

Guidelines for Effectively Diversifying the Board and Committees

1. Board and Committee Diversity Policy

Doctors Nova Scotia (DNS) values the benefits that diversity can bring to its Board of Directors (the "Board") and its standing committees ("committees"). Diversity promotes the inclusion of different perspectives and ideas, mitigates against group think and improves oversight, decision-making, and governance. Diversity on the Board and committees also demonstrates DNS's commitment to diversity at all levels within the organization.

See DNS [Board and Committee Diversity Policy](#).

2. Definitions

- 2.1 *Diversity* includes but is not limited to the following elements: ethnicity, experience, expertise, gender diversity, geography, international medical graduate, race, sexual orientation, skills, specialty, and stage of practice.
- 2.2 *Equity-deserving groups*: When we reference equity-deserving groups, the groups most relevant for our membership are those who identify as:
- Racialized, Black, and/or People of Colour
 - Indigenous Peoples
 - People with disabilities (including invisible and episodic disabilities)
 - 2SIALGBTQ+ and/or gender diverse individuals.

3. Appointed Positions within the Governance Structure

DNS can diversify the Board and committees by considering diverse skills and attributes when selecting candidates for appointed positions.

The Board has ten elected positions that balance the representation of physicians inside and outside HRM, as well as family physicians and specialists. The remaining positions are ex-officio or appointed, either by the Board, or in the case of President-Elect, the AGM.

Committee members are appointed by the Board. Some committees consist only of Board members, and others a mixture of Board members and members-at-large, or those not on the Board.

A DNS member who is interested in being appointed to the Board or a committee, completes an expression of interest (EOI) via the website. For the Board, the Nominating Committee reviews the EOIs, selects the preferred candidates and makes a recommendation to the Board for approval. For committees, the committee reviews the EOIs and makes a recommendation to the Board for approval.

The President-Elect is appointed annually by the AGM, and the Board Chair is appointed by the Board.

The positions highlighted with **blue text** in the following chart are appointed. Candidates for those positions are selected from the EOIs submitted by the general membership, or in the case of the President-Elect and Board Chair, through a member-wide nomination process.

Board of Directors	Standing Committees
<p>President Past-President</p> <p><u>Appointed by the AGM</u> President-Elect</p> <p><u>Elected</u> 10 members-at-large elected by the membership</p> <p><u>Appointed by the Board</u> Board Chair 3 regional representatives</p> <p><u>Ex-officio (by virtue of a position held elsewhere)</u> 1 student representative (nominated by DMSS) 1 resident representative (nominated by MarDocs) 1 Chair of the Section Forum 1 CMA Board representative (non-voting)</p>	<p><u>Board members/members-at-large:</u> Audit Committee eHealth Committee Governance Committee Policy & Health Issues Committee</p> <p><u>Board members only:</u> CEO Evaluation Committee Executive Committee Nominating Committee</p>

4. Skills and Attributes Matrix

A skills and attributes matrix is a tool used to assess the diversity of member representation on the Board and committees. All current Board and committee members are asked to complete a skills and attributes survey. The information gathered is important as it will highlight gaps that may need to be filled. When members apply for the appointed positions through the EOI or nomination process, completing a skills and attributes survey will be included as part of that process. That information will be used to find someone who best complements the current mix of skills and attributes on the Board or committee.

There is no particular perspective, background, experience, knowledge or skills that would be required for a position on the Board or committees. Nothing listed is required or mandatory; the information provided is used only to assist the selection committee with identifying and filling gaps.

The information gathered will be kept confidential within DNS and only shared with the members of the committee making the selection. This committee is comprised of DNS staff and physicians. They are all required to keep personal candidate information confidential.

The criteria used will include:

Perspective/Background

Gender	Black, Indigenous, People of Colour
Indigenous status	2SIALGBTQ+
Disability	Family medicine specialist
Royal College specialist	International medical graduate

Skills/Knowledge/Experience

Early Career (less than 10 years in practice)
Resident
Board & Governance
Government Relations
Leadership
eHealth/Technology

Late Career (less than 10 years until retirement)
Student
Financial & Accounting
Health Policy
Cultural Competency/Equity Issues

5. Recruiting for Appointed Positions

As noted earlier, appointed positions are filled using an EOI or nomination process. There may be times, however, when the slate of candidates available does not provide the diversity needed by the Board or committees. In those cases, the Nominating Committee, standing committee chairs or senior staff may actively recruit for those positions. As well, there may be times when DNS has identified a need for candidates with specific skills or attributes, but recruitment attempts are unsuccessful. In those cases, the positions will be filled from the existing slate of candidates.

6. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

6.1 Our Commitments

The DNS Board commits to ensuring that EDI are woven into the fabric of DNS culture. As outlined in our EDI framework, *DNS will be more intentional about applying a lens of equity, diversity, and inclusion to everything we do.*

The DNS mission statement includes the following:

DNS is committed to working with health system partners to dismantle systemic racism and oppression so that all Nova Scotians have access to, and work within, a safe, inclusive health-care system.

DNS is committed to increasing representation and correcting historic disadvantage by advocating and creating opportunities for underrepresented groups within the organization and the medical profession.

Having equity-deserving groups represented in our governance structure is essential to fulfilling these commitments.

6.2 Recruiting from Equity-deserving Groups

Recruiting and retaining members from equity-deserving groups requires a thoughtful, strategic and respectful approach that includes knowing about the individual's work, skills and background and being able to clearly articulate the ways in which the candidate would add value and help the Board or committee fulfill its purpose. No one should ever feel tokenized or that the sole reason for recruiting is to check a box.

All physicians bring experiences and perspectives that are unique to the individual and important for effective decision-making and oversight. In addition to those perspectives, members of equity-deserving groups can also bring:

- their lived experience as a member of an equity-deserving group; and
- new insights to our thinking about equity, diversity and inclusion.

6.3 Embedding EDI in our Work

- 6.3.1. DNS' EDI work is governed by the organization's EDI framework, which outlines guiding principles and rationale for DNS' approach. It is important to note that DNS considers equity, diversity, and inclusion to be outcomes or goals, which are achieved through processes and tools including reconciliation and accessibility. The outcomes of EDI for Indigenous people (i.e., decolonization) cannot be achieved without intentionally engaging in reconciliation, nor can they be achieved for disabled people without implementing accessibility accommodations. When DNS refers to "EDI work," it is including the processes that can lead to the outcomes of EDI for all.
- 6.3.2 To ensure the Board has a clear line of sight to EDI initiatives and that this work receives the attention required to make and evaluate progress, an EDI report will be added to each regular board meeting agenda and time will be allotted for discussion and questions.
- 6.3.3 All Board and committee briefing notes will have a section for 'equity considerations'. This will allow the Board, committees and senior staff to cultivate a deeper understanding of the communities that make up the membership and ensure those perspectives and priorities are part of any strategic discussions when decisions are being made.
- 6.3.4 Expression of interest and nomination forms are reviewed to ensure they do not create barriers or limitations for equity-deserving groups. Forms will link to the Board and Committee Diversity policy to reinforce DNS's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and will include the following statement:

Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion

Doctors Nova Scotia is committed to developing and supporting a more diverse, inclusive and equitable environment for both physicians and staff. We encourage applicants from equity-deserving populations to apply and self-identify when completing the skills and attributes survey. We also encourage all applicants to share how they will bring an equity lens to leadership positions at DNS. Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is an integral component of DNS through our Strategic Plan and EDI framework. DNS considers EDI to be outcomes which are achieved through processes and tools such as reconciliation, decolonization and accessibility. When DNS refers to "EDI work," it is including the processes that can lead to the outcomes of EDI for all. The association's commitments to EDI are upheld through regular education sessions; a Respectful Workplace Policy for staff, Board and committee members; external audits; a staff EDI committee; and routine application of an equity lens in all organizational decision-making. As outlined in our Board and Committee Diversity Policy, the Board will strive to foster a brave space that tackles challenging topics with respect and care, and where everyone feels comfortable participating. If you have questions about how DNS can ensure a safe place for you or how the expression of interest process can accommodate your needs, we invite you to reach out to Maddi McKay, Chair, EDI Committee at maddi.mckay@doctorsns.com.

Supporting Documents:

[Board and Committee Diversity Policy](#)

[Skills & Attributes Matrix](#)

These Guidelines and the supporting documents (Board and Committee Diversity Policy and the Skills and Attributes Matrix) were developed in collaboration with the Governance Committee, the internal DNS EDI Committee and physician members of equity-deserving groups.

Approved by the Board of Directors: April 29, 2022