plans. Foundational areas for all social workers to consider for CPE includes knowledge of the current code of ethics, standards of practice, confidentiality and disclosure of information, boundaries, and social work theory.

Overview of Policy

CPE is cited in the Social Workers Act, the Social Workers Regulations, the **CASW Code of Ethics** and the **NLCSW Standards of Practice**. The NLCSW CPE Policy was initially developed in 1995 and has evolved by recognizing the broad scope of the profession. That is why within the 40-hour parameter there is considerable

judgment on the part of a social worker to determine the type of CPE activities that will best meet learning needs. The policy allows for 20 credits to be obtained through activities such as conferences, courses, and workshops while the remaining 20 can be obtained through self-directed learning activities such as reading and mentoring. More information on the mechanics of the policy including the submission of credits and when credits can be prorated can be found on the **NLCSW website** under the CPE section of the social worker menu. Every year in January the Registration Committee facilitates a CPE session about registration requirements. The next webinar will be offered on January 26, 2024 and will be posted on the **NLCSW YouTube** channel for later viewing.

As social work professionals we are required to practice in a manner that is compliant with our code of ethics and standards of practice, that ensures confidentiality and appropriate boundaries, while applying social work theory in our everyday work. Consider these principles as you seek out learning opportunities and embark on completing CPE in the future. And further, consider using the **Update MyCPE** feature to keep your continuing education easily in view. Meaningful continuing education on an annual basis is one factor in the assurance of quality social work practice and our ongoing pursuit of knowledge.

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Issues

Being PrEPared

BY SHELBY WRIGHT BSW, RSW

The AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador (ACNL) is a provincial community-based, non-profit charitable organization committed to preventing the spread of HIV, hepatitis C virus (HCV), and related sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBI) through education and supportive harm reduction-based programs and services. At ACNL we utilize evidence based practices to increase access and remove barriers to prevention, testing, treatment and the continuum of care as they relate to STBBI. One highly effective prevention tool in decreasing the transmission of HIV is Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). PrEP is a highly effective HIV prevention strategy that HIV-negative people can use to lower their chance of getting HIV (Arkell, 2022). Use of PrEP involves taking antiretroviral (anti-HIV) drugs and attending regular medical appointments for monitoring and support. When PrEP is taken as prescribed, the risk of HIV transmission is extremely low (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

In Canada the rate of new HIV infections has been increasing since 2016 and this recent upward trend does not appear to be decreasing (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2021). When taken consistently, PrEP appears to prevent nearly 100% of sexual HIV transmission. Among all the studies and the many thousands of people now using PrEP globally (including all genders and sexual orientations), there have only been less than a few documented cases of sexual HIV transmission in people who are adherent to PrEP (Arkell, 2022). In our immense work in community, collectively we have found that the largest barrier to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians accessing this effective, preventative medication has been financial.

Despite the fact PrEP coverage is available through the provincial drug program, and that some co-pays are defined by the

program's eligibility criteria, PrEP can still cost Newfoundlanders and Labradorians \$250.00 - \$280.00 a month out of pocket to access. This large monthly payment has become a deterrent for many in accessing this important and preventative medication.

When comparing the cost to government in providing full PrEP coverage, to the cost of treating a newly diagnosed individual with HIV, the financial benefits of prevention over treatment become evident. The average economic cost to the provincial government in treating an individual newly diagnosed with HIV is \$14,453.00 a year (Kingston-Riechers, 2011). This too is only related to direct medical costs, and does not include productivity and quality of life costs. This indicates that the economic cost of providing HIV treatment to newly diagnosed individuals is five times greater a cost per year than providing an NL citizen with equitable financial access to PrEP.

Daily use of PrEP is recommended by the World Health Organization as an effective method to prevent HIV in people at significant risk of infection, such as men and transwomen who have sex with men, people who inject drugs and people who have sex with individuals with HIV (World Health Organization, 2021). Despite this recommendation Newfoundland and Labrador have fallen behind other Canadian provinces like Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan where PrEP is fully covered for those deemed to be at higher risk for HIV. At ACNL we feel it is pertinent to see Newfoundland and Labrador go a step further and to be at the forefront in adhering to Canada's commitment to UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets. UNAIDS states in order to meet these targets there must be urgency in scaling up other core prevention strategies such as PrEP (UNAIDS, 2014). This can be done by taking on approaches grounded in principles of human rights, mutual respect and inclusion, such as full and

equitable free access to PrEP in NL.

If you, or someone you know is considering, or wants further information about PrEP as a prevention option, please reach out to us at The AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador, by emailing swright@acnl.net, or calling 1 (709) 579 8656 (ask for Shelby). In addition, you can find further information at our website www.acnl.net. Together we navigate and find the best option(s) to suit you.

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Community



Cultivating Hope: How the Brian Martin Housing Resource Centre, Stella's Circle Transforms Housing Support

BY MELANIE HICKEY MSW, RSW

The Brian Martin Housing Resource Centre (BMHRC) at Stella's Circle, located at 84 Prescott Street in St. John's, assists individuals seeking housing stability and hope. Our committed team of 12 staff members offers a suite of services aimed at helping individuals find and maintain housing while breaking the cycle of homelessness and precarious housing. Our work is driven by a profound awareness of the growing housing crisis, soaring costs of living, and the detrimental impact of Airbnb on housing availability in our local community.

One of the fundamental pillars of the BMHRC is housing-focused case management. We understand that securing stable housing is a complex

and often overwhelming process for many individuals facing homelessness and housing uncertainty. Our case managers work closely with participants, landlords, and other service providers, offering client-led assistance and support tailored to their unique needs. By providing comprehensive guidance in navigating housing options, financial assistance programs, and legal rights, we aim to empower individuals to take control of their housing situations.

The BMHRC always welcomes Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) students from Memorial University. These students bring fresh perspectives, energy, and a commitment to social justice to our work. Furthermore, working closely with these aspiring social workers

helps bridge the gap between theory and practice.

The Challenge of Rising Homelessness

The work we do at the BMHRC is undeniably challenging. The growing prevalence of homelessness in our society is a stark reminder of the work that remains to be done. Daily, we interact with individuals who have experienced homelessness. The reasons for homelessness are diverse, including job loss, mental health issues, addiction, and domestic violence. Yet, the consistent thread is the urgent need for stability and support.

Food Insecurity and Housing Crisis

Homelessness is inextricably linked to a range of socio-economic issues. Alongside housing, food is a basic



human need. Many of the individuals we support also experience food insecurity. The housing crisis compounds these issues, making it even more difficult for them to find affordable housing. These challenges emphasize the necessity of our work.

Rising Cost of Living and Lack of Affordable Housing

In recent years, the cost of living has escalated to unprecedented levels, leaving many individuals teetering on the brink of homelessness. The combination of high rent costs, insufficient income, and an overall lack

of affordable housing options makes it exceedingly difficult for individuals to secure a stable place to call home. As a housing resource centre, we strive to alleviate this burden by connecting our clients with resources and advocacy services that can help bridge the affordability gap.

Impact of Airbnb on Local Housing Availability

Another pertinent issue we face is the impact of Airbnb on local housing availability. The increase of short-term rentals has reduced the pool

of available housing units in our community, leaving fewer options for individuals seeking long-term housing solutions. The BMHRC actively engages in landlord recruitment and support.

Meeting Higher Needs Than Ever

In recent years, we have observed a concerning trend – individuals seeking our services have more complex and higher needs than ever before. Substance abuse, mental health challenges, food insecurity, and a lack of access to essential healthcare services have compounded the already difficult challenges of homelessness. Our team has had to adapt and expand our services to provide the necessary support for individuals with complex needs. Collaboration with local healthcare providers and mental health services has become essential in addressing this critical aspect of our work.

The work of the BMHRC is a testament to our unwavering commitment to ending homelessness, precarious housing, and the many challenges that face our participants. With a committed team of staff and through our valuable partnerships, we are determined to make a difference in the lives of those we serve. As the housing crisis continues to evolve, we adapt, innovate, and work tirelessly to ensure that everyone has a safe and stable place to call home.



March is Social Work Month. The theme is **Seven Points of Unity: Many Possibilities** which celebrates the release of the 2024 Code of Ethics.

Stay tuned to NLCSW's website and twitter feed as more details will be released soon.

Initiatives

Amal: A Centre for Hope in Search of Healing Homes

BY BETHANY WOODMAN
MSW, RSW

Amal Youth and Family Centre, a non-profit organization, proudly provides an extensive range of diverse programs and services to our community. Under the leadership of Dr. Heather Modlin, a globally respected Child and Youth Care Practitioner, we aspire to be a beacon of hope—a warm, welcoming, respectful, and diverse organization where children, youth, and families from various backgrounds thrive together.

The focus of this article is to highlight our family-based care program, a specialized initiative designed for children and youth with complex needs in the foster care system. Our aim is to deliver high-quality care in a family setting, allowing children to heal from their traumatic experiences, whether their placement is for the short or long-term. Our dedicated family-based care team brings extensive experience in assessment and family support and is eagerly awaiting individuals like you to step forward and embark on the rewarding journey of family-based care.

Social workers in the foster care system have long grappled with the persistent challenge of a shortage of families to provide care. Reflecting on 2008, when I was a new social worker, I recall a critical shortage leading to children being cared for in hotel rooms. Since then, collaborative efforts between community-based organizations and the government have increased placement resources, resulting in the elimination of children living in hotel rooms under the care of child protection social workers. It is a testament to our community's ability to unite and generate impactful solutions.



AMAL YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTRE

Over the past 15 years, I have witnessed creative solutions, shift a significant number of children from staffed residential placements to family placements. Family-based care has the capacity to yield remarkable outcomes with lasting impacts on many children. The family environment allows children the space to heal and facilitates permanency planning. Some children may be adopted, other children may receive nurturing care while their parents do the necessary work to transition them home or until they move on toward independence.

Despite these potential successes, our community faces a renewed crisis of foster and family-based care home shortages. There is much public attention to the backlogs in the healthcare system created by the pandemic; however, another startling, but less obvious, result appears to be a reduction in the number of families coming forward to care for children in need. This reduction has led to fewer placements for children in families and

a resulting increase in children placed in staffed care. Provincial government statistics support this assertion. There were 50 children in family-based placements in 2021, and by 2023 there were just 30. This accompanies a reduction in the number of children placed in foster homes (785 down to 675) and an increase in staffed residential placements (95 to 100 in group care and 50 to 70 in individual care). While there was a concurrent decrease in the number of children in-care from 2021 to 2023 (995 to 915) the decreased placements in family settings are alarming (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2021; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

It is crucial for more families to step forward and open their homes to children in need. As of July 2023, approximately 200 children in our provincial foster care system are not placed with families. Amal is committed to supporting families and reducing the caregiver burden

to ensure successful placements. Our carers have a dedicated program supervisor and family engagement worker, alongside quality educational programs to empower them with the necessary skills and confidence to take on this role. Recognizing the importance of self-care, we provide breaks and respite, along with financial remuneration to alleviate any financial burdens. Understanding many people may not have extra space in their home for an additional child or siblings, Amal works with families to secure suitable accommodations when necessary. We remain committed to helping carers provide stable and healing homes for children who are experiencing much instability in their lives.

While group and individualized care in staffed living arrangements remains necessary for some children, most children thrive in family settings.

If opening your home is not feasible right now, there are still impactful ways to contribute. We urge you to spread the word about the critical need for more families and become ambassadors for Amal.

Join us in making a difference! If someone has been considering family-based care, reassure them that Amal is a welcoming place to begin this journey. They can engage in a commitment-free conversation to gather information and make an informed decision. If the thought of becoming a carer has crossed their minds but obstacles exist, encourage them to reach out. Together, we can address potential roadblocks and determine if family-based care is a good fit.

You have the power to make a meaningful difference by engaging

in conversations with those willing to listen. Your support can change the lives of children when they need it the most.

For more information, please contact us at info@amalni.ca or 709-771-9798.

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EMOTIONALLY FOCUSED THERAPY IN-PERSON TRAININGS 2024

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA
DR. ROBERT ALLAN

Emotionally Focused
Couple Therapy
Externship
May 8 - 11



Emotionally Focused
Individual Therapy
Essentials
May 1 - 4

Info and Registration
<https://bit.ly/EETHALIFAX2024>

Info and Registration
<https://bit.ly/EFIHAlifax2024>

For more information on either training, email ceallanevents@gmail.com

Perspectives

"One Step Below a Doctor"

BY HANNAH DROVER BSW
STUDENT

Hannah's BSW field placement was completed at Planned Parenthood Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Health Centre (PPNLSHC).

I was midway through an individual session with a service user when I was asked, "You're just one step below a doctor, right?" I responded by explaining my role as a social work student and clarified that I was there to listen, provide information, and offer resources, not to make medical judgements regarding their health.

I had been providing this service user with information on different forms of contraception and Sexually Transmitted or Blood Born Infections (STBBI) testing. They expressed they were happy to have someone to talk to and had many questions related to these areas of sexual health. In my role, I had the capacity to provide emotional support and share information so this client would be better equipped to discuss these topics with their physician.

Their inquiry regarding my position prompted me to contemplate the boundaries of my role as a social work student. Further, I began to consider the scope of practice of social workers in health care settings. Was there truth to the discipline hierarchy this service user referenced, and if so, how does this perception impact social worker roles in health care contexts?

In Newfoundland and Labrador, regional health authorities employ the largest number of social workers, fluctuating around 40% (Newfoundland & Labrador College of Social Workers, 2021). This number can only be expected to rise as the **Health Accord for Newfoundland & Labrador (Health Accord NL) (2022)** projects

the need for "more primary health care providers and an integrated approach that includes social supports and services" (p.102).

In a qualitative study, social workers in Canadian health care settings "reported that colleagues of other disciplines recognize that they bring something unique to healthcare services, usually characterized as 'complementary'" (Lévesque et al., 2019, p.2254). The implications of this statement align with the misperception that social workers in interdisciplinary teams contribute services that are appendages to the medical system, rather than essential components.

In the same context, a separate study spoke to how this perception impacts social work practice, "Social workers are in a position of having to carve out roles and demonstrate how this assists the [interdisciplinary] team in a unique way" (Ambrose-Miller and Ashcroft, 2016, p. 102). This uncertainty regarding scope of practice is something I experienced within my placement as a social work student.

At PPNLSHC, service users can book what is called a Birth Control Consult with a physician. This is typically a 10–15-minute phone call appointment where a doctor can answer questions and walk a service user through birth control options. While there are situations where a client may have complex medical needs, these consults are largely utilized to provide information on the differences in use between birth control options so that a client can determine which one is the best fit for them.

As a person who is passionate about accessible reproductive health care, I have educated myself on every type of birth control offered at PPNLSHC. I have also cross-referenced my knowledge with PPNLSHC's resources

to ensure that I am not spreading misinformation.

Throughout my placement, many service users have asked me questions about birth control options over the phone, in-person, and following options counseling. I have always responded by providing unbiased information. Many of these conversations have resulted in a service user self-determining a birth control option that feels right for them. I then book them a phone call appointment to receive a prescription from a doctor.

This example leaves me questioning whether these conversations are within the scope of practice of a social worker. Are they relative and specific to social work practice?

When reflecting on this question, I consulted with my field instructor. We discussed ethical principles and theoretical approaches that distinguish social work practice from other disciplines. Additionally, she challenged me to conceptualize social determinants of health as factors that substantiate social workers as integral to interdisciplinary health care teams.

I also came across a statement that inspired further thought, "Social workers resist the dominant medical paradigm, even when performing clinical work, in an effort to make up for increasingly impersonal services" (Lévesque et al., 2019, p.2253).

Resonating with this claim, I reflected upon emotionally driven conversations with service users that spanned as long as an hour even though the only measurable outcomes were discussions around birth control options. My field instructor encouraged me to examine how these conversations provided other forms of personalized support such as the space to share one's story,

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Topics

Reconceptualizing 'Quality': Evaluation Considerations in Social Work Practice

BY SHARI L. FITZGERALD MASP,
BSC, MSW, RSW

In the field of social work, program evaluation is highly touted as a critical component of evidence-based social work practice. Evaluation offers a systematic approach to exploring the effectiveness and efficiency of policies, programs and procedures, and aims to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems (Gervin et al., 2010). While evaluation in social work practice is often linked to the process of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), discerning the intricacies embedded within the notion of 'quality' can be a weighted, nuanced endeavor. Evaluation utility as it relates to perceptions of 'quality' and 'success' is multifaceted as evaluation findings vary in representativeness and are contingent upon the dynamics of interacting social systems impacting any one stakeholder, individual, family, or community at any given time (Blom & Morén, 2012).

What do successes in policy and program evaluation look like? How do we ground evaluation in a manner that necessitates transition from learning to action? Is the concept of 'quality' in social work service delivery a quantitative or qualitative evaluation benchmark or an individualized state of being guided by the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) (2005)? While these questions are quite profound with little known consensus, I propose that quality in evaluation and its impact on service delivery can be deduced in simplicity to inquisitive disposition and unconditional organizational support in the pursuit of reflection and learning.

In attempting to construct a theory of change for evaluating service impacts and outcomes, Bronfenbrenner's (1992) ecosystemic perspective provides one model with which to understand interventions and outcomes across the



three levels of social work practice (i.e., micro, meso, and macro). Ecological systems theory can be extrapolated as a framework for practitioners to localize themselves in various, interacting social environments and offers evaluators a conceptual map to help plan quality improvement strategies across systems of relationships. While evaluation in social work is commonly approached from micro or meso-targeted perspectives and an omnipresent hopefulness to promote broad-scale impact, the connection between evaluative work and inclusive systemic change is often weak or unclear.

Findings and recommendations that emerge from social work evaluation offer valuable insight to and from stakeholders that inform quality improvement strategies. Though, a lingering presumption continues to prevail – an assumption that evaluative findings reaching policymakers and other powered professionals result in the assurance of influence. If we take what we know about policy and program evaluation and the significant role organizational support and collaboration has in supporting desired outcomes, we must consider adapting our view of quality social work evaluation beyond one-off assessments of achievement and evaluative tasks to rationalize financial

support. Rather, we must move toward a renewed vision that unpacks evaluation as inherent, day-to-day undertakings shared among everyone in the interest of establishing a framework of authentic reflection across all agencies.

Certainly, individualized performance evaluations and program-specific evaluation projects are informative as they present opportunities for learning; still, challenges arise when evaluation tasks are used unilaterally in politicized or punitive ways to force governing agendas tethered to financial support and social stigma. The larger vision of systemic reform must be sought after in a manner that is broad and more accountable than localizing responsibility on individual workers, specific programs, or select services to perform quicker, cheaper, or better. As we continue to utilize evaluation initiatives to improve policies and programs and aim for the gold star standard that is 'quality', we must be mindful of the inner-workings of our sociopolitical systems and be intentional as we seek some sort of semblance of meaningful action or resolve.

I argue that quality program evaluation in social work practice requires a thoughtful attitudinal shift in how evaluation is

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Leadership

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate: Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Children and Youth here in Newfoundland and Labrador

BY WILMA MACINNIS MSW, RSW

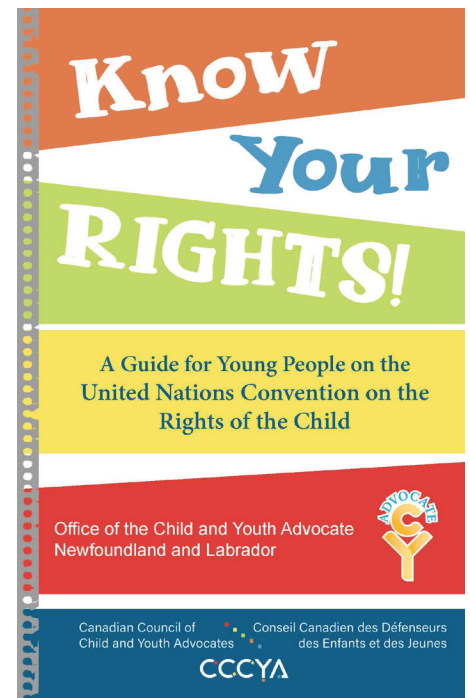
The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA) is an Independent Statutory Office of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador. We are responsible for promoting and protecting the rights of all children and youth in the province and provide public oversight of government programs and services. We advocate to ensure children and youth have access to services they are entitled to, that their issues receive appropriate attention, and their voices are amplified in matters affecting them. The Office has been doing this work for over 20 years and is mandated by legislation through the **Child and Youth Advocate Act (2001)** to protect and advance the rights of children and youth.

Our primary clients are children and youth under the age of 19. If a young person is in extended care or custody, that age range is extended to the age of 21. We help children and youth by standing up for their rights in dealing with child serving systems. We help young people speak up for themselves, we speak up with them, or we speak up for them. We encourage young people to contact us if they are having an issue accessing services, if they feel their rights are not being respected, or if their viewpoint is not being heard. We also work closely with family members, professionals, other supporters, and champions working on behalf of children and youth. We offer individual advocacy, as well as systemic advocacy where groups of young people are

affected. We investigate and review complaints, and deliver public education on the rights of children and youth.

The voices and rights of young people are integral to the work we do and guide all of our advocacy efforts. Our advocacy work is guided by the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989)** as well as the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)**, the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)** and other policies and laws.

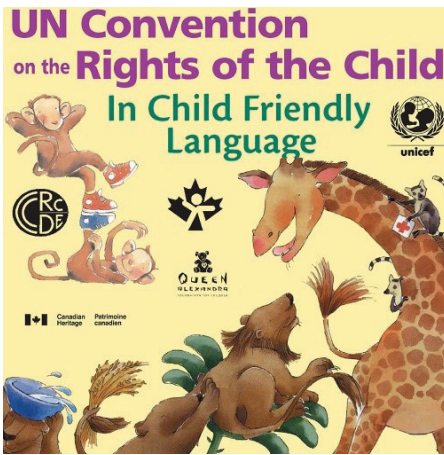
When we facilitate public education sessions we are often surprised that many young people and adults as well are unaware that children and youth have their own specific set of rights as outlined in the UNCRC. This comprehensive child rights framework exists because children and youth are a unique and vulnerable group and therefore require special protection of their rights. Their views, experiences, and perspectives are frequently missing from public policy consultation, debate, and development. The UNCRC is rooted in the principles of non-discrimination, best interests of the child, life, survival and development, and participation. As social workers working with young persons, it is incumbent on all of us to be aware of the UNCRC so we can be the conduit of this information to young people we serve. They are the rights holders and we, the duty bearers. Reach out to us for rights posters for your office and



booklets to share with young people.

On our website you'll find all kinds of these resources as well as all of our Investigative Reports and Reviews that we have published. You'll see in those reports that we often make recommendations to government departments and agencies. These recommendations are made with the best interests of the young person at the forefront, and should result in positive changes and outcomes for children and youth of our province. The OCYA monitors and follows up on all outstanding recommendations until we are satisfied that all have been appropriately addressed. It is important for us to monitor such progress and report annually on these recommendations to ensure transparency and accountability to children, youth, their families, and the public.

It's a sincere privilege to work at the OCYA. We are all committed to the work that we do each day to support and champion the rights of children and youth here in the province. Our role allows us to interact with many young people and family members, as



well as professionals working on behalf of children and youth. All efforts to effect change are incredibly important for young people in Newfoundland and

Continued from page 16

validation, and approachable sexual health education. Taking this into consideration, these sessions with service users differ significantly from Birth Control Consults with physicians and lean towards addressing a need for other services such as individual counselling.

As a social work student, I am far from posing an answer to the question of 'what is a social worker's scope of practice in a health care setting?' Although, what I can say for certain is that social workers are not a step below doctors. I strongly believe that there

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conceptualized, utilized, and supported in the day-to-day functions of tiered systems. By expanding our definitions of 'quality' and 'success' beyond numerical yardsticks and ranked performance expectations, we have the ability to obtain a more comprehensive vision of how social agencies are structured and how the functions of these macrosystems do or do not respect, honour, and respond to the varied perspectives comprising the broader social narrative (Lindsey et al., 1986). If we afford ourselves the power to expand our typical conception of

Labrador. It is through these efforts that real improvements are made in their lives and the protection of their rights.

If you would like to have posters, resource materials, or learn more through one of our education sessions, reach out to us at (709) 753-3888, email office@ocya.nl.ca, or visit our website <https://www.childand youthadvocate.nl.ca/>.

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is an equal need for every health care discipline. As stated by Health Accord NL (2022), the "key to all domains of care is the central role of interprofessional team-based care" (p.100). Truly inclusive, accessible, efficient, and effective health care only occurs within interdisciplinary teams where there is mutual understanding and respect for each other's roles.

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'quality' in social work evaluation beyond assessing support services for 'success' to include humanistic shifts in critical thinking about how governing bodies support reflection, learning, and mutual accountability in day-to-day practice, we have the potential to create an avenue for social change through humanism.

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Promotion

Reflections of a Social Worker at Memorial University

BY KIM KELLY MED, BSW, RSW

Growing up in the Kelly household in Cape Broyle, NL, I learned about service to humanity and social justice, first from my parents, secondly from Sister Lois Greene and other Presentation Sisters, and more recently the Mercy Sisters. Through my experiences with Memorial University (MUN) Chaplaincy and living on campus at MUN for 16 years, as a student, house proctor and Residence Life Officer, I learned the importance of citizenship and was introduced to transformative skills, including reflection, facilitation, and relationship building. I had the honor of working with exceptional students while building fantastic connections with Campus Enforcement, Facilities Management and Student Life. It was during my time working in residence that I took a leave of absence from a graduate program in education to complete a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW), as I realized I needed the skills of a BSW to help address issues I was encountering in the students such as low self-esteem, relationships, homesickness and academic difficulties; and to help juggle the different hats I was required to wear as mediator, supporter, adviser, connector, consultant, program developer and educator.

In studying social work, I felt as though I had come home, and upon graduation with my BSW, I proudly registered with the NLCSW and became a part of a diverse profession. Now I am preparing to retire from my 30-year career at Memorial University with 21 of those as a social worker. Working in education may not be an

obvious track for BSW graduates, but it has been a career full of diverse experiences and opportunities for me. Here are a few of the highlights:

Mentoring: Whether it was helping to recognize strengths through mock interviews, providing feedback on resumes/CVs, or award/grant applications, I was privileged to be invited to contribute to students' personal, professional and career development. I have been proud to support student engagement and shine a light on student success at university, community, regional and national levels.

Leadership and Community Service Learning (CSL): Having a social work lens uniquely positioned me to collaborate, envision, create and implement some of the greatest experiences of my time at MUN. From the creation of a residence peer helper program, to inspiring new employees at staff orientations, to leading Memorial's premiere programs (e.g., orientation, leader forum, student ambassador), the social work lens and social work values guided my practice, interactions and visions.

Having met students who could not go home for midterm break and who were seeking experiences that connected them to the community, I created a program called **Make Midterm Matter**. From modest beginnings which fostered opportunities for a dozen students to volunteer at long-term care facilities, this program has become one of Memorial's premiere leadership experiences where thousands of students have connected to their

community and critically reflected on civic responsibility, the impact of the service on self and others and the importance of advocacy and policy to address the needs of individuals and communities.

In 2008, a student and I brought the idea of a Cabot Habitat for Humanity build to the MUN leadership team advocating that the build would highlight the University mission of "service to the people of NL and beyond". And so, the Petro Canada ~ Memorial University build was born. During daily reflection sessions on the bus, MUN staff including carpenters, plumbers and electricians joined faculty, and students to reflect on the impact of their experience and the social determinants of health. In recognition of the unique program and the participation of more than 250 MUN and Petro Canada affiliates, the build received the CCAE (Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education) Gold Medal for the Best Community Outreach Program in Canada while that same year Make Midterm Matter was awarded the AACUSS (Atlantic Association of College and University Student Services) Award of Excellence and I was honored, to be personally awarded the AACUSS Carols Creed Award for "infectious enthusiasm for the profession through a commitment to health, well-being, love and laughter".

In 2010, I was part of a team of more than 80 students, faculty, staff and that established the MUN Community Garden. From a modest beginning with a few simple structures, the garden now has more than 50 beds

and contributes to food security and sustainability on campus.

While my involvements in these projects ended when I changed departments and roles, they are an important part of my social work footprint, and remind me that it takes a village to partner for change - no social worker is an island.

Policy Development and Contributions to Social Work Education:

The opportunity to contribute to social work education and policy became a reality when I joined the School of Social Work as BSW Student Services Coordinator. Having chaired BSW Admissions, BSW Student Promotions and managing the BSW programs, I was proud to help students, faculty and staff navigate resources and regulations. My social work education footprint includes my contributions to BSW policy, regulations and processes that maintain the academic integrity of the social work program. This footprint also includes my recommendations to enhance recruitment and retention

and to reduce barriers for BSW applicants and students.

My time in education has been filled with challenges and surprises. It has been a privilege to work with, learn from and be inspired by exceptional students and staff. And it has been a great honor to be recognized by students with awards generated via their nominations, including: MUN President's Award for Exemplary Service (2004), MUN Volunteer Staff of the Year Award (2005), and MUNSU Outstanding Contribution to Student Life Award (2010).

While I am honored to have received such recognition, I believe these awards speak to the CASW social work values that have guided my practice – inherent dignity and worth of persons, pursuit of social justice, service to humanity, as well as integrity and competence in professional practice.

A transformative and defining moment in my social work journey, occurred in 2011 when I joined the

NLCSW Promotion of the Profession Committee. Working with the professional, dedicated, respectful, creative and proud social work colleagues on this committee, I have been inspired to demonstrate my pride in the social work profession. Whether I am emceeding the annual vigil to remember people who died by suicide, speaking in the media about suicide loss, or volunteering as a member of the board of directors for the Ruah Counselling Centre, I aim to promote the profession and to demonstrate that being a social worker is who I am, not just what I do!

As I leave Memorial University, I am proud to have created and contributed to programs, policies, and services that have enhanced the lives of individuals, groups and communities in the practice area of education. My name is Kim Kelly and I proud to say "I am a Social Worker!" May you also be proud to proclaim that you are a social worker – there is no greater profession!



2024 REGISTRATION RENEWAL

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February 15, 2024

(Midnight Island Time)