

CENTRE FOR  
NURSING  
STUDIES  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN  
2017-2020



## Message from the Director

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We are very pleased to present the strategic plan for the Centre for Nursing Studies (CNS) 2014-2017. A strategic plan is important to ensure the CNS is clear about its goals, is focused on its future direction, is responsive to changes in the environment, and is investing resources in the best way possible to realize this. Faculty and staff have engaged in a collaborative process to create this strategic plan. We have also consulted with our major stakeholders, including our students. We recognize the strength of our current programs, the invaluable resource we have in our faculty and staff, and the unlimited potential of our students. Yet, we continuously strive to do better, to meet and exceed our own standards for excellence. We have identified three strategic directions that will focus our work for the next three years: preparing excellent graduates who will become tomorrow's leaders, strengthening our reputation for innovative research and other forms of scholarship, and promoting our distinct identity as a first class nursing education institution.

We are jointly presenting this strategic plan as the CNS makes a transition in leadership. We would like to thank our stakeholders who contributed to our strategic plan and Jane Pardy, Flow Consulting, for leading us in this process.

Anne Kearney PhD RN  
Director, 2011-2014

Kathy Watkins PhD RN  
Director 2014-Present

# About the Centre for Nursing Studies

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The Centre for Nursing Studies (CNS) was established in 1996 and is operated by Eastern Health. It is located at Southcott Hall, 100 Forest Road, in the east end of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The CNS is the largest nursing school in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The CNS offers a variety of high quality nursing education programs that prepare our graduates to provide excellent patient care across a broad range of health care and other settings:

- Bachelor of Nursing (Collaborative) Program
- Practical Nursing Program
- Continuing Nursing Studies for Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)

The Bachelor of Nursing (Collaborative) Program, offered jointly with Memorial University School of Nursing and Western Regional School of Nursing, has received the highest possible accreditation award of 7 years in the past three reviews by the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing. As well, it has received the highest approval award of 7 years from the Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador (ARNNL) in the past three reviews. The Practical Nursing Program has received the highest approval award of 5 years from the College of Practical Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador. These awards provide assurance to our students, partners, stakeholders, and the general public that the CNS offers the highest standards of excellence in nursing education.

The Bachelor of Nursing (Collaborative) Program includes the LPN Bridging Option which allows Licensed Practical Nurses to complete a bridging semester and enter the second year of the nursing degree program.

The CNS provides continuing studies programs (post-basic courses) and re-entry programs for RNs and LPNs, a tailored bridging and re-entry program for internationally educated nurses (IENs), and as requested, competency-based assessments of nurses in practice for the ARNNL and regional health authorities (RHAs). Clinical and/or lab competency assessments are also conducted upon the request of the ARNNL, College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador (CLPNL) or RHAs. The CNS also offers a Substantive Equivalent Competency Assessment (SECA) and Pathway to Success Program for internationally

educated registered nurses who want to work as LPNs in NL and/or Canada. Programs are offered both on-site and by distance delivery.

The CNS has capacity for over 500 students in the Bachelor of Nursing (Collaborative) Program and over 150 students in the Practical Nursing Program. In addition, approximately 200 students can be enrolled in Continuing Nursing Studies in any given year. Enrollment in continuing studies programs is variable depending on health care system demand. The CNS has 52 full-time faculty members and, at peak periods, an almost equal number of sessional faculty.

## Our Mission

The Centre for Nursing Studies will deliver a continuum of nursing education programs that prepare highly competent practitioners and leaders through a commitment to excellence in teaching, practice, research and other forms of scholarship.

## Our Vision

To enhance excellence and leadership in nursing education, innovation, partnerships, research and other forms of scholarship.

## Our Values

### Collaboration

Collaboration is the guiding principle in our approach to education, research and other forms of scholarship, practice, and international development.

### Diversity

We respect diversity and foster inclusion among students, faculty, staff, and partners.

### Excellence

Excellence is a means of assuring we prepare the highest quality practitioners and leaders.

### Professionalism

We embody professionalism through continuous learning and the highest standards of integrity, ethical behavior, accountability, and transparency.

### Respect

Respect is the foundation of all our interactions.

# Environmental Scan

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The Centre for Nursing Studies (CNS) exists within a complex environment. It is positioned within Eastern Health, one of four regional health authorities (RHAs) in Newfoundland and Labrador, which has a primary mandate of patient care. We offer nursing programs in collaboration with other educational institutions such as Memorial University, Western Regional School of Nursing and College of the North Atlantic. We are the only nursing school in the province that is called upon by the RHAs, our regulators, and government to fulfill the continuing education needs of nurses in practice. To meet multiple, and sometimes competing demands, we must be responsive to our environment to ensure we continue to offer excellent nursing education programs.

We are committed to the consolidation of nursing education in our province. Though recommended in the 2005 White Paper on Post-Secondary Education<sup>1</sup> and supported by all major stakeholders, it has not yet occurred. Despite uncertainty caused by the delay in consolidation and other concurrent changes in our environment, we remain steadfast in our provision of high-quality nursing education programs and in promoting a respectful and nurturing place to learn and work.

Our environment is rapidly changing. There is current regionalization of services within the four RHAs in our province. The government is currently reviewing programs and processes of our RHAs and our two largest publicly funded post-secondary institutions: Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic. We are poised to manage potential ongoing changes.

The nature of healthcare is changing and is challenging us to continuously adapt our curricula to meet the needs of patients, community members, and the health care system itself. We have an aging population that will require more complex care to address increasing chronic illness and co-morbidities. Individuals who are admitted for care are more acutely ill but have short lengths of stay. More and more, complex care is coordinated in the community for individuals who continue to receive treatment and convalesce at home after discharge. Technology is advancing at a brisk rate and nursing schools must ensure graduates can meet the challenges inherent in continuously

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<sup>1</sup> Foundation for Success: White Paper on Post-Secondary Education. Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2005.

advancing care and treatment protocols. Increasingly, healthcare professionals must work in teams to ensure the best care possible is provided and to decrease the risk of harm to the patient. Nurses have a key role to play in the coordination and integration of care among health team members. It is our challenge to prepare our graduates to meet these and other evolving demands within our environment.

Our student population is becoming increasingly diverse. While this is not unique to the CNS, it nonetheless compels us to continue to ensure an inclusive learning environment for students of varying age, ethnicity, learning styles, and ability, among other factors.

Educational technology is also advancing at a rapid pace. We are challenged to keep abreast of the many learning tools and new approaches to education. Students expect to use their hand-held devices in the classroom and at the bedside – a fundamental shift in practice. They expect increasingly sophisticated instructional technologies and more engagement in the learning process. We continue to work with educational and information technology consultants to best understand how to harness the resources that are available. Resource management to meet increasingly complex technology costs is an ongoing challenge.

Nursing schools across Canada and the CNS is no exception, are challenged by faculty recruitment and shortages in clinical placements for students. This is further exacerbated by increasing enrollments necessary to meet nursing workforce demands. We continue to explore innovative clinical learning opportunities, including simulation, to augment more traditional placements. In addition, we strive to provide the best learning and working environment within the CNS to attract and retain highly qualified faculty.

We recognize the importance of research and other scholarship to enhance nursing practice, patient care, and our teaching. There is an increasing emphasis on evidence-informed practice and we are committed to create and use evidence to achieve these ends.

We are working hard to promote our distinct identity. While being recognized nationally and internationally as an excellent nursing school with outstanding graduates, there remains confusion regarding whether we belong to Eastern Health, Memorial University, and sometimes the College of the North Atlantic. We understand

the confusion because of our organizational collaborations. We are determined to strengthen our identity through efforts such as our new website, activities to profile faculty, staff and student achievements, new standardized student uniforms, new identity-enhancing faculty lanyards and faculty and staff name tags, among other initiatives.

We are committed to excellence and are more than ready to meet the challenges of nursing education.

# Strategic Direction 1: Prepare High-Quality Practitioners and Leaders

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The focus of this strategic direction is to ensure the CNS continues to provide students with exceptional classroom, lab, and clinical learning experiences.

## Goals:

1. Foster a learning environment that empowers students to be self-directed and engaged partners
2. Ensure innovative and appropriate classroom and clinical experiences
3. Increase the use of innovative technology to enhance student learning

## Activities

- Utilize innovative teaching approaches including interprofessional education
- Develop curricula that encourage student engagement and self-direction
- Deliver ongoing faculty development, including mentorship
- Maximize appropriate use of technology (e.g., high fidelity simulation) in the classroom, instructional labs, and clinical settings.
- Provide opportunities to support faculty research and other forms of scholarship, including dissemination
- Incorporate clinical scenarios in classroom and lab settings
- Establish and maintain strong partnerships with stakeholders for all learning experiences
- Solicit and utilize feedback from students and other key stakeholders to continuously improve our curricula
- Continue to support student engagement in school committees and community initiatives
- Continuously review recruitment and retention strategies for faculty, staff, and students
- Ensure a highly qualified and committed cohort of faculty

## Strategic Direction 2: Promote Scholarship

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The focus of this strategic direction is to enhance faculty and academic staff involvement in all domains of scholarship.

### Goals

1. Foster a strong research culture within the CNS
2. Develop processes to support increased faculty and academic staff participation in scholarship
3. Enhance partnerships with individuals, groups, and organizations that advance scholarship

### Activities

- Create a supportive environment that maximizes the potential of faculty members for scholarship
- Promote professional development activities such as structured education sessions regarding writing grant proposals and innovations in teaching
- Support scholarship committee work to promote all domains of scholarship
- Support the services offered by the CNS Research Office
- Support faculty doctoral studies
- Offer funding for dissemination of scholarship
- Encourage a strong CNS presence at provincial forums
- Encourage a CNS presence at provincial, national and international forums for dissemination of scholarship
- Offer the opportunity for the presentations of scholarship to faculty, staff and students
- Support the Collaborative Research Committee to increase teamwork and research excellence
- Support the collaborative research newsletter to highlight research opportunities across the three schools of nursing and the dissemination of research
- Maintain announcements of faculty and academic staff accomplishments related to scholarship
- Support and encourage innovations in teaching

- Begin a CNS Research Day for all faculty, staff, and students
- Continue protected time for scholarship
- Promote up to date technology to support scholarship
- Maintain strong linkages with the Reference Librarian to support scholarship
- Establish peer mentoring opportunities for new faculty and academic staff to support their beginning program of scholarship
- Strengthen opportunities to participate in collaborative scholarship
- Network with faculty who have existing partnerships for scholarship
- Seek increased partnerships with clinical practitioners and individuals, groups, and organizations in the community for scholarship opportunities

## Strategic Direction 3: Promote Our Distinct Identity

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The focus of this strategic direction is to enhance awareness of the CNS's distinct identity including our continuum of programs and innovative initiatives to advance nursing education, practice, and scholarship.

### Goals

1. Continue to define and construct our distinct identity
2. Develop and implement a marketing and communications plan
3. Enhance partnerships with other nursing educational institutions, government, regional health authorities, regulators, and community partners
4. Continue to support and expand international activities

### Activities

- Create a marketing and communications plan that highlights our unique continuum of nursing education programs and nursing practice support to regional health authorities and regulators
- Promote our reputation as a supportive environment for students, faculty, and staff that is based on mutual respect and which fosters a sense of team and community
- Maintain an up to date and engaging CNS website
- Increase CNS visibility through various means such as participating in community initiatives
- Create a CNS Alumni Association
- Promote our identity and capacity for international activities and opportunities for students, faculty, and staff
- Promote CNS programs and scholarship in relevant newsletters
- Continue to explore new opportunities to promote CNS as an excellent educational institution for prospective students, faculty, and staff
- Continue to utilize Eastern Health social media to promote the CNS
- Explore all strategies with Eastern Health to sustain a stable and highly qualified workforce

- Promote faculty portability within Eastern Health to enhance our faculty members' clinical expertise, partnerships with practice, research and other forms of scholarship.

# Monitoring Our Progress

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The CNS acknowledges the continuously changing environment in healthcare and academia. The complexity of the environment creates challenges and opportunities for the CNS that necessitate the need to adapt and respond.

The implementation of the strategic plan will be the responsibility of the faculty and staff under the leadership of the Executive Committee. We expect faculty, staff, students and key stakeholders to hold us accountable for the results we are achieving. The Administrative Team will work with existing joint and CNS program committees in providing regular updates on successes and challenges. In monitoring progress with the strategic directions we commit to the following:

- Bimonthly meetings of the Administrative Team
- Biannual meetings of the Executive Committee
- Biannual updates to Academic Council
- CNS Annual Report to ARNNL
- Review of annual reports from the following:
  - BN Program
    - Site Undergraduate Studies Committee
    - Joint Curriculum Committee
    - Joint Admissions Committee
    - Joint Program Evaluation Committee
    - Joint Recruitment Committee
  - PN Program
  - Continuing Nursing Studies
  - Learning Resource Centre
  - Instructional Resource Centre
  - International Office
  - Guidance and Counseling Office
  - Nursing Research Office