

Agenda Item# 9.1

2025 AGM Motion

Section of Occupational Medicine

The Annual Meeting is being asked to approve a new **Section of Occupational Medicine**.

Nova Scotia has one of the highest rates of time loss from work due to work-related injuries, presenting both a challenge and an opportunity for physicians to make a significant impact.

Occupational Medicine has become a focus of practice for an increasing number of physicians in Nova Scotia. The Foundation in Occupational Medicine course has seen increased interest in this field and has more recently been able to offer advanced education to a yearly cohort of physicians. By creating this specialized section, we can better address the needs of Nova Scotian workers, advance our practice, expand educational opportunities, establish a higher standard of care for workers across the province, and create a supportive network of likeminded colleagues.

Occupational Medicine plays a critical role in the prevention, treatment, and management of work-related injuries and illnesses. A dedicated Section of Occupational Medicine would bring together family physicians and specialists working in various settings. These include physicians working with organizations such as the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia (WCB NS), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Health Canada, the Enhanced Physician Services program, Occupational Fitness Medical assessment providers, and various private industries and employers that have their own occupational health programs.

The formation of this section would provide several key benefits:

1. **Collaboration Amongst Physicians Across Diverse Practices:** By uniting physicians practicing in a variety of settings we can foster an integrated approach to addressing the healthcare needs of workers. This collective expertise will allow us to standardize care, share best practices, and improve worker outcomes on a broader scale. For example, with the high rate of time loss from work due to injuries in Nova Scotia, the new section could focus on reducing these instances by providing timely and effective care. By collaborating on such efforts as offering early intervention, workplace injury prevention, and facilitating early appropriate return to work, section physicians can help workers return to work successfully and prevent long-term health issues and economic stresses which are linked to chronic worklessness.
2. **Improvements in Education and Training:** A dedicated section would promote targeted education to family physicians, specialists, and allied occupational health professionals. By fostering the development of continuing medical education and training programs focused on Occupational Medicine, we can enhance the capacity of all healthcare providers to address the complex needs of workers, ensuring that best practices are consistently applied.
3. **Share ideas and Foster Innovation:** The establishment of a new section would provide an opportunity for sharing ideas to address the unique occupational health challenges faced

by Nova Scotians. By focusing on local needs and emerging health concerns, we can develop innovative solutions and contribute to shaping local and national standards in Occupational Medicine.

4. **Enhanced Worker Health and Safety and Injury Prevention:** Bringing together physicians with an interest in Occupational Medicine from diverse settings will allow us to as a group be visible as experts and to act as a resource for occupational health initiatives. Whether it's improving fitness assessments for high-risk workers or enhancing screening for occupational disease, this collaboration will ensure that we meet the diverse needs of workers across the province.
5. **Stronger Professional Network:** By establishing a Section of Occupational Medicine, we would create a platform for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and professional growth. This would not only elevate the standard of care for workers but also build a stronger, more connected community of physicians dedicated to improving occupational health. Bringing these physicians together for regular meetings can strengthen formal and informal connections amongst us, creating a supportive network and advancing our shared interests. The section could also work together to establish fair rates of compensation for our expertise.

In summary, the creation of a Section of Occupational Medicine within Doctor Nova Scotia would provide an important forum for physicians interested this field to come together. Though the section we could achieve improved care for workers/patients. We can support each other in our work through new educational opportunities, shared ideas and developing a network of physicians who can help each other with all aspects of medical practice.

Section 2 of the Rules & Regulations (below) outlines the requirements for forming a new Section.

2. SECTIONS

2.1 Creation

- (a) Any group of ten or more members of the Society who are primarily interested in any aspect of the science and/or practice of medicine may be recognized as a Section of the Society with the approval of a formal application at the time of the Annual General Meeting provided that such an application is endorsed by the Board of Directors at a meeting not less than 60 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) This application will include:
 - (i) the name of the proposed Section;
 - (ii) the names and signatures of the ten (10) or more Society members sponsoring the proposed Section;
 - (iii) the names of the interim chair and secretary of the proposed Section; and

- (iv) the reason why the formation of a new Section will benefit both the members of the proposed Section and the Society as a whole.

The Board of Directors has reviewed the application and is satisfied that the requirements set out in the Rules & Regulations have been met. To be recognized as a Section of Doctors Nova Scotia, approval at the Annual General Meeting is required.

The following motion will be presented at the AGM:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting approves the creation of the Section of Occupational Medicine.