

**Provincial Wellness
Advisory Council**

Annual Report

2014-15

Please Note: In accordance with **Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines** (Canadian National Institute for the Blind: n.d.), italics or upper-case letters have not been used for the titles of acts, titles, subtitles or for emphasis. Bold fonts of medium heaviness as recommended have been used instead.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chair of the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council, I am pleased to present its annual report for the fiscal year 2014-15. The annual report has been prepared and is submitted in accordance with the obligation as a category three entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. My signature below is indicative of the Council's accountability for the actual results reported in this document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Catherine Donovan".

Catherine Donovan, MD.
Chairperson, Provincial Wellness Advisory Council

OVERVIEW

In 2002, the Provincial Government, through its strategic health plan, recognized the importance of maintaining a healthy population and established the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council (advisory council). Recommendations from the Advisory Council informed the development of **Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador** (2006). The Advisory Council continues to provide advice to the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development on priorities for wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador.

On September 30, 2014 the new Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development was created. With this change the Advisory Council now reports to the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development. The Advisory Council in its advisory capacity to the Minister will play a key role in providing input and advice on advancing the wellness agenda in the province and in the development of a new provincial wellness plan.

Healthy living and wellness focus on the many factors that keep us healthy and prevent injury and chronic diseases. The health of the population is influenced by individual lifestyle in areas such as eating healthy, being physically active and being smoke-free. However, individual action must be supported by social, economic and environmental factors such as access to healthy food, legislation to protect us from secondhand smoke, and the design of safe and active communities which make the healthy choice the safest and best choice.

To address and advance healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador will require strong leadership and partnerships with various sectors and segments of society. The nature of the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council positions it to provide advice to the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development on various aspects and approaches necessary to advance healthy living and wellness.

Membership

The Advisory Council has 28 members that represent Memorial University, non-government agencies, professional associations and various government departments. The Advisory Council membership is voluntary and appointments are made by the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development (see Appendix 1).

Funding

The Advisory Council does not maintain a separate office. The work of the advisory Council is supported and funded by the Healthy Living Division of the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development. Associated meeting costs incurred by the Advisory Council are covered by the department and travel and other expenses associated with duties of the volunteer members are reimbursed by the department, in accordance with the Provincial Government travel guidelines.

Contact Information

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Mandate

The Advisory Council exists to provide advice and guidance to the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development.

The role of the Advisory Council is to:

- Advise on the components of the Provincial Wellness Plan;
- Identify gaps and priorities based on evidence and research;
- Recommend action strategies;
- Monitor the achievements of the Provincial Wellness Plan; and
- Provide ongoing leadership for wellness.

Values

Upon the establishment of its Activity Plan 2014-17, the Advisory Council reported to the Department of Health and Community Services. The Advisory Council considered the values of that department and adapted them and identified two additional values. The values reflect how the Advisory Council members work as a group. The values also reflect the advice that is provided to the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development.

Privacy

Each member of the Advisory Council is qualified, competent and respectful, and protects information appropriately, in the discussions and decision-making processes undertaken when providing advice to the Minister.

Excellence

The Advisory Council makes decisions based on the best evidence and information available to provide a high standard of advice to the Minister.

Transparency and Accountability

Each member of the Advisory Council takes their responsibilities seriously and contributes to a culture of openness in decision-making and reporting.

Collaboration

The Advisory Council engages with others in the health and community services system, with others in the broader health promotion and wellness community, and with various other partners and sectors to gather different perspectives and present collective advice to the Minister.

Innovation

The Advisory Council actively considers current evidence and new approaches to inform the development of recommendations for the Minister.

Equity

The Advisory Council considers fairness and justice when providing advice to the Minister.

Respect

The members of the Advisory Council respect the diversity of the group and the value that each member brings to the group. Each member of the Advisory Council treats members with respect during the discussions and decision-making process when preparing advice for the Minister.

Vision

In 2014-15, The Advisory Council supported the vision of the Department of Health and Community Services:

The vision of the Department of Health and Community Services is for individuals, families and communities to achieve optimal health and well-being.

The Advisory Council now supports the vision of the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development:

All people in the province are equal, included, supported and empowered to achieve their full potential and well-being.

The Advisory Council contributes to achieving the vision by providing the best available advice to the Minister on efforts to advance and support healthy living and wellness in the province.

Primary Clients

The Advisory Council recognizes the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, as its primary client. By fostering an environment of understanding within government about healthy living and wellness, the communities, organizations and the people of the province are also served.

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE – OBJECTIVE 2014-17

The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council through the Activity Plan (2014-17) will continue to provide the best available advice to the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development on the area of healthy living and wellness.

There are many partners that contribute to the collective efforts to promote healthy living and wellness. These partners include local, provincial and national organizations and governments; professional groups and associations; various sectors such as health, education, recreation and municipalities; research centres and academic institutions; volunteer groups; and advocacy groups. Increasingly it is recognized that a more concerted and coordinated approach is needed to create the conditions needed in the province to effect substantial improvement in health. To further advance efforts for healthy living and wellness the Advisory Council had been asked by the Minister of Health and Community Services to consider new partnerships and non-traditional partnerships to help extend the scope of the efforts to advance healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador, and these considerations will continue now with the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development.

To inform policy direction, the Provincial Government considers input from a variety of partners. The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council will facilitate this information exchange and will provide collective advice to the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development from the many partners that contribute to wellness. This advice will help foster a culture of understanding within government about the broad scope of healthy living and wellness.

The Advisory Council has reviewed and considered the strategic directions of government (Appendix 2), specifically “for a more inclusive, healthy and active future for individuals, families and communities.” The focus area is healthy living and wellness.

Annual Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council will have provided advice to advance healthy living and wellness efforts in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Measure:

Provided advice

Indicators:

- Provided advice on gaps and/or priorities for healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Provided advice on emerging areas of interest to advance healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Provided advice on mechanisms to support monitoring of healthy living and wellness initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Provided advice on areas of wellness in response to direction provided by the Minister of Health and Community Services (now the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development).

The Advisory Council will report on the same objective, measure and indicators in 2015/16.

Report on Activities 2014-15

Indicator	Report on Activities
<p>Provided advice on gaps and/or priorities for healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador</p>	<p>Advisory Council members provided advice on gaps and/or priorities for healthy living and wellness when they participated in the Provincial Wellness Review 2014. Through stakeholder interviews and discussions at Advisory Council meetings in spring/summer 2014 members provided input into the review. Specific areas discussed included how health promotion programs and services are delivered, how healthy living priorities are set and the importance of collaboration among partners for advancing actions to support healthy living and wellness.</p> <p>Advisory Council members participated in the Premier's Health Care Summit in January 2015 which included specific input related to healthy living and wellness gaps and priorities. Some of the areas discussed included the need for increased awareness of disease prevention and health promotion programs and services and the need for increased recreation and physical activity programs and services for youth and seniors.</p>
<p>Provided advice on emerging areas of interest to advance healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>	<p>The Advisory Council provided advice on an emerging area of healthy living and wellness when they submitted a wellness paper on the healthy built environment to the Minister in May 2014. The wellness paper included recommendations in five areas for consideration including health impact assessments, and active transportation, land use, food security and healthy buildings policies.</p> <p>Members provided input into emerging areas of interest to advance healthy living and wellness when they participated in a consultation session in June 2014 to inform</p>

Indicator	Report on Activities
	the development of a provincial food assembly which is being coordinated by the Food Security Network and the NL Public Health Association, and when they participated in engagement sessions for the Poverty Reduction Strategy in winter 2015.
Provided advice on mechanisms to support monitoring of healthy living and wellness initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador.	Advisory Council members participated in the Provincial Wellness Review in spring/summer 2014 and provided input on elements which contribute to monitoring including leadership, governance and communications: leadership sets to the direction and identifies the priorities to be monitored; the governance structure determines the reporting relationships and which partners will monitor and report on the priorities; communications determines the methods for monitoring and reporting. These are all important aspects related to the monitoring of wellness initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador.
Provided advice on areas of wellness in response to direction provided by the Minister of Health and Community Services [now the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development].	Advisory Council members provided advice on areas of wellness in response to direction provided by the Minister when they were invited by the Minister of Health and Community Services in spring 2014 to bring forward recommendations on the healthy built environment and to participate in the Provincial Wellness Review. Advisory Council members submitted a wellness paper on the healthy built environment to the Minister in May 2014 and participated in the Provincial Wellness Review in spring/summer 2014.

As of March 31, 2015, the Advisory Council achieved its annual objective and indicators. The Advisory Council provided advice to advance healthy living and wellness efforts in Newfoundland and Labrador when it submitted a wellness paper to the Minister on the healthy built environment. In addition, the Advisory Council had various opportunities throughout 2014-15 to participate in actions to inform gaps, priorities and emerging areas of interest to advance healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador through participation in the Provincial Wellness Review, the Premier's Health Care Summit, the poverty reduction engagement session and the food security assembly consultation.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council expects to fulfill its mandate as outlined in its Activity Plan 2014-2017. The Minister is supportive of the Advisory Council's work and the mandate aligns with the strategic directions of government and the new strategic plan of the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development.

Opportunities exist for the Advisory Council as it considers the recommendations of the Provincial Wellness Review which specifically identified benefits and challenges to the current structure of the Advisory Council. In addition, the mandate of SWSD and the development of a new provincial wellness plan relates specifically to the advice the Advisory Council can provide to the Minister to advance healthy living and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Challenges exist when trying to explore and provide the best possible advice to advance healthy living and wellness in a province with some of the highest rates of the common risk factors for chronic disease and the pressures of the current fiscal realities.

APPENDIX 1: Council Membership as of March 2015

Chairperson: Dr. Catherine Donovan, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Faculty of Medicine

Members of the Advisory Council represent the following organizations:

- Association of Allied Health Professionals – Deb Noseworthy
- Alliance for the Control of Tobacco – Kevin Coady
- Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador – Lynn Power
- Canadian Cancer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador – Angela Noseworthy
- Canadian Diabetes Association – Carol Ann Smith
- Canadian Mental Health Association – George Skinner
- Department of Advanced Education and Skills – Vacant
- Department of Child, Youth and Family Services – Vacant
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – Brad Clarke
- Department of Environment and Conservation – Angela Burrige
- Department of Health and Community Services – Éline Chatigny
- Department of Service NL – Donna Kelland
- Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development – Mark Jones
- Dietitians of Newfoundland and Labrador – Member Group of Dietitians NL – Marg Ewtuchik
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador – Heather Percy
- Memorial University of Newfoundland, Faculty of Medicine – Vacant
- Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador – Dale Colbourne
- Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research – Pablo Navarro
- Newfoundland and Labrador Lung Association – Greg Noel
- Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association – Jonathan Carpenter
- Newfoundland and Labrador Public Health Association – Fay Matthews
- Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association – Brian Shortall
- Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association – Judy Beranger
- Executive Council, Office of Public Engagement – Michelle Snow
- Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador – Tina Auchinleck-Ryan
- Regional Health Authorities – Natalie Moody
- Seniors Resource Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador – Kelly Heisz

APPENDIX 2: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social, or economic outcomes and normally require action by or involvement of, more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by government through platform documents, Throne and Budget speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. They summarize the outcomes desired for the health sector and are communicated to entities that plan and report in collaboration with the department. The direction and focus areas related to healthy living and wellness for 2014 -17 are as follows:

Strategic Direction: Provide leadership and strengthen measures to support people in our province to adopt healthier lifestyles through wellness, including enhanced promotion and support for physical activity for children and youth.			
Outcome: A more inclusive, healthy and active future for individuals, families and communities.			
Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:		
	To be addressed by the activity plan	Addressed in the operational plan	Addressed in the Work Plan
Healthy Living and Wellness	✓		