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**THE NLHBA
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING
WILL BE HELD ON
NOVEMBER 26, 2004.**

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions for our News-Net, please contact Jeannie House, Director of Advocacy and Information at (709) 364-7701 ext. 320 or at jhouse@nlhba.nf.ca

**Notes
from the
Executive
Director**



The announcement on health boards integration has been made and we can now start to move forward to meet the challenges of change. Changes to the health and community services system since 1992 have been working towards the eventual integration of all health services along the full continuum of care, so these decisions are the latest stage in that process. The Newfoundland and Labrador Health Boards Association

(NLHBA) supports the concept of integrated health authorities as an effective use of health resources with significant potential benefits for the provincial population. The Association is looking forward to working with Government and the current health boards to ensure a smooth transition and to maximize the benefits to clients, patients and residents.

The NLHBA will be providing governance orientation for trustees of the new health authorities, using the provincial Treasury Board's *Excellence in Governance*. Orientation will cover the full trustee role and governance issues in the health and community services system and offer guidelines for setting up and running an effective and accountable board.

All NLHBA programs and services will be reviewed in consultation with health boards to ensure that there are no gaps in service and that we maintain an appropriate focus for the new structure. In particular, discussions with all stakeholders and partners will be required to develop a suitable labour relations structure for the integrated mandate.

There are exciting times ahead: through teamwork and cooperation we can ensure that the changes are positive and in the best interests of clients, patients and residents, leading to a continuum of high quality, streamlined and appropriate services for the population of the province.

News from the Labour Relations Department

Recent Nova Scotia Arbitration Board Award Could Affect Collective Bargaining Activities in Atlantic Canada

When dealing with contract negotiations in the health sector, the question of whether binding arbitration should be used as a means to resolve an impasse in collective bargaining, rather than having unions engage in a strike, has been a topic of interest in several provinces including Newfoundland and Labrador. Earlier this year, presidents of both the striking public sector unions, NAPE and CUPE, suggested binding arbitration as a means to settle their dispute with the government of Newfoundland and Labrador when the parties were unable to reach a negotiated settlement. However, a recent Nova Scotia award saw an arbitrator determine that the Capital Health District Authority in Nova Scotia was the

leading health care employer in Atlantic Canada and therefore all classifications within the Health District should be paid the highest rate in Atlantic Canada. This award raises concerns over the apparent authority of arbitrators to set government policy when they are engaged to resolve collective bargaining issues and may have far reaching implications outside the province of Nova Scotia.

The text of this award may be obtained from the Labour Relations Department.

Update on Activities:

The Labour Relations Department is currently scheduling interpretation sessions throughout the province to review changes to the NAPE and CUPE collective agreements resulting from the *Public Services Resumption and Continuation Act*.

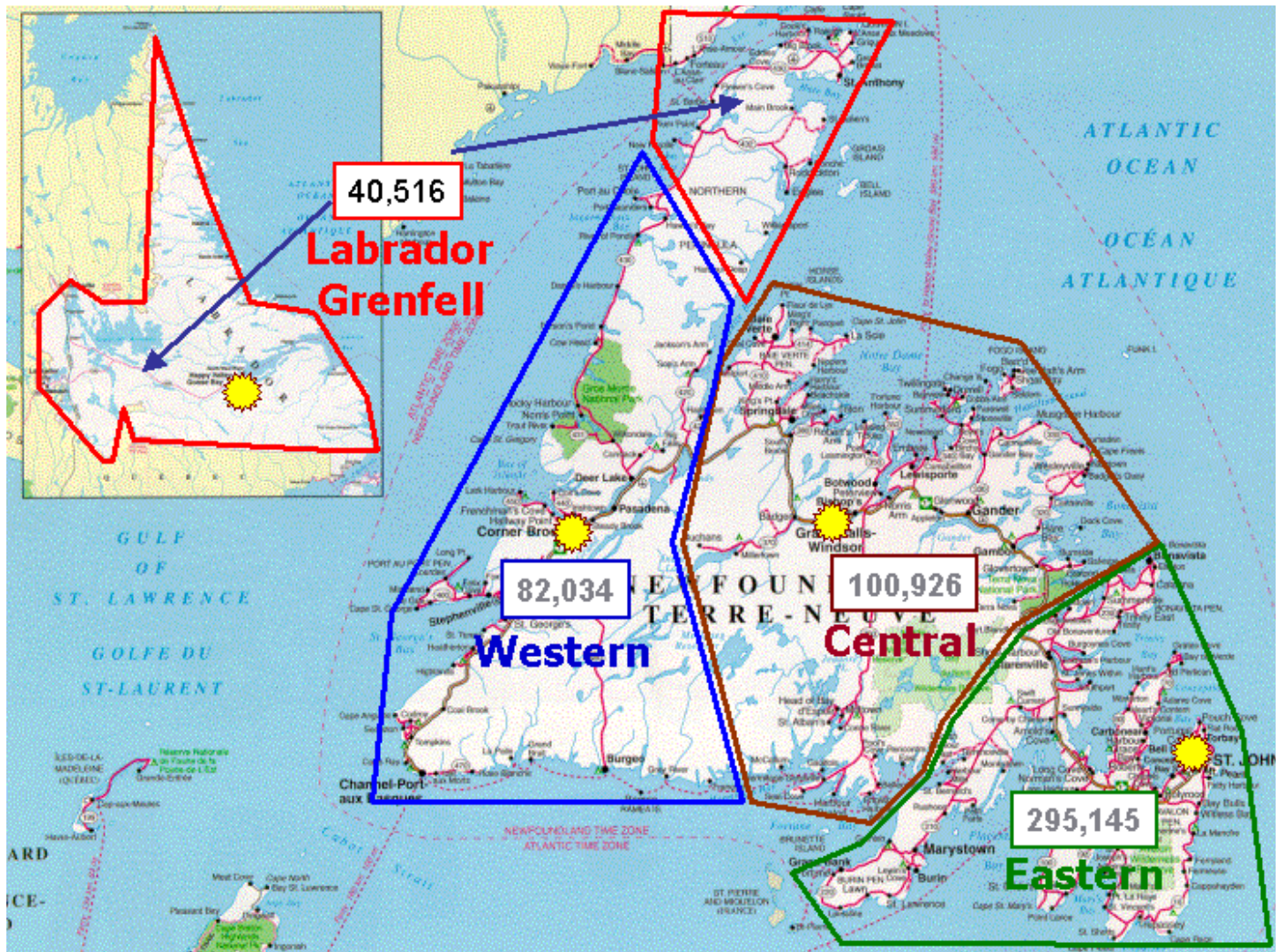
Regional Integrated Health Authorities

The long-awaited announcement on the integration of health boards into regional integrated health authorities was made on September 10 at a press conference by Minister Elizabeth Marshall, accompanied by John Peddle, NLHBA Executive Director. The Minister pointed out that integrated boards will have the ability to focus on the full continuum of care, from community care to acute and long-term care, resulting in better service for clients. Three decisions were announced: the number of boards; the location of the head offices; and the boundaries of the new boards. There will be four new regional boards, starting in January 2005:

- Eastern Health Authority, corporate headquarters located in St. John's, incorporating the territory and services of the existing Health and Community Services St. John's Region, the Health Care Corporation of St. John's, St. John's Nursing Home Board, Newfoundland Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, Health and Community Ser-

ices Eastern, Avalon Health Care Institutions Board and the Peninsulas Health Care Corporation;

- Central Health Authority, corporate headquarters located in Grand Falls-Windsor, incorporating the territory and services of the existing Health and Community Services Central, Central West Health Corporation and Central East Health Care Institutions Board;
- Western Health Authority, corporate headquarters located in Corner Brook, incorporating the territory and services of the existing Health and Community Services Western and Western Health Care Corporation;
- Labrador-Grenfell Health Authority, corporate headquarters located in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, incorporating the territory and services of the existing Health Labrador Corporation and Grenfell Regional Health Services Board.



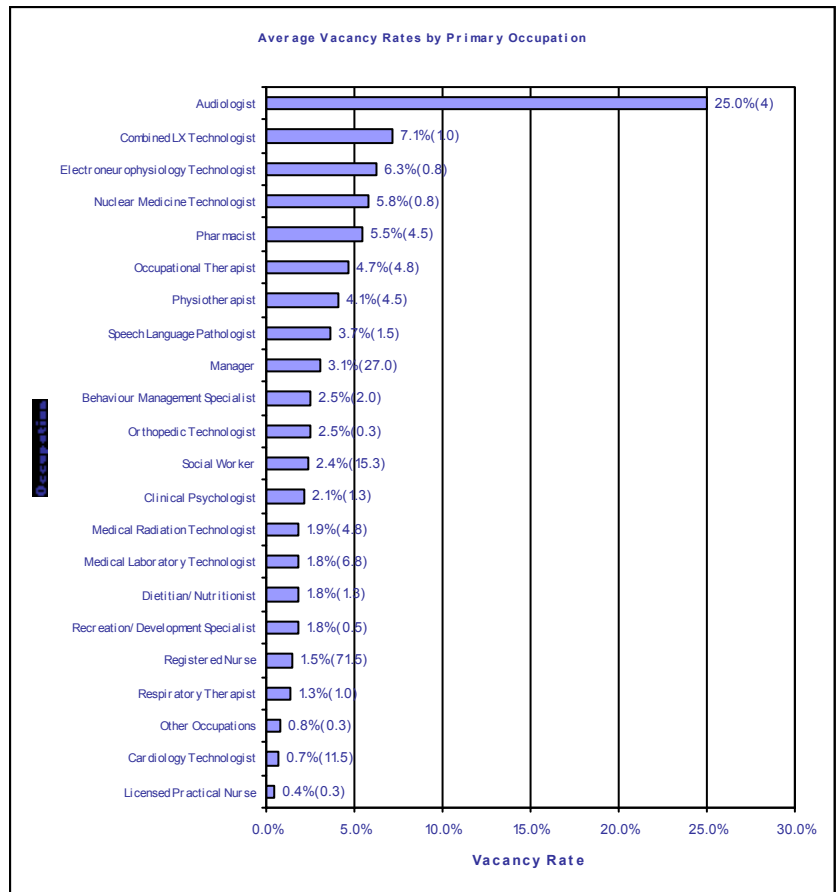
BOUNDARY MAP, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Health System Vacancy Rates

The Human Resource Planning Unit collects statistics on the number and type of vacancies in Health Boards quarterly. All vacancies are captured except physician vacancies. To calculate a vacancy rate, the Human Resources Planning Unit averaged the statistics for four collection periods, and divided by the number in the workforce as of March 31, 2003.

The average number of vacancies is approximately 1.6 per cent of the total workforce. Audiologists, combined LX technologists, and electroneurophysiology technologists have the highest vacancy rates, at 25.0 per cent, 7.1 per cent, and 6.3 per cent respectively. The three largest health professional groups are social workers, registered nurses, and licensed practical nurses, which have vacancy rates of 3.1 per cent, 1.5 per cent, and 0.4 per cent respectively. The actual average is shown in brackets after the vacancy rate in the graph.

The number of vacant positions at any point-in-time for any group may vary considerably, and caution is noted where numbers are small. Regular health board updates are needed to ensure reliable findings. For more information contact the Human Resource Planning Unit.



Summer Student Takes on Group Purchasing Research Project

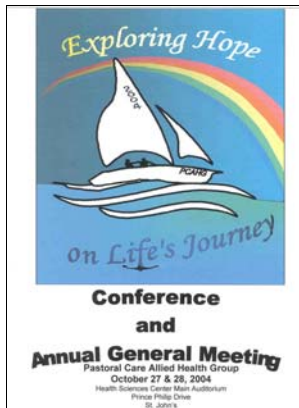
This past summer, the Group Purchasing Department had the pleasure of working with Joanne Rideout, a MUN student hired to research Medical Device and Establishment License regulations as they pertain to purchases made by our members. These regulations are an initiative of Health Canada and are put in place to ensure that products purchased for use in our health system meet requirements for safety and quality. It appears that we are one of the first purchasing groups to place this sort of emphasis on the Medical Device/Establishment License issue and many members and vendors have expressed an interest in Ms. Rideout's findings. The data collected will play an important role in the launch of the new online tendering system, expected in September. The Group Purchasing Department would like to extend thanks and best wishes on her future studies to Ms. Rideout.

Carlson Wagonlit Travel - Harvey's Travel Contract Extended

Due to excellent service and continued competitive rates, the group made the decision to take advantage of an option to extend the current contract with Carlson Wagonlit Travel - Harvey's Travel to June 30th, 2005. This means that members can continue to contact their local Carlson Wagonlit Travel - Harvey's Travel branch for all travel needs.

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Provincial Co-ordinator of Pastoral/Spiritual Care



• The Provincial Co-ordinator of Pastoral Spiritual Care prepared the Provincial Proclamation for the Minister of Health and Community Services for Pastoral/Spiritual Care Week October 17-23, 2004. "Exploring Hope: On Life's Journey" will be the Provincial theme for the Pastoral Care Allied Health Group Conference to be

held in St. John's on October 27 & 28, 2004, with Keynote presenters Sister Elizabeth Davis and Lloyd Wicks, Provincial Child and Youth Advocate. The approximately 340 pastoral care workers in our Province are invited to attend.

- Verdon Young, NLHBA President, presented the certificates at the 2004 Clinical Pastoral Education graduation in Central West Health Care Corporation. Bishop Currie, representing the Roman Catholic Church, and Bishop Young, representing the Anglican Church, were present, as well as staff from the Central West Health Corporation, spouses

and friends of the graduates, and guests. Interviews have already been conducted and people accepted into next year's program to be held May 2 to July 15, 2005, sponsored by Avalon Health Care Institutions Board. We are expecting a full unit with a waiting list of interested students. Rev. Dr. Colin Mackinnon will be the Clinical Pastoral Education Teaching Supervisor.

- Working with Pastoral Care Allied Health Group Regional Representatives and the MIS manager with NLCHI, the Provincial Co-ordinator of Pastoral Spiritual Care developed a training model for Pastoral Care Committees, finalized new workable recording forms for clergy and coordinated the development of a Microsoft Excel template for MIS Workload reporting to be used by clergy and chaplains to report to the designated administrative person at their site. Monthly site and regional data using this new template will be sent to the Provincial Co-ordinator to produce a region by region or total provincial picture of Pastoral Care.
- Plans are underway this fall for the Provincial Co-ordinator of Pastoral Spiritual Care to visit, train, encourage, and equip Pastoral Care Committees whose boards support and fund Provincial Pastoral Care.

Physician Recruitment

- A total of 21 physicians were forwarded to the NMB for license consideration.
- Canadian Association of Institutional Physician Recruiters: The first meeting of this group will be held in Toronto on November 24 in conjunction with the Family Medicine Forum 2004. The NLHBA Recruitment Office will participate.
- Residents: Interest in the bursary programs has escalated well beyond expectation. Fortunately, the Department of Health and Community Services were able to meet all applications. Promotions in 2004-2005 will notify all interested students/residents that the program has become more competitive and contacts with regional health boards prior to application is strongly encouraged.
- Class Starting in 2004: The class lists of students entering in September 2004 and their home community and email addresses have been forwarded to all Medical Directors. Health Boards are encouraged to es-

establish initial contact and continue throughout the four years of medical training. Communities with this opportunity include: Corner Brook; Pasadena; Gander; Bay Roberts; Burin; Botwood; Deer Lake; Lamaline; Torbay; Pilley's Island; and Kippens.

- Summer Employment Project: A total of 16 students accepted employment projects; 9/16 are in locations other than St. John's (Labrador City, Burin, Paradise, Corner Brook, Placentia, Deer Lake). Examples of agency placements include the Primary Health Care Initiative, Seniors Resource Centre, Learning Disabilities Association, Planned Parenthood, IOC, Cancer Society, Community Health, and Placentia Health Center. Other placements involved shadowing in the emergency, in private clinics and hospital based programs. Thanks to all health boards for supporting this initiative. Student feedback has been extremely positive about their experiences.

NLHBA Fall Conference

We are in the final stages of organizing our Fall Conference, *Adverse Events and Patient Safety: Meeting the Challenge in Newfoundland and Labrador. October 18 and 19, 2004.* Thanks to our program committee, Bev Clark, Alice Kennedy, Kristi Parmiter and Heather Predham, we have an excellent program with distinguished speakers from within the province and across the country. Details of the program and online registration can be found by clicking on "conference website" at www.nlhba.nf.ca.