

# Proceedings

168th Annual General Meeting  
Saturday, June 4, 2022  
Virtual meeting via Zoom



## MISSION STATEMENT

To maintain the integrity and honour of the medical profession, to represent all members equitably, and to promote high quality health care and disease prevention in Nova Scotia.



# AGM 2022 proceedings



The 168th Doctors Nova Scotia Annual Meeting (AGM) began with the introduction of Dr. André Bernard, Chair of the Board; Dr. Heather Johnson, President; Dr. Leisha Hawker, President-elect; Dr. Ann Collins, Canadian Medical Association Past President, and Nancy MacCready-Williams, CEO, Doctors Nova Scotia.

## 1. Call to Order

### 1.1 Opening of the Annual Meeting

The chair called the meeting to order and declared the 168th AGM in session and acknowledged the land on which we all live and work as Mi'kma'ki and Unama'ki, the ancestral, unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. He noted that the term "unceded" is important because it indicates that the Mi'kmaq did not give up their rights to their land or resources despite Colonization. As Settlers in Mi'kma'ki, we are grateful for the Treaties of Peace and Friendship with the Mi'kmaq people, which set out long-standing promises, mutual obligations and benefits for all parties involved. Mi'kmaq rights are also affirmed in our Canadian Constitution and by the Supreme Court of Canada. Treaties are about rights and about how to build peaceful, long-term relationships with each other.

At Doctors Nova Scotia (DNS), we honour and respect the Indigenous people of this land. We also recognize that we have much more to learn and do to embrace the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Doctors Nova Scotia is committed to working with the Indigenous and African Nova Scotian leaders, the medical community, physicians and system partners to disrupt systemic racism and decolonize the health-care system to improve the health-care experiences of Indigenous people and African Nova Scotians in Nova Scotia. We are all Treaty people.

The chair invited those who are interested in learning more to reach out to any DNS staff member on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, research Indigenous history or visit an Indigenous cultural centre.

### 1.2 Review Conduct of Meetings

Dr. Bernard reviewed the conduct and rules of order for the virtual meeting format. While every effort is made to ensure a smooth meeting, sometimes technology can be unpredictable, therefore participants were asked to be patient if any technical issues are experienced during the meeting.

### 1.3 Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

The following motion was moved by Dr. Gary Ernest and seconded by Dr. Chadwick Williams:

#### **Resolution – Agenda**

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting approves the agenda for the June 4, 2022, meeting. CARRIED*

The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.

## 2. Proceedings of June 12, 2021 Annual General Meeting

A copy of the proceedings from the 2021 AGM were distributed to delegates before the meeting. There were no questions or comments regarding the record of those proceedings.

## 3. Moment of Silence in Memory of Deceased Members

The chair read the names of those members who have passed away since the 2021 AGM: Drs. Wayne Edwards, Harry Poulos, Bernard Badley, John McGrail, Said Awad, Martin Abenheimer, Gerard Mallon, Donald MacIntosh, S. Clair MacLeod, Jozef Zaremba, Scott Murray, Brian Hennen, David Winfield Morse, Roger Hamilton, John Dill, George Jollymore, Richard Goldbloom, James Rae, Lystra Dayal-Gosine, Sonia Salisbury, John Abdul Sattar, Michael Ramsey, Iain Macpherson, Amin Akbarali Nanji, Cheryl Conrod, Paul Begin, A. Emerson Dunphy, Donald Brown and William Huestis.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of the association's deceased members.

## 4. Approval of Annual Report

A copy of the 2021–22 Annual Report was included with the registration package that was distributed to delegates before the meeting. There were no questions or comments regarding the report. The following resolution was moved by Ms. Gendresa Sahiti and seconded by Dr. Pippa Moss:

### **Resolution – Annual Report**

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting accept all narrative portions of the 2021–22 Annual Report. CARRIED*

The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.

## 5. Canadian Medical Association Address

Dr. Ann Collins, CMA President, thanked everyone. Dr. Ann Collins, Canadian Medical Association (CMA) Past-president, thanked everyone for the opportunity to attend and speak about some of the work that is ongoing at the CMA to support physicians and medical learners in Nova Scotia and across the country. She began by acknowledging she was joining the meeting from Fredericton, N.B., land that is the traditional unceded territory of the Wolastoqiyik.

She noted that the events of the past two years have driven home the need to do more in the CMA's advocacy and scope of our work. The pandemic has laid bare devastating gaps in the health-care system, but it has also provided a unique opportunity to create change.

In approaching this work, the CMA is guided by the following vision:

- a sustainable, accessible health system where patients are partners in care
- communities where everyone has the chance to be healthy
- a new culture of medicine that embraces equity and diversity and sustains physicians as people as well as professionals

There are six principles guiding the CMA's approach: engagement, accountability, transparency, impact, equity and diversity. Success requires that we stay true to those values. The CMA is committed to working toward becoming a stronger, more relevant and more inclusive organization.

Dr. Collins thanked the delegation for their dedication to patients and to one another during this challenging time. She thanked them for the support they have shown the CMA's advocacy and for always staying centred on what is best for patients and each other.

The CMA continues its call for action to strengthen the health-care system, including the health workforce. New data from the CMA's National Physician Health Survey indicates the profound consequences the pandemic has had on the country's health workforce. This is evident in the record-high rates of burnout among physicians; more than twice what it was pre-pandemic.

The CMA continues to launch new resources on its Physician Wellness Hub, including resources for physicians experiencing harassment, as well as new peer support sessions and resources for protecting physicians from workplace violence, threats, harassment and more.

This spring, the CMA hosted a health human resource summit, and the top priority identified was creating a robust data source of health human resources and implementing a multi-disciplinary nationwide health human resource strategy. The CMA has shared these proposed solutions with the federal government and underscored the need for them to develop a pan-Canadian health workforce plan, in collaboration with all levels of government.

Another form of support the CMA is showing to members is through funding to provincial and territorial medical associations, including DNS. Through the CMA's affinity agreement

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with Scotiabank and MD Financial Management, Doctors Nova Scotia is receiving \$1 million to support physician wellness initiatives over four years (2020–23). Also, through the CMA-PTMA Memorandum of Understanding, DNS is receiving \$300,000 over three years for physician leadership development.

In closing, Dr. Collins thanked Dr. Gerard MacDonald for his continued work as the Nova Scotia representative at the CMA board table and Dr. Heather Johnson for her tireless work this past year as DNS President. The CMA looks forward to continuing to advance important conversations with incoming President, Dr. Leisha Hawker.

## 6. Audit Committee Report

Dr. Gerard MacDonald, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the Audit Committee report, which included an overview of the Audited Financial statements for the year ending August 31, 2021, and an update on how the association is trending for the year 2021–22.

He noted that the Audit Committee is responsible for ensuring that internal controls are in place and executed properly. It represents the Board by overseeing the establishment and implementation of accounting policies and internal controls which promote good financial stewardship, managing overall risk including investment policies, tax compliance, adequate insurance and overseeing that compliance is adhered to.

### 6.1 Review Audited Financial Statements for 2020-21

Dr. MacDonald presented the audited financial statements for the year ending August 31, 2021. The detailed audited statements were included in the registration package and were also available on-line prior to the meeting. He noted that DNS's fiscal year, which runs from September to August, and the timing of the Annual meeting don't align well which makes the reporting less timely.

KPMG successfully performed the annual audit and found no errors or omissions resulting in an

unqualified opinion. The financial statements are presented in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The Audit Committee reviewed the audit process and resulting statements with KPMG. The statements required no adjustments, and a recommendation was made to the Board of Directors for approval. KPMG presented the audited financial statements to the Board of Directors in December of 2021, and they were approved as presented.

The association has two main ongoing sources of funds, Operations and the Member Benefits fund. Operations are funded by annual dues from members, staff salary recoveries from the Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) and payments from third parties for magazine advertising and sponsorships. The Member Benefits fund consists of payments from the DHW that are provided via the Master Agreement to cover the cost of member benefits. Revenues always equal expenses in this fund, therefore surpluses and deficits do not accumulate from year to year.

The association's revenue has been stable year over year. Funding from DHW represented 63% of total revenues received during the 2021 fiscal year. These funds were used to cover the cost of the health and dental plan, parental leave and professional support programs as well as targeted project costs incurred during the year. The remaining 37% was received from membership dues, sponsorships and advertising, which covered the cost of DNS operations.

For the 2021 fiscal year, there was an overall surplus of \$474,000 after investments and depreciation against a budgeted deficit of \$531,000. The large positive variance from the budget is attributed to several anomalies, such as reduced expenses due to COVID-19, an increase in CMA funding (affinity funding and physician training program) and investment earnings.

The deficit budget was planned as per the Board approved business plan and supported by the

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association's strong financial position. The Board made the strategic decision to proceed with the work outlined in the five-year financial strategy and to cover the costs through a combination of fiscal prudence on the part of DNS staff and covering deficit budgets by drawing down on the association's net assets.

## Overview of Fiscal Year 2020-21

Dr. MacDonald provided a brief overview on how the association is trending for the 2021–22 fiscal year, which closes on Aug. 31, 2022. KPMG will perform the audit at the end of October and the audited financial statements will be available for review by the Board at their December 2022 meeting. The statements will be presented at the 2023 AGM.

Dr. MacDonald noted that the association is in good financial health. For 2021–22, the board approved a \$224,000 operating fund surplus in conjunction with the dues increase that came into effect on Sept. 1, 2021. Management is projecting that the 2022 fiscal year will report a surplus in excess of this budget. This surplus is expected to roughly cover the capital budget for the year, resulting in a minimal change to the association's unrestricted net assets.

Over the next three years (2022–24), CMA affinity funding will support the cost of several initiatives under the banner Restoring the Joy in the Practice of Medicine, including professional development, virtual care and physician wellness. This funding is short-term and must be directed to specific projects; it cannot be used to fund operations. Likewise, physician development funding for the 2020–21 fiscal year was renewed for 2021–22.

## 7. Nominating Committee Report

### 7.1 President-elect

Dr. Heather Johnson, President and Chair of the Nominating Committee, delivered the Nominating

Committee report. She explained that the Committee is responsible for reviewing the nominations for President-elect and recommending a candidate for the Board's endorsement and for approval at the AGM.

This year the Nominating Committee recommends Dr. Colin Audain for President-Elect. The Committee has determined that Dr. Audain meets the selection criteria.

Dr. Johnson noted that Dr. Audain is a C/AFP anesthesiologist in Central Zone who is well-respected among his colleagues in the medical community. Those who know him on a personal or professional level will attest to his suitability for this role.

Throughout his career, Dr. Audain has sought out opportunities to contribute in a meaningful way to the health-care system and believes many of his current interests align with Doctors Nova Scotia's mission and vision.

Doctors Nova Scotia's Strategic Plan makes a commitment to dismantle systemic racism and intolerance in health care and to increase representation and correct historic disadvantage in the medical profession. Dr. Audain is acutely aware of the importance of this commitment and welcomes the opportunity to work with Doctors Nova Scotia to advocate for equity, diversity and inclusion.

Dr. Audain's father, Dr. Vincent Audain, was President of the Medical Society of Nova Scotia 34 years ago, in 1988–89.

The Nominating Committee agreed that Dr. Audain is a strong physician leader who possess the qualities to be successful in this role, and had no hesitation recommending him for President-elect.

The Board of Directors passed a motion at its April 29, 2022, meeting to endorse the com-

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mittee's nomination of Dr. Audain. If approved, he will formally step into the role following this meeting until June 2023 when he will become President.

Members of the delegation expressed their support for the committee's recommendation, agreeing that Dr. Audain is an excellent candidate for the role.

The following resolution was moved by Dr. Heather Johnson and seconded by Dr. Leisha Hawker:

#### **Resolution – President-elect**

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting approve Dr. Colin Audain as President-elect for 2022–23. CARRIED*

***The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.***

#### **7.2 2022-23 Board of Directors**

Dr. Johnson reported that this year the Board welcomed several new and returning members:

- Drs. Lynn Bussey, Andrea Lantz Powers and Lucas Richardson were elected for their first three-year term.
- Drs. Chakshu Sharma, Patty Menard and Chadwick Williams were appointed as regional representatives for a one-year term (second terms).
- Ms. Adelaide von Kursell is the new DMSS representative.

**A complete list of the 2022–23 Board of Directors** can be found on the DNS website.

Additionally, on behalf of the association, Dr. Johnson extended a huge thank you to those Board members whose terms concluded in June:  
Dr. Robyn MacQuarrie, Past president  
Dr. Dahir Farah  
Dr. Gehad Gobran  
Dr. Tammy Keough-Ryan  
Ms. Qendresa Sahiti

Donations will be made in each person's name to The Healthy Tomorrow Foundation.

## **8. By-Laws Revisions**

***The Governance Committee has reviewed the By-laws to ensure they:***

- are in line with our governing legislation;
- are current and reflect any recent changes and governance updates that have been made;
- are consistent with the by-laws of other provincial medical associations; and
- have simple and easy-to-read language.

This year, the Governance Committee is recommending some revisions to the following sections of the By-laws:

- Sections 8/4 – Annual General Meeting
- Section 9.5 – Board of Directors
- Section 10.1 – Executive Committee
- Section 12.5 – Officers of the Society

The main changes include incorporating the rAll but one of the changes relate to the revised Process for Selecting the Board Chair that was approved by the Board in March 2022. The new process allows for a one-year overlap between the incoming and outgoing Board Chairs to provide time for an in-depth orientation and onboarding.

These revisions have been endorsed by the Board of Directors.

The following resolution was moved by Dr. Cindy Marshall and seconded by Dr. Kelly Dakin Hache:

#### **Resolution – Approval of Revised By-Laws**

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting approves the revised By-laws as presented at the June 4, 2022, meeting. CARRIED*

***The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.***

## 9. Approval of New Sections

### 9.1 Section of Black Physicians

The Board of Directors reviewed a request for the creation of the Section of Black Physicians and is satisfied that the requirements set out in the Rules & Regulations have been met. In order to be recognized as a Section of Doctors Nova Scotia, approval at the Annual General Meeting is required.

This Section would be specifically for physicians of African descent in Nova Scotia but may also extend to physicians of African descent in the other Atlantic provinces. The creation of this Section will be beneficial for both Black Physicians of Nova Scotia (BPNS) and DNS.

This Section would provide BPNS with:

- a more formalized relationship with DNS,
- access to resources and support from experienced DNS staff,
- a forum for issues related to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), and
- a forum to interact with DNS and other Sections.

This Section would provide DNS with:

- a more formalized relationship with BPNS,
- access to Black physicians regarding EDI issues,
- the opportunity to engage Black physicians as DNS works to address systemic racism, and
- the opportunity to support Black physicians as they advocate for themselves and their communities.

The following resolution was moved by Dr. David Haase and seconded by Dr. Chadwick Williams:

#### **Resolution – Approval of Section Black Physicians**

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting approves the creation of the Section of Black Physicians. CARRIED*

*The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.*

### 9.2 Section of Planetary Health

The Board of Directors reviewed a request for the creation of the Section of Planetary Health and is satisfied that the requirements set out in the Rules & Regulations have been met. In order to be recognized as a Section of Doctors Nova Scotia, approval at the Annual General Meeting is required.

The current global climate crisis is the greatest public health threat that humanity has ever faced. Not only does environmental change directly affect health, but health care is responsible for up to 8% of national carbon emissions and untold tons of waste. Nationally, groups such as the CMA and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), have been active in promoting awareness and solutions. The establishment of this section will allow space for local physicians who are involved in this work to come together to better advance both awareness and action.

The initial objectives of the Section would be to:

- Provide a forum where DNS members can connect,
- Establish a link to other medical society climate groups,
- Provide an expert resource for DNS and other groups, and
- Contribute to advocacy for solutions.

The following resolution was moved by Dr. Laurette Geldenhuys and seconded by Dr. Greg Hirsch:

#### **Resolution – Approval of Section of Planetary Health**

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting approves the creation of the Section of Planetary Health. CARRIED*

***The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.***

9.3 Section of Long-Term Care Physicians  
The Board of Directors reviewed a request for the creation of the Section of Long-Term Care Physicians and is satisfied that the requirements set out in the Rules & Regulations have been met. In order to be recognized as a Section of Doctors Nova Scotia, approval at the Annual General Meeting is required.

Long-term care physicians recognize the challenges faced by the long-term care sector, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. This section will allow physicians who are doing this work to have a unified voice to speak to those challenges, and hopefully help influence meaningful change in this growing area of medicine. The demographics in Nova Scotia are changing and that requires us to change the way we approach the care of our most vulnerable citizens.

This section would apply to all physicians practising in the long-term care sector. The purpose of having a section devoted to long-term care physicians is to:

- provide a vehicle for the long-term care physician to voice and share their concerns with DNS,
- enhance the collective voice and interest of physicians who want to provide long-term care service,
- provide a unique vision and knowledge regarding long-term care directly to the DNS Board and management teams to assist in negotiations and policy issues related to long-term care, and
- create opportunity for discussions regarding fee codes and unused provincial funding.

***Resolution – Approval of Long-Term Care Physicians***

***BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting approves the creation of the Section of Long-Term Care Physicians.***

CARRIED

***The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.***

## **10. Other Business**

*There was no other business.*

## **11. Message from Outgoing President, Dr. Heather Johnson**

Dr. Heather Johnson addressed the delegation as she concludes her term as President. Dr. Johnson noted that over the past year, she did not get the chance to meet with as many physicians as she had hoped to, and very few were in-person meetings. A year ago, when a vaccine was developed and being rolled out in the province, we were hopeful that a return to normal was just around the corner. Fast forward a year later, and we are not exactly where we thought we'd find ourselves. Physicians and patients are tired and frustrated. Dr. Johnson explained that as we look ahead, we know we will have to deal with the consequences of the past two years; some of which we've anticipated and others that are still not yet clear. Despite this, physicians of this province continue to move forward with cautious optimism, all while providing the best care they can to their patients.

The provincial government has recently released a strategic roadmap for health care, titled Action for Health. Dr. Johnson indicated that this may be our opportunity to be directly engaged in shaping the future of our health-care system. Dr. Johnson encouraged members to get involved and voice their ideas, thoughts, and perspectives at any opportunity they get. Physicians collectively have a great deal of knowledge, experience and influence that can create meaningful change. They know the system best. Although many challenges lie ahead, Dr. Johnson noted that she is eager to see where this next chapter will take us.

Dr. Johnson thanked the DNS staff for all of their

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support over the past year. She also thanked her colleagues, friends and family for all of their patience and support while serving in this role. Dr. Johnson indicated how proud she was to have had the opportunity to represent the physicians of Nova Scotia over the past year and that they will be in great hands under Dr. Leisha Hawker's leadership.

## **12. Announcements**

The Chair advised that a meeting evaluation would be circulated to attendees after the meeting and encouraged everyone to provide their feedback. He noted that the Members' Forum would begin immediately following the business meeting.

## **13. Adjournment**

The 168th annual meeting of Doctors Nova Scotia was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

The following resolution was moved by Dr. Robyn MacQuarrie and seconded by Dr. Gehad Gobran:

### ***Resolution – Adjournment***

***BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 168th Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED***

The Chair put the resolution to a vote, and declared it carried.