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This year the Association
celebrates its 40th year of
continuous operation!

Recruitment and Retention of Health Professionals

One mandate of the Health and Community Services Human Resource Planning Committee is to "Identify gaps and barriers to employers and employees in hiring, recruiting and retaining appropriate human resources..." Research undertaken by the committee on this topic is summarized in a comprehensive discussion paper organized around four main themes of recruitment and retention: Quality of Worklife; Workload/Skill Mix; Professional Development; Financial Incentives. Each theme is discussed in relation to allied health professionals, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, physicians, and management, drawing on

relevant research and information from provincial sources.

Following this are tools of effective recruitment and retention, and a list of potential recommendations that will assist in making Newfoundland and Labrador a province that is able to attract and retain qualified, motivated health professionals. It is important to note that effective recruitment and retention depends on an appropriate mix of all factors, rather than any one in isolation.

Feedback is welcome before September 16, 2002. Both the document and a feedback form are available at <http://www.nlhba.nf.ca/hr/reports.htm>

Sick Leave: costs continue to rise, but not as fast

The Labour Relations Department released the 2001 Sick Leave statistics -

- With recent union salary increases factored in, total sick leave costs for the health system continue to rise but replacement costs for the period 1997 – 2001 decreased from 10.7% in 1998 to 4.9% in 2001. Occupational reviews in 2000 also significantly increased the salaries of many groups.
- It is important to remember, however, in making comparisons amongst Health Boards, that employers with a relatively small number of employees can experience misleadingly dramatic percentage changes because of the low number of employees.
- The number of sick leave hours taken during the year is an important aspect of evaluating the effectiveness of any absentee program and provides a realistic benchmark for evaluating a change in the use of sick leave. Although the hours taken for sick leave continue to rise, the rate of increase is gradually declining to only 1% in 2001. In five of the fourteen Health Boards the number of sick leave hours used in 2001 declined in comparison to 2000.

View the full report on our website

A Collective Agreement for Internes & Residents

A tentative agreement was struck on July 26, 2002, against a backdrop of a planned service withdrawal by the internes and residents at 5 p.m. on the same date. Highlights of the tentative agreement include an employer commitment for full payment of the Canadian Medical Protective Association premiums along with a commitment to commence collective bargaining in March of 2003. For this particular group Government did not go with the typical three year contract, signing a two year deal with salary increases as follows:

- 2.5% effective July 1, 2001
- 2.5% effective January 1, 2002
- 10% effective August 21, 2002

Internet Physician Recruitment

Physicianjobsearch.com posts most of the physician vacancies available in Canada. The NLHBA Recruitment Office has a six month contract with this internet service because all search engines present **physicianjobsearch** within the first two choices for physicians searching the web for job opportunities in Canada. Only Canadian positions are posted. A minimum of 15 hits are tracked to Newfoundland and Labrador ads each day which tend to result in the submission of at least five resumes each day.

View your ads at www.physicianjobsearch.com and recommend any changes to the content by contacting the Physician Recruitment Office (shann@mun.ca) or 777-6031.

NEWS FROM THE HEALTH SYSTEM

John Peddle, NLHBA Executive Director, says that events unfolding over the summer may have significant implications for the health system:



- **Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (Revenue Canada)** have reassessed the tax status of physicians providing locum, or temporary replacement, services, not only in this province, but also in Saskatchewan and possibly in other provinces as well. The "locum" refers to short term contracts allowing other physicians to take leave for various purposes, and also filling physician vacancies during recruitment for permanent physicians. Revenue Canada has decided that physicians doing locums are acting as employees of Health Boards. This means that Boards and physicians have to make Canada Pension and EI deductions from their pay. This will be a huge cost to the health system and make these temporary replacements less attractive to physicians. A 90-day period for appeal of the Revenue Canada decision is under way.
- **The eagerly-anticipated Strategic Health Plan, *Healthier Together***, was released on September 10th. The Association looks forward to working with Government on its implementation.
- **Medical Services Negotiations** are continuing. Health Boards look forward to a conclusion that will be in the best interests of our patients, clients and residents and will benefit both Health Boards and physicians.

www.nlhba.nf.ca

- When do the CEOs & Medical Directors meet next?
- Who are the communications contacts?
- How many LPNs are expected to retire in 2004?
- Where can I read the latest NLHBA press release?
- Where can I find a listing of job vacancies in the province?



Check out our web site

<http://www.nlhba.nf.ca>

NLHBA Group Purchasing Corporate Travel Agreement

A review of member activities under the Group Corporate Travel Agreement shows that, for the first six months of 2002, members spent \$1,364,877 on air travel, representing a reduction of \$1,501,358 on regular airfare of \$2,866,235. This reduction is a result of travellers' willingness to accept the lower fare, including the restrictions, offered by our corporate travel consultants at Harvey's Travel.

INTERESTING TIMES IN HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Although the boss has always been ultimately responsible for workplace safety, since September 11th more employers are questioning the way their employees work and the overall workplace conditions with a renewed emphasis on injury prevention. It is not surprising that this also translates into a heightened concern about how health and safety is organized as compared with the legislated responsibilities of employers.

As large employers, Health Boards need to consider the most appropriate monitoring structure needed to ensure healthy, safe workplaces. Newfoundland and Labrador legislation requires that Health and Safety Committees have 3 worker members and 3 management representatives when there are 51 to 100 employees and an additional member for every 100 employees thereafter. When it takes more than 12 members to represent all areas of the workplace, it may be wise to set up more than one OH&S committee. Consequently, there are many such committees throughout our health system. In order to monitor the present delivery of health and safety throughout a regional Health Board, a review of the terms of reference of all present committees within each Health Board would be a logical place to start. Such a review would determine the present status of how Health and Safety Committees are functioning in the organization and confirm that they meet the legislated requirements. When requesting committees to submit these documents, the following information should be required:

- The goals and objectives of the committee and the date of last revision

- The structure of the committee (including reporting responsibility)
- Functions and activities of the committee (# of inspection reports reviewed; role in return to work practices; number of complaints received/resolved)
- Duties and responsibilities of committee members (listing only the roles in which the committee member has been active during the last 6 months)
- Guidelines surrounding meetings (providing minutes of the last 3 meetings held)
- Provisions for record keeping (indicating who receives the report at a corporate level)

A corporation confident in their Health and Safety Committees and Programs is in an admirable position. Such corporations are more likely to be able to build a culture of internal responsibility that reflects the commitment, involvement and accountability of all parties in the workplace. It also establishes a level of credibility for a due diligence defense under the law. In cases where a serious workplace accident has occurred and legal action has been taken, corporations will want to demonstrate that they took all reasonable precautions to prevent the accident.

A review of our present Health and Safety Committees is the first step in making corporate decisions about how health and safety should be organized while also providing an objective measure of committee performance.

Annual Pastoral Care Allied Health Group (PCAHG) Fall Conference and AGM to be held for the first time in Stephenville

The local Planning Committee has picked up the theme of the National Pastoral Care Week, "*Valuing a Growing Spirit*" for the conference. It will be an exciting conclusion to Pastoral/Spiritual Care Week, October 21 – 27, 2002.

The PCAHG Conference dates are October 27 – 29, 2002 and will begin with an ecumenical service at the United Church, with the plenary sessions, workshops and AGM at the Arts and Culture Centre. There is considerable local wisdom in pastoral/spiritual care on the west coast of our province.

Barbara Lamb, keynote speaker, has 16 years' experience in the field of addictions and mental health and will address the overall theme of "*Valuing a Growing Spirit*". Participants will have a chance to take three of the four concurrent workshops: Marie Brennan Downing, "*Communications Strategies: Do You Hear What I Hear?*", Jocelyn Rose/Florence Newman, "*Body, Mind and Spirit: A Caring Concern*", Sister Regina Quigley, "*Grief and Bereavement*" and Dr. Aamir Safdar, "*Mental Health Issues: Dispelling the Myths*".

During the banquet the Second Annual Pastoral Care Allied Health Group award

will be presented to a recipient who has made a significant contribution to pastoral/spiritual care in our province and contributed to the life of the PCAHG. Last year's recipient, the Rev'd. Dr. Peter Barnes, has moved to Ottawa and is the Pastoral Care Education Coordinator for the Ottawa Hospitals Corporation. For further information on the Conference contact the web site of the NLHBA www.nlhba.nf.ca.

Sound Advice for Making Sound Decisions The Office of the Employers' Advisors

Did you know that a serious violation of the new Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations could result in fines of up to \$250,000? In addition, a finding of non-cooperation under the Early and Safe Return to Work legislation could result in a bi-weekly penalty equal to the injured workers' benefits under Workers' Compensation. You may know the regulations and follow them to the best of your knowledge, but there are always times when a question will arise that falls into that gray area of no-man's land. In these situations having sound advice can turn a potential problem into an ordinary Workers' Compensation case.

Employers in this province are incredibly lucky to have a free resource for such situations in the form of two paid employees called Employers' Advisors. These advisors are funded, but not employed by, the Workplace, Health, Safety and Compensation Commission. They operate independently under the auspices of the Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council, a not-for-profit employer advocacy group that was created to look out for the best interests of employers. Providing advice from an employer perspective on everything relating to Workers' Compensation and Occupational Health and Safety is their job and they do it very well. Thousands of questions are answered and volumes of advice given every year. As one health care user of the Employers' Council commented, "The advice I have received (from the Employers' Advisors) has been accessible and invaluable. They have helped me to make informed business decisions that have saved valuable time and resources."

In the past several years, the Employers' Advisors have taken on a more proactive approach when it comes to the advice they give. The passing of Bill 16 in the House of Assembly introducing new rules governing Workers' Compensation and OH&S meant many employers needed to be brought up to speed quickly or risk significant penalties. Advisors have been offering information sessions and workshops on demand to employers in all areas of the new legislation to help them understand and deal with the new requirements. Since the legislation was passed last year more than one hundred and twenty sessions have been delivered across the province to firms of all sizes and in all sectors of the economy. Managers, supervisors and even employees all have responsibilities under the new regulations and becoming informed is of paramount importance.

The size, scope and variety of positions within the health sector make it a challenging segment to deal with when it comes to Workers' Compensation and OH&S issues. Advice from the Employers' Advisors can help make some of those issues seem less threatening.

More information on the Employers' Advisors can be found by visiting www.nlec.nf.ca. For advice, or to set up a Workers' Compensation or OH&S session, you can call 1-888-738-5900 or email ralexander@nlec.nf.ca.

Disposal of Biomedical Waste

A reconciliation of the Group contract for Transport, Treatment and Disposal of Biomedical Waste indicates members produced 149562 kilograms of waste during the period August 01 to July 02.

While this represents a reduction of 2.3% over last year, the volume is 33% above the guaranteed annual volume committed in the contract. The average annual volume for the four year period ending July 2002 is 139865 at a cost of \$3.875 per kilogram.

NLHBA Staff enjoy an "Evening on the Bay"

NLHBA staff enjoyed an evening boat trip and BBQ around the cliffs of Bell Island courtesy of their Staff Social Fund. Check out our website for photos: <http://www.nlhba.nf.ca>

*www.nlhba.nf.ca
Nearly 40,000 hits since Y2K*

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