

– MRCNS Council Meeting –
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, September 17, 2024; 1:00pm-3:00pm (Atlantic)
ONLINE

MRCNS Council Members in Attendance:

T. Pickart RM, Chair	A. Houston MD
J.K. Wallace, Treasurer	P. Anderson
J. Kearns	

Regrets:

T. Crawford RN, Vice-Chair

Staff in Attendance:

J. Wright, Registrar/ED	J. Neil, Executive Assistant
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Guests:

Matt Lafond, Lafond Serran Consulting Inc.

0. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions (no attachment) (T.Pickart)

The meeting was called to order by T.Pickart, at 1:01 p.m.

The Chair, T.Pickart welcomed everyone back from summer break. Jolinne Kearns, newly appointed public representative to the board was introduced and welcomed.

1. Approval of Agenda (ATCH 1) (T.Pickart)

P. Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by: P.Anderson **Seconded by:** A.Houston

No objections. **Approved.**

2. Approval of May 21, 2024 MRCNS Council Meeting Minutes (ATCH 2) (T.Pickart)

Members reviewed the minutes from the May 21, 2024 Council meeting.

P.Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes with edits.

Moved by: P.Anderson **Seconded by:** A.Houston

No objections. **Approved.**

3. Annual General Meeting (J.Wright)

The first annual general meeting was held on July 29, 2024. The minutes from the AGM were reviewed by the board and have been tabled for approval and presentation at next year's AGM.

P.Anderson and J.Wright both championed our efforts and reflected on the successes of the AGM in general. T.Pickart was happy that NSCN representatives were in attendance.

4. Financial Update (J.Wright)

There was \$17,000 unspent in the budget this fiscal year for which J. Wright requested to keep for the next year. The government did not approve this request. J. Wright is following up for further discussion.

Motions to approve Draft 2023 Financials and approval to create the 25k fund were completed by email over the summer. Council email vote results from July 10, 2024.

Motion 1: Move Council to approve the 2024 audited financials conducted by Debi Peverill and Associates.

Moved by: T.Crawford **Seconded by:** P.Anderson
No objections. **Approved.**

Motion 2: In accordance with Article 3.5 of the Funding Agreement between the Province of Nova Scotia and the Midwifery Regulatory Council of Nova Scotia, I move that the \$25,000 be moved into a designated reserve account to carry out regulatory processes authorised under the *Act* or *Regulations*, or to respond to any legal proceeding brought against the Council involving either a court or administrative tribunal process.

Moved by: T.Crawford **Seconded by:** P.Anderson
No objections. **Approved.**

Motion to approve 2024-25 Operating Budget was completed by email over the summer.
Council email vote results from Aug 1, 2024.

Motion 3: To approve the proposed operational budget for 2024/2025.

Email Vote Unanimous. **Approved.**

5. Board Composition Update (J.Wright)

We are waiting for a Letter of Appointment for M. Lamson, RM who was approved in June. However, the final ministerial signoff has not yet occurred.

6. Policy Update: List of Approved Midwifery Education Programs (MEP) (J.Wright)

Canadian baccalaureate midwifery education programs are accredited in accordance with CAMEd (Canadian Association for Midwifery Education) standards, posted on the CAMEd website. CAMEd's Accreditation Council reviews programs and notifies the CAMEd board of directors, in writing, of all final accreditation decisions. We were recently notified of the accreditation cycles for the six approved midwifery programs.

A.Houstoun made a motion to amend the ***Policy On Approved Canadian Midwifery Education Programs - List of Approved Programs*** to match the current list of CAMEd accredited programs.

Moved by: A.Houstoun **Seconded by:** K. Wallace
No objections. **Approved.**

Action: J.Neil to update and upload amended policy on Approved Canadian Midwifery Education Programs - List of Approved Programs to mrcns.ca resource library

7. Discussion regarding Abortion Pill (J.Wright)

The draft ***Policy On Prescribing Mifepristone*** was discussed. The draft will need to be amended and cannot be put into place until the regulations are updated. T.Pickart and A.Houstoun have had lengthy discussions regarding regulations and sought input from an active Obstetrician. A.Houstoun made it clear that Mifepristone is not used alone, companion drugs must be considered, as well as intention for use.

J.Wright noted that other provinces are moving to allow midwives to have access to the abortion pill.

Our draft has not been out for any consultation at this time, only legal, at the request of the Council.

Midwives in the province are advocating for access to abortion care for their clients and have made their position very clear. Once the new regulations, new bylaws and a new scope of practice, this policy may not be necessary.

T.Crawford sent a question by proxy regarding required certifications that may be needed. This will be considered by the Council.

A.Houstoun expressed concern about providers who do not wish to provide an abortion, based on their personal values, even when obligated by the regulations to provide care or a referral. K.Wallace agreed that future policies should try to prevent denial of care and conscientious objection, while not making a lightning rod out of it.

J.Wright highlighted that training and a policy on delegation by a physician, may be a bridge to implement in the interim while we wait for the new regulations to take effect.

Action: J.Wright will draft a delegation policy with mandatory training to present to the board. Draft will be sent by email for review and possible motion to vote.

8. Development of New Profession Specific Regulations Update (M.Lafond)

J.Wright introduced Matt Lafond, who has been hired as a consultant for work related to development of our new profession specific regulations under the new RHPA. Matt presented an update to the Council showing timelines, offering clarification and highlighting areas of focus.

Proposals for profession specific regulations will be due to the government in September 2025.

MRCNS PRIORITIES FOR NEW REGULATIONS

- **Streamlining licensing categories:**
 - Practising
 - Clinical
 - Non-Clinical
 - Conditional
 - Clinical
 - Non-Clinical
 - Others?

The Council had a discussion on Other categories we need to consider:

In Nova Scotia, the separation of registration and licensure is fairly unique and confusing. The act of Registration means you are on the register FOREVER. Practising under a licence within our categories is what allows a registered midwife to practise within the scope of their licence.

Students, for example, should be separated from those who are actually authorised to practise midwifery. A separate affiliation could be created to maintain a connection with groups/demographics who wish to receive communications and updates from the regulator. Retired registrants could also be considered through a similar lens. This would also provide a continued income stream for the Council, for those who are affiliated but not practising with a licence, or using the protected title.

Non-Practising is our current classification for midwives on any type of leave of absence. We will likely need to rename this category or include it under Conditional in the future under the new regulations.

- **Integration of newly approved Scope of Practice**
 - Midwives as primary, autonomous healthcare providers providing care in a variety of practice settings and client populations with diverse sexual/reproductive health and childbearing needs, as well as infants up to one year.

The Council should consider whether the scope needs to be defined differently for clinical/non-clinical categories. M.Lafond informed Council that this can be defined in the new By-Laws.

- **Elimination of practice limitations imposed by current regulations (i.e. “List of Permitted Drugs” and “List of Permitted Procedures”)**
 - Midwives may perform procedures and prescribe/administer drugs consistent with their scope of practice and relevant policies.
- **Other Considerations**
 - We have advanced practice competencies that will need consideration i.e. something within the scope of the profession, but may require additional training and/or certification for an individual to practise.
 - Revising our Quality Assurance Program to be more beneficial to our registrants, is effective and in accordance with new regulations.

9. Other (T.Pickart)

10. Closing (T.Pickart)

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm by the Chair, T.Pickart.

Important Dates to Remember:

- September 30, 2024 - National Day for Truth & Reconciliation
- October 6-7, 2024 - CMRC Meeting - Ottawa ON
- November 11, 2024 - Remembrance Day
- November 19, 2024 - MRCNS Quarterly Council Meeting
- December 25, 2024 - Christmas Day