



ANNUAL REPORT

April 1 2023 – March 31 2024

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Our website can be found at www.mrcns.ca

About the Council

The Midwifery Regulatory Council of Nova Scotia (MRCNS) was established in 2009 to regulate the profession of midwifery in the province, in accordance with the *Midwifery Act* and *Regulations*, as well as the *Council Bylaws*.

The Council is responsible for:

- (a) regulating the practice of midwifery in accordance with the registration, licensing and professional conduct processes set out in the *Act* and the *Regulations*;
- (b) establishing, maintaining and promoting standards of midwifery practice; and
- (c) approving and promoting a code of ethics.

Vision, Mandate and Mission

Vision

An innovative and trusted leader in Midwifery regulation.

Mandate

The legislated mandate of the Midwifery Regulatory Council of Nova Scotia is to serve and protect the public interest by regulating the practice of midwifery.

Mission

We protect the public by ensuring that all registrants engaged in clinical midwifery practice are safe, competent and ethical practitioners, and;

- We set practice standards and a code of ethics;
- We register and licence those qualified to practice midwifery;
- We intervene to ensure safe and ethical practice; and
- We approve midwifery education programs.

Guiding Principles

- **Accountability:** We act openly and honestly to enhance accountability.
- **Transparency:** We make fair, consistent, and defensible decisions.
- **Proportionality:** We allocate resources proportionate to the risk presented to our regulatory outcomes.
- **Innovation:** We translate opportunity into tangible benefits for the organization.
- **Integrity:** We act with humility and respect.
- **Equity:** We identify, remove, and prevent systemic inequities.
- **Collaboration:** We work to build relationships across healthcare systems and include diverse voices in our work.

MRCNS Council Members

Members of the Council are appointed by the Agencies, Boards and Commission process in Nova Scotia.

The Council is comprised of:

- Three (3) midwives recommended by the Association of Nova Scotia Midwives (ANSM);
- One (1) registered nurse recommended by the Nova Scotia College of Nurses (NSCN);
- One (1) physician recommended by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia (CPSNS); and
- Three (3) public members who are not members of a health profession.

2023 MRCNS Council Members

During 2023-24 there were five (5) active Council Members as of March 31, 2024.

Theresa Pickart, R.M. (Chair)

Teri Crawford, R.N. (Vice Chair / NSCN)

Dr. Anne Houstoun, M.D. (CPSNS)

Karin Wallace (Treasurer / Public Representative)

Paulette Anderson (Public Representative)

The following Council members resigned during 2023. We are grateful to their service.

Kerry Jackson, R.M. *(Resigned June 2023)*

Laura White (Public Representative) *(Resigned December 2023)*

MRCNS Staff

There are currently two (2) staff positions.

The Registrar/Executive Director (R/ED) is responsible for all duties set out in the Nova Scotia Midwifery Act (Act), the Nova Scotia Midwifery Regulations (Regulations), MRCNS Bylaws and the policies and procedures set by the Council, including the registration and professional conduct process. The R/ED ensures that midwifery practitioners are adhering to the Standards of Midwifery practice and other clinical policies set out by the Council. The R/ED is responsible for managing all the affairs of the Council, and is responsible for planning and implementing all MRCNS programs in accordance with the policies and objective approved by the Council. The R/ED is a part time position (28 hrs per week).

The Registrar/Executive Director of the Council is Jenny Wright.

The Executive Assistant (EA) for MRCNS is responsible for all administrative tasks as directed by the R/ED. The EA position is a part time hybrid position (20 hrs per week, including 1 day in the office per week).

The Executive Assistant for the Council is Jennifer Neil.

Message from the Chair and Registrar/Executive Director

The previous year was one of great change for the Council. Most impactful was our move away from our long time embedded relationship within the Nova Scotia government to become a stand alone regulatory body. This enabled the Council to be independent as a regulator and as an organization. The move away from government was strategic, well-thought out and done in collaboration with the Department of Health and Wellness.

The Council co-located within the Nova Scotia College of Nursing offices in Bedford Nova Scotia. The benefit of the co-location is shared resources, reduced administrative costs, and increased security and safety. This location has also improved public access to MRCNS staff. An administrative professional was also hired to support operations and expand our support for registrants.

On January 22, 2024, MRCNS and the Nova Scotia College of Nursing (NSCN) received official direction from the Nova Scotia Government to amalgamate as one regulatory body by the summer of 2026. Midwives and nurses are autonomous health care providers and fulfill different roles in health care. What is similar between the two regulatory bodies, however, is the regulatory role and commitment to public protection.

The Council redeveloped our vision, mission and guiding principles, as well as updated and expanded on operational, financial, HR and governance policies to guide future growth and promote responsive regulatory practices.

The Council's website was expanded to enable online registration and a registrant newsletter was established to keep registrants informed of Council activities.

General Updates

Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC)

Nova Scotia continues to be an active member of the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC), whose mandate is to facilitate interprovincial mobility, advocate for legislation, regulation, and standards of practice that support access to a high standard of midwifery care across the country, and to provide a forum for Canadian regulators to discuss and act on issues of mutual concern.

Provincial representatives meet quarterly by teleconference and once per year in-person. This year the CMRC annual conference was held in Vancouver, BC immediately following the annual Canadian Network of Agencies of Regulation (CNAR) 2023 conference. The Council was in attendance to collaborate on issues regarding ongoing maintenance of the Canadian Midwifery Registration Examination (CMRE), harmonizing regulatory processes nationally, as well as the approval and program accreditation for Canadian Midwifery Education Programs (MEP).

In 2023, the MRCNS Registrar held the position of Chair of the Professional Practice Committee which recommended guidelines for excellence in midwifery practice.

For more information please visit CMRC's website at www.cmrc-ccosf.ca

Nova Scotia Regulated Health Professions Network (the Network)

As a regulated health profession, the Council continues to participate in the meetings and activities of the Nova Scotia Regulated Health Professions Network (the Network). The Network is a forum for the 22 regulated health professions in the province to share capacity, information, and best practices among themselves while preserving the autonomy of each regulated health profession. The Network's focus is public safety; it upholds the quality and professionalism of healthcare professionals across Nova Scotia.

This year the Network was an invaluable resource, support, and partner in navigating the many regulatory changes that arose during 2023. The ability to share resources, disseminate and receive information quickly, as well as collaboratively navigate the changing regulatory climate was particularly beneficial for a smaller college.

For more information please visit the Network's website at www.nsrhpn.ca.

Fair Registration Practices Act

The *Fair Registration Practices Act (FRPA)* was proclaimed on December 7, 2009 and it applies to 49 regulatory bodies in Nova Scotia (covering over 58 occupations and 68 designated trades). *FRPA* ensures that regulators and applicants are governed by transparent, objective, impartial and procedurally fair registration practices. It requires regulators to review their registration practices and level of compliance with the *Act* and develop a two-year action plan to address any gaps that are identified during the Review. The intent is to facilitate a better understanding of registration practices in Nova Scotia, reducing barriers for both nationally and internationally trained and educated applicants.

The Council completed their *FRPA* review and were compliant. We are continuously working to update our website which will improve compliance, remove barriers to employment, and raise awareness with midwives and the public about midwifery in Nova Scotia.

Patient Access to Care Act

The *Patient Access to Care Act (PACA)* received royal assent on April 12, 2023. The purpose of this Act is to improve patient access to care by further opening the Province to out-of-province health professionals, ensuring all health professionals can work to the full extent of their training and continuing the reduction of administrative burdens in health care, including incenting companies to reduce their administrative demands on health professionals.

Visit the NS Legislature to read the Act: [Bill No.256 - Patient Access to Care Act](#)

Regulated Health Professions Act

The *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)* received royal assent on November 9, 2023. The purpose of this act is to provide a common legislative foundation for regulated Health professions. The Act sets out what a regulator is and what it does.

Visit the NS Legislature to read the Act: [Bill No.323 - Regulated Health Professions Act](#)

Policy Development

The Council amended the clinical policy on *Provisional Licensure and Supervised Practice*.

The Council amended the clinical policy on *Prescribing, Ordering and Administering Drugs*.

The Council approved the removal of the clinical policy on *Indications for Planned Place of Birth*.

Committees

There are two standing Committees of Council:

1. Registration Committee

The Registration Committee is appointed by the Midwifery Regulatory Council under the Midwifery Regulatory Council Bylaws governing committees. The bylaws state that the Registration Committee shall:

- (a) consider and recommend concerning any application for registration or accreditation referred to the committee by the Registrar; and
- (b) make recommendations to Council respecting all applications for extension of time, reductions in requirements, equivalent experience, and other variations from the requirements of the regulations authorized by the regulations.

The Registration Committee meets as necessary as requested by the Registrar/Executive Director.

In 2023 the Registration Committee was comprised of:

- Paulette Anderson (Chair)
- Theresa Pickart (ex-officio)
- Karin Wallace (Public Representative)

There were no meetings of the Registration Committee in 2023.

2. Registration Appeal Committee

The Registration Appeal Committee (RAC) is appointed by the Midwifery Regulatory Council under Section 19 of the *Midwifery Act*. Upon receipt of an appeal, the RAC sets a date for the hearing of the appeal which cannot be later than 60 days following the receipt of the written notice of the appeal. The RAC meets as necessary if there is an appeal of registration denied by the Registrar/Executive Director. The RAC does not retry the facts of a case. The purpose of an appeal is to review the procedures of a decision to determine if there is a basis for error. The Registration Appeal Committee prepares its written decision with reasons for the appellant.

In 2023, the Registration Appeal Committee was comprised of:

- Teri Crawford, R.N. (Vice Chair)
- Dr. Anne Houstoun, M.D.
- Laura White (Public Representative)

There were no appeals to the Registration Appeal Committee in 2023.

Registration

Nova Scotia's legislation categories of active-practicing licensing are Clinical and Non-Clinical.

Between March 31 2023 – April 1 2024, MRCNS registered six (6) new midwives in Nova Scotia:

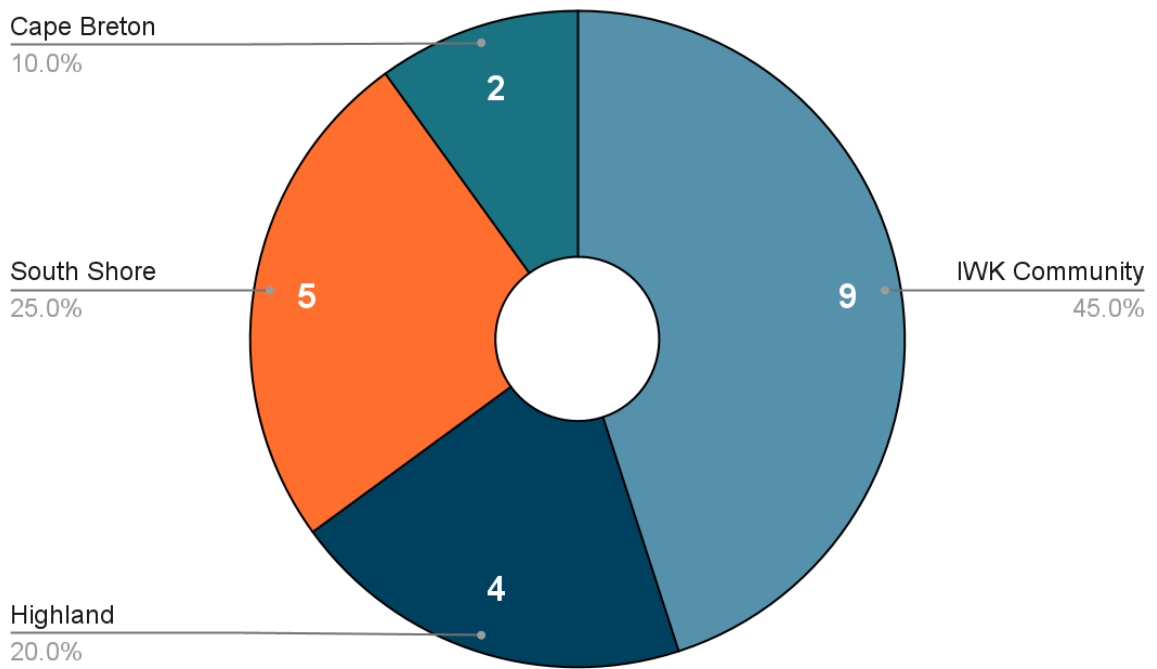
- 5 Active Practicing (Clinical)
- 1 Active Practicing (Non-Clinical)

In 2023, there were three (3) midwives who moved out of province permanently, and were removed from the register. There was one (1) clinical locum.

As of April 1, 2024 the register maintained by MRCNS had 25 licensed midwives in the following categories:

- Active-Practicing (Clinical): **20**
- Active-Practicing (Non-Clinical): **3**
- Non-Practising: **2**

2023 Year-End Active Practising Clinical Midwives, by Location



Disciplinary Matters

The MRCNS protects the public interest by ensuring that registered midwives in Nova Scotia practice safely, competently, and ethically.

Under the provisions of the *Midwifery Act*, the Registrar is required to investigate complaints regarding disciplinary matters concerning any members. Upon completion of the investigation, the Registrar has authority under section 38(8) of the *Midwifery Act* to take a variety of actions, including:

- (a) dismiss the complaint;
- (b) attempt to resolve the matter informally;
- (c) with the consent of both parties, refer the matter, in-whole or in-part, for mediation;
- (d) refer the matter in-whole or in-part, to a hearing panel;
- (e) counsel the member;
- (f) caution the member;
- (g) counsel and caution the member;
- (h) reprimand the member with the member's consent;
- (i) with the consent of the member, require the member to undergo such treatment or re-education as the Registrar considers necessary.

In 2023, there was one (1) formal complaint filed with the Council which was resolved through a resolution agreement.

Financial

The Midwifery Regulatory Council of Nova Scotia derives some income from membership fees and financial support provided by the Nova Scotia government. The Council is grateful for this financial contribution.

The audited 2023 financial statements were approved by the Council on July 12, 2024.

Midwifery Regulatory Council of Nova Scotia

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2024

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
RECEIPTS		
Government Grant	\$ 225,000	\$ -
Membership Dues	19,293	-
Interest income	<u>132</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>244,425</u>	<u>-</u>
DISBURSEMENTS		
Wages & Salaries	110,742	-
Bank and credit card charges	236	-
Dues and fees	3,215	-
Insurance	3,099	-
Office expenses	3,473	-
Professional fees (Schedule 1)	38,518	-
Prof. Development Council	1,553	-
Other Committee Expenses	5,804	-
Membership/Prof. Development	1,280	-
Investigation Expenses	5,128	-
Prov./Nat. Meetings & Conferences	3,563	-
Rent	14,292	-
Communications	1,465	-
Interest & penalties	888	-
Board Gov & Committee Honorarium	<u>8,725</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>201,981</u>	<u>-</u>
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS	42,444	-
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
FUNDING REPAYABLE TO THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA (Note 3)	(17,444)	-
FUND TRANSFER (Note 3)	<u>(25,000)</u>	<u>-</u>
NET ASSETS, end of year	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ (17,444)</u>

Acknowledgements

The Council wishes to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of many individuals who have volunteered their time and expertise to the regulation of midwifery in the province. Gratitude is expressed to members of the Council, the Nova Scotia College of Nurses, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, The Network, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, IWK, fellow provincial/territorial midwifery regulators, the Department of Health and Wellness, and registered midwives in Nova Scotia.

Respectfully,

Theresa Pickart

Theresa Pickart, R.M
MRCNS Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Wright, E".

Jenny Wright, MSW, RSW
MRCNS Registrar/Executive Director