

April 20th, 2020

Dear members,

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you today in the aftermath of the tragic loss of lives in Nova Scotia this weekend. As leaders in our schools and systems, so much of what we celebrate is fuelled by the vibrance of life and the connections among people. Violence like we saw this weekend takes that away from so many families and communities. The measurement of these losses is incalculable.

Our hearts go out to the families and friends of those who have been lost, their co-workers, for some their students, and their communities. In a province our size, and with so many victims, this will be personal for many of you and will hit very close to home.

At times like this, and in the midst of the measures to cope with the pandemic at hand, it will be even more important to reach out to one other for support or to offer help. We have already seen information coming forth from the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees, the Regional Centres for Education, the conseil scolaire acadien provincial, and offers of support from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, in addition to community based supports through the Nova Scotia Health Authority and external entities like the Kids Help Phone.

Please, please, reach out to them in a way that makes sense for you.

The scope of this tragedy will affect every one of us differently from one end of the province to the other, especially under the circumstances of the pandemic. Listed below are some of the supports in place through the NSTU Group Insurance www.nstuinsurance.ca, PSAANS and other agencies.

It is always the right time to take care of one another, but it is never more needed than now.

We are thinking of all of you and are here to help in any way we can.



Tim Simony,
Chair

Traduction française à suivre

NEW - CAREpath - Your Wellness Partner

<https://www.carepath.ca/clients/> and <https://www.carepath.ca/clients/your-wellness-partner/> and <https://nstuinsurance.ca/members/active/your-wellness-partner/>

Mental health issues affect the health and well-being of 1 in 4 people, regardless of age, gender, or background. In Canada, workplace mental health issues are associated with an enormous degree of disability with significant emotional and financial burden to both members and employers.

- Stress and conflict in the workplace can contribute to mental health issues.
- Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, or panic disorders, among others, can make it difficult for persons to perform their job, affecting concentration, decision-making, and communication with others.

This solution can help reduce the emotional and physical impact of such mental health concerns and provide a sounding board to treatment options and medical best practices.

Total Care - Medical

<https://nstuinsurance.ca/members/active/total-care-medical/>

Within the Extended Health Benefits of our General - Total Care Medical Insurance Plan - There is access to - Extended Health Benefits - Medavie Blue Cross

This section of the plan includes 80% reimbursement for such items as the following (benefit maximums may apply): Practitioners services. (including Psychologist, Social Worker)

Resilience

<https://nstuinsurance.ca/members/active/resilience/>

Resilience® is an Employee and Family Assistance Program for active NSTU members who have a permanent, probationary or term contract. Through Resilience® you can reach a team of experienced counsellors from Homewood Health who will listen to the issue, offer sound advice and help you create an action plan to address issues.

A copy of the Self-Care Starter Kits can be found here-

https://nstuinsurance.ca/wp-content/uploads/HH_NSTU_SELF-CARE-KIT_EN_1119.pdf?x56993

More details on the online services and to register for the program can be found here-

<https://www.homewoodhumansolutions.com/MSA/Manulife/MyResilience>

Independent Psychological Consultation

Accessed through the registered nurse at the NSTU by dialing 1-800-565-6788, press 3.

Support from a PSAANS funded Social Worker

The Board of Directors approved the part-time hiring of a Clinical Social Worker to provide short-term support to members through challenges related to COVID-19 and other stressors. Kimberley Brennan, MSW, RSW can be contacted by members to set up an appointment for support by visiting: kimberleybrennan.noustalk.com . Further information forthcoming.

Kids Help Phone

@KidsHelpPhone is here to anyone looking for support. Young people can text TALK to 686868 and adults can text WELLNESS to 741741.

Nova Scotia Health Authority

The **Provincial Mental Health Crisis Line** is available 24/7 for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis or someone concerned about them. Call (toll-free) 1-888-429-8167.