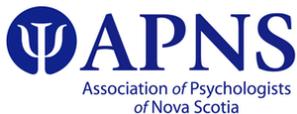


The Nova Scotia Psychologist

The Newsletter of the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia



President's Report - Kim O'Connor

What's Inside
Welcome p. 1-2
2025 Awards and Nominations p. 3-4
Reports p. 5-10
Psychology in the News p. 11-12
Acknowledgements p. 16-17
Advertisements p. 15-16
Committees and Representatives p. 17



It is time for the winter newsletter already! Where does the time go?! Speaking of time... APNS turns 60 years old this year! There are so many milestones in our lives that are important to mark and celebrate. These milestones can be a time for reflection on the past, considering the exciting things happening in the present and looking toward the future of psychology in Nova Scotia. In the coming months, please watch for ways we are hoping to mark this milestone.

February is Psychology month, aimed at highlighting psychologists' contributions to helping people live healthy lives. Our profession has so much to offer, and this month is time to shine a light on psychology. I encourage you to connect with other psychologists as well as promote our work among your colleagues, workplaces, and spheres of influence! We will be promoting psychology with a social media engagement (please share in your own circles as well), hosting an online social/open house later in the month for those who would like to connect, and Jeopardy questions as in past years! We also have our annual awards coming up and are looking for nominations. This is a great time to reflect on what we do and the outstanding work of our colleagues. Read through the award criteria and nominate those you feel are deserving of our recognition.



President’s Report, Con’t

Our association only works well when we work together to support each other and our profession. As an advocacy group we work to represent and support psychologists across our province, sectors and other demographics. There has been a lot going on these past several months. We have had a lot of work to do with the Universal Mental Health care initiatives, pilot projects, the election advocacy last fall, and in advocacy with specific groups of our membership. There is lots to do! As the new government takes shape in Nova Scotia, we eagerly await the new mandate letters to continue to collaborate with government.

I know we are all busy. I get it. You likely wonder how you could add more to your plate. Balance and boundaries are important – so is getting involved and contributing in various ways that align with our values and passions. I ask you to consider getting involved in our profession beyond your clinical work. This may be serving on the APNS Executive, joining a committee with APNS or NSBEP, supervising new psychologists on the Candidate Register and/or practicum students, starting a consultation group in your area, or in many other ways. Being involved with APNS has provided me the opportunity to meet many of our members, other psychologists across the country, and learn about advocacy, government and the work of psychologists at various levels. Many people evaluate their time, capacity and goals at the beginning of a new year so please include in your thoughts (and hopefully actions) how you might like to get more involved in APNS and our profession. Information about nominations for the Executive are included in this newsletter. I am happy to chat with anyone considering joining the Executive about my experience and how they can get involved.

As we look forward to a new year, I am excited to see what unfolds. There is a lot of uncertainty in our world. Our association has worked for over six decades to promote psychology and represent psychologists in our province. Let’s work together to keep that legacy going!

Kim D. O’Connor

Kim O’Connor, R. Psych
APNS President

Psychology Month 2025

Psychology Month is celebrated every February to highlight the contributions of Canadian psychologists and to show Canadians how psychology benefits people to live healthy and happy lives.

The objective of Psychology Month is to reduce stigma surrounding mental health and psychological services. It focuses on educating the public and promoting the profession. Psychology Month showcases how psychology contributes to flourishing communities, helps employers create better workplaces, and supports governments in developing effective policies.

APNS will be bringing back our popular Psychology Jeopardy - where each week APNS Members answer questions regarding various psychology-related categories. Whoever has the most correct answers each week, is eligible to win a gift card worth \$100 from a local business.

We will also be doing a social media video campaign throughout February highlighting different types of psychologists. The focus will be on helping the public understand psychologists’ extensive expertise and value. If you would like to be interviewed for a video, please email apns@apns.ca.

If your workplace is planning its own Psychology Month activities, we would love to hear about them and would be pleased to promote them. Send information about your event to admin@apns.ca.



Nominations for the APNS Awards

Deadline: Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Do you know a psychologist who deserves to be nominated for our Awards? Please take a few minutes to reflect on which of your colleagues should receive this honour.

Categories for nomination are as follows:

Fellow of the Association

Each year, the APNS Executive may designate one member a "Fellow" of the Association, in recognition of outstanding contributions to the Association. The award has been given since the late 1970s and it is intended as a way of recognizing and saying thank you to someone who has been doing outstanding work for APNS.

The Dr. Charles J.A. Hayes Lifetime Contribution Award

This award honours those who have spent a significant part of their professional lifetime supporting APNS, as well as the profession of psychology at the provincial, national and international level.

Excellence in Psychology Award

This award recognizes those mid-career psychologists who have demonstrated excellence in their professional activities or in their volunteer activities while acting as a psychologist. The recipient will receive an award of \$1,500.

Outstanding Early Career Psychologist

This award recognizes the unique challenges of being an Early Career Psychologist in the first ten years of their career. The nominee must be an APNS member who has actively participated in APNS at the committee or Executive level, has used the services of APNS to advance their career in psychology. The recipient will receive an award of \$1,000.

Community Service Award - Psychologists

This award recognizes the contributions of psychologists who do outstanding volunteer service in the community beyond their role as a psychologist. It acknowledges and raises awareness of the important contributions that psychologists make to the greater community. The recipient will receive an award of \$1,000.

Diversity in Psychology Bursary

This bursary assists graduate psychology students who identify as being from a diverse population and are in pursuit of post-secondary education in Psychology. The recipient will receive an award of \$1,000.

Gerald Gordon Memorial Prize: Undergrad

This award is given for outstanding undergraduate achievement in psychology in Nova Scotia. The recipient will receive an award of \$1,000.

Brian Dufton Memorial Prize: Graduate

This award is given for outstanding graduate achievement in psychology in Nova Scotia. The recipient will receive an award of \$1,000.

Outstanding APNS Student

This award recognizes the challenges of preparing for a career in psychology at the master's or doctoral level. The recipient will receive an award of \$500.

Non-Psychologist Award

Community Service Award in Mental Health

This award recognizes the contributions of non-psychologists who have made valuable contributions to the community in a health and wellness setting or through other activities that touch and benefit the greater community by raising awareness or advocating for mental health issues. The recipient will receive an award of \$1,000.

[Award Nomination Forms](#)





Nominations for the APNS Executive Committee

Deadline: Tuesday, April 1, 2025

The Nominations and Elections Committee of APNS is asking the membership for nominations for the following positions on the APNS Executive:

PRESIDENT-ELECT

The President-Elect assumes office immediately following the Annual General Meeting and serves a one-year term, followed by two successive years as President and Past President. The primary objectives are to become familiar with the APNS Executive Committee and its functions in preparation for the Presidential year and to assist the President and/or the Executive Committee in carrying out APNS activities.

SECRETARY

The Secretary of the Executive is responsible for recording minutes during monthly APNS Executive meetings and emailing them to the Executive Director for distribution prior to the next meeting, as well as to committee chairs when appropriate. The Secretary also takes minutes at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and provides an electronic copy to the Executive Director, which is then stored electronically at the APNS office.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

The Member-at-Large of the Executive provides input and advice to the Executive and the Executive Director on topics and issues where they have specialized knowledge or expertise.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

The Student Representative is a graduate student at any NS University who provides input and advice to the Executive and the Executive Director on topics and issues within their area of expertise. They contribute to the annual Call for Nominations for student awards and Executive nominations and serve as a liaison between APNS and student members or potential members.

The person elected to the President-elect position will serve for a three-year term, as President-elect, President and Past-president.

The other positions are for a two-year term. Only registered psychologists may be nominated for the President-elect position, however registered and candidate psychologists are eligible for Secretary and Member-at-large, and graduate students for the Student Rep.

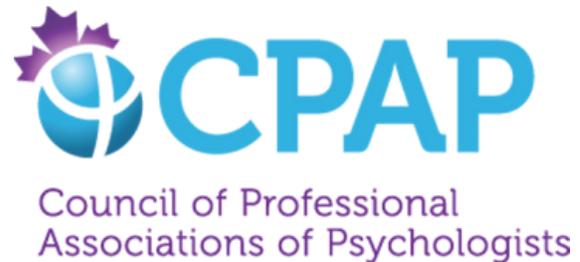
If more than one person is nominated for the same position, APNS is required to hold an election.

APNS strives to foster a sense of community among all who identify with psychology by supporting inclusion, equality and celebrating diversity. We welcome nominees who indicate that they identify as Indigenous, African Nova Scotian and other racially visible persons, persons of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, persons with disabilities and genders in occupations or positions where they are under-represented.

[Executive Nomination Form](#)

If you know anyone who would be a good addition to the Executive, please consider nominating them. Contact apns@apns.ca for more information.

CPAP Meeting Report October 2024 Chimène Jewer, MSc.



Chimène Jewer (CPAP Voting Representative) & Claire Halpern (Observer) attended the October 19-20 meeting in Montréal, Quebec. Montréal was chosen as the location for our Fall meeting, because it aligned with the Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations (ACPRO) meeting, which was also held in Montréal a few days earlier.

The following are some of the highlights from the CPAP meeting:

- BMS professional liability insurance update. The BMS program is the only program built by psychologists, for psychologists. BMS gives financial support back to the associations. Participation in the program is up slightly over last year. BMS gave us some high-level aggregate information about the numbers and types of claims. Most claims are related to complaints to the regulatory body, involving assessment and nonsexual unprofessional conduct, and most of the costs are legal costs.
- We asked BMS to consider giving us example vignettes of common claim scenarios so that we can work on risk mitigation with the membership.
- A noted improvement was in extended coverage from 3 to 10 years after discontinuing practice and not renewing the policy (e.g. in retirement).
- Cyber coverage is very important and highly recommended. Approximately half of members also purchased cyber coverage. Members need to attest that they have taken a course on cyber security to purchase this coverage. An excellent free training can be found at Get Cyber Safe.
- CPA (sponsored by BMS) has leadership grants available for students that have not received any applicants. Please encourage students to apply.
- ACPRO has an MOU signed in April 2024 for psychologists [Regarding Interjurisdictional Telepsychology](#)
- Psychologist wellness program has been put on hold.
- Recommended rates discussion. Claire has compiled recommended rates and review schedule from jurisdictions across the country. Ontario has decided to stop recommending rates for several reasons. Reasons they have cited are that members will charge what they wish anyway and that it would be difficult to keep up with the rate of inflation anyway (or it would not be publicly acceptable, especially in the context of a mental health crisis).
- Recruitment and retention of psychologists in hospitals. We reviewed and discussed an article by Hudd et al., 2024 titled [The imperative to recruit and retain psychologists in Canadian hospitals: Challenges and proposed solutions](#). The article highlights well many of the issues that contribute to difficulties recruiting and retaining psychologists in hospitals and proposes some solutions. CPA is aware of these issues and is forming a working group on this and plans to develop resources that we can use to advocate for ourselves within our institutions
- Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). CPA has an AI working group that is beginning to work on the development of ethical guidelines re. the use of AI. In the Fall of 2025, CPA and BCPA are hosting a two-day summit re: AI. There will also be a symposium on the topic at the CPA conference next year in June 2025, in St. John's Newfoundland. New Brunswick shared a cautionary tale about an AI tool that has been used to assess and diagnose children with autism and the difficulties inherent in this.

CPAP Meeting Report, Con't Chimène Jewer, MSc.

Round table updates from the provinces and territories:

- NFLD has been offering some “Come Home” signing bonuses. They are a small association and so we discussed sharing resources (e.g. advocacy materials, continuing education, etc.) with them.
- PEI is a small association, and we discussed sharing resources (e.g. advocacy materials, continuing education, etc.) with them.
- NB government has been meeting with and entertaining psychology students as a means of trying to increase recruitment.
- QC has passed a bill (bill 68) to reduce physician paperwork, which will mean no more sick notes. This may impact psychologists because we may be asked to do this. Psychologists did not have diagnostic privileges until now but can now use “psychological diagnosis”.
- ON has decided to cease recommending rates (as noted above) and are updating their bylaws. And they have been using an e-referral service with a patient navigator called “Ask for help today”. since 2021. BC and NB have joined on to this program and they would like APNS to consider joining.
- MB is working on recruitment and retention of psychologists. They received a small increase to salaries, likely due to our advocacy efforts at CPAP meeting there in May 2024
- SK has started a pilot project of shared care clinic with GP, psychiatrist, but unfortunately, no psychologist.
- AB experiencing some transition. Dr. Judi Malone has stepped down and there is a new interim CEO.
- BC college has amalgamated into an omnibus college with other healthcare professionals. Unfortunately, there is no psychologist on the board. Pilot project re: integrating psychologists into primary care put on pause due to lack of funding.
- YT government working on writing regulations, which are now in draft form, due to our advocacy efforts at CPAP meeting there in May 2023.
- CPA has been having a lot of discussion about scope of practice, psychologists versus other MH providers, etc. Health Workforce Canada has been collecting workforce data re. psychologists.



BMS Practitioner Insurance Program

The BMS Canada Risk Services Ltd. (BMS) is the broker for the exclusive and official liability insurance program endorsed by the CPA and CPAP, of which APNS is a member.

About the BMS Program, Exclusive to CPA and CPAP Provincial/Territorial Members Participating members of the insurance program receive dedicated legal advice and practice risk resources based on liability trends in psychology. In this model, risk management and patient safety are a key priority, with a direct positive financial impact on future premiums and loss reserves.

Program & Benefits include:

- Developed for members by members and not driven by profit. Excess reserves are invested back into the profession (e.g. practice risk management and other continuing professional development activities)
- Coverage provides comprehensive insurance protection for psychology practitioners at group discounted premium pricing that is reliable and sustainable
- Provides coverage not found in employer policies
- Insured members are protected 24/7 in all employment circumstances anywhere in Canada
- Coverage provides dedicated superior legal defense services for claims without an hourly limit
- Focus on risk management, emphasizing reduced practice error and enhanced patient safety. Investments in prudent practice will reduce future premiums and expand future coverage.

To learn more about the insurance products available to APNS members or to purchase coverage Please visit: www.psychology.bmsgroup.com or contact a BMS broker at 1-855-318-6038 or by email at psy.insurance@bmsgroup.com.

All of the above information is available on the APNS website- <https://apns.ca/membership/bms-practitioner-insurance-program>





Continuing Education

APNS had a busy 2024 with five continuing education opportunities on a wide range of topics. The 2025 continuing education calendar is going through a planning process and is still being developed. APNS is reigniting our Continuing Education Committee to help with the planning. If you are interested in helping develop a continuing education calendar, please email apns@apns.ca

2024 Recap

April 12th: **Professional Wills Workshop**

Presented by Kim O'Connor, R.Psych. and guest speaker Tanya L. Butler, TEP

This facilitated workshop discussed the purpose of a professional will for a psychologist and guided participants in drafting their documents.

May 10th: **Educating psychologists about government plans to increase access to mental health services.**

Panelist: Dr. David M Clark, Dr. David Peachey, and Dr. Pierre Ritchie

Moderator: Ron Sherrard

This four-hour panel discussion examined what psychologists need to know to play a proactive role in government advocacy. The key messages included continuing the discussion amongst psychologists to create a positive plan that is evidence based, to be at the table and have continued dialogue with policy makers and for psychologists to work together to form a consistent message.

May 31st: **Telepsychology & Ethical Issues**

Panelists: Dr. Marcie Balch, Dr. Elizabeth Church, Dr Natalie Stratton, and Carlye Smith-Burke, MA

Moderator: Tracy Whittaker-Taggart, MA

This three-hour panel discussion on telepsychology focused on the ethical concerns, privacy and security, and whether it is, or is not, appropriate for various issues or clients.

July 5th, 2024: **The Role of Psychology in Addressing Pain and Related Opioid Dependence**

Presenters: Dr. David Bruns, Dr. Jennifer F Kelly, and Dr. Ravi Prasad

APNS member Dr. Frank Fedde provided context and expertise on the APA five-part video series on Pain and Opioid Dependence. Dr. Fedde also answered questions from participants.

Nov 15th, 2024: **Creating Culturally Safe Space in Clinical Practice and Service Provision: A Primer for Practitioners' Multicultural Development and Cultural Competence.**

Presenter: Dr. Ben Kuo

This full day workshop gave participants foundational knowledge and concepts related to culture, diversity and clinical practice and supervision as a means of promoting cultural safety in psychological services. This was Dr. Kuo's second time presenting for APNS.



APNS Advocacy Committee and Executive Committee continues to champion advocacy initiatives to enhance the role of psychologists and improve mental health care across the province. Recent efforts have centered on three critical areas: Election Advocacy, Universal Mental Health and Addictions Care (UMHAC), and recommended rate. These initiatives underscore our commitment to strengthening psychological services and ensuring fair support for psychologists.

Election Advocacy: Mental Health as a Provincial Priority

Ahead of the 2024 provincial election, APNS launched a comprehensive election advocacy campaign to ensure mental health remains a top priority for all political parties. This included sending detailed letters and questionnaires to party leaders, asking for commitments to improve mental health funding, enhance recruitment and retention strategies, and expand training opportunities for psychologists in NS.

The campaign also featured a public outreach component, including an active social media presence. Posts highlighting key election priorities reached over 1,000 individuals on Instagram, demonstrating a significant increase in engagement compared to previous months. Additionally, a meeting was held with the NDP Health Care Critic, with plans for continued engagement to address our advocacy goals. Post election advocacy will involve requesting meetings with the Hon. Michelle Thompson, Minister of Health, the Hon. Brian Comer, the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, and the Hon. Brendan Maguire, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Minister of Advanced Education.

Universal Mental Health and Addictions Care (UMHAC) Advocacy

UMHAC discussions and feedback with the government remain a top priority for APNS. The UMHAC Working Group, a subcommittee of the APNS Advocacy Committee, continues to provide a representative psychology perspective grounded in equity and evidence-based care.

The group held its second meeting on November 1, 2024. However, with the government in maintenance mode due to the election, no new updates on UMHAC programs were available.

In parallel, the Advocacy Committee is addressing concerns raised by public system psychologists, including issues of pay equity, professional autonomy, and organizational structures that impede effective service delivery and recruitment and retention efforts. To tackle these challenges, the committee convened a meeting with public system psychologists in November 2024 to develop strategies for meaningful advocacy and to ensure these voices are heard.

Recommended Rate Increases

In October 2024, APNS recommended a rate increase for psychological services provided by psychologists registered with NSBEP. However, advocacy efforts began in May 2024, with APNS reaching out to insurance companies and government agencies to address this important issue. Specifically, discussions with Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) were initiated to highlight the critical need for fair compensation for psychologists serving veterans.

In mid-October, APNS contacted VAC's Chief Medical Officer, who confirmed receipt of the correspondence and indicated that the matter had been forwarded to the Director of the Treatment Benefit Unit for further review. By late December, VAC informed APNS that they are currently reviewing the maximum reimbursable fees for psychological services, with decisions on potential increases expected to be communicated in early 2025. As of January 15, 2026 we have been informed that the review of the fees is in its final stages and is expected to be completed in the coming weeks.

As these advocacy efforts progress, APNS will continue to update members. Members are encouraged to share their insights, participate in advocacy initiatives, and stay informed about our ongoing work. Together, we can continue to strengthen the voice of psychologists and make meaningful improvements to psychological services across Nova Scotia.





The Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia (APNS) proudly marks its 60th anniversary this year, celebrating six decades of dedicated service to the psychology profession and the mental health of Nova Scotians. Since its establishment in 1965, APNS has evolved into a leading voice for psychologists, advocating for equitable health policies, advancing professional standards, and fostering a strong community of practitioners.

The timeline below was created for the 50th Anniversary by Michael Fowler, M.Ps, Charles J.A. Hayes, Ph.D., Victor Day, Ph.D., William Crist, Ph.D., Gordon Butler, Ph.D., David Pilon, Ph.D., Lynne Robinson, Ph.D. and Michael Ross, Ph.D.

1960s and 1970s

- May 1961- Ace Beach (Dalhousie University) called a meeting of local psychologists with a view to establishing the NS Association.
- May 1962: The first general meeting was held with 32 members and “a Board of Examiners”. The meeting was chaired by Ace Beach and included Ron Backman, Jim Clark, Len Denton and George Nichols.
- May 1965: After many false starts, APNS was incorporated on May 17, 1965.
- Mid-to-late 1970s: the growth of clinical psychology demanded regulation. APNS petitioned government to introduce legislation governing psychologists.
- March 1977 - APNS becomes a full member of ACPAP (Advisory Council of the Provincial Associations of Psychologists)
- 1979: The Ferguson Report on Higher Education contained the blueprint for graduate training in psychology for this region. An APNS Task Force on Training in Psychology prepared a submission.

1980s

- March 3, 1980: Bill No. 4 - The Psychologists Act was introduced into the Nova Scotia House of Assembly.
- December 1980: The School Psychology Task Force chaired by Rilda van Feggelen, developed a position paper on the appropriate training and roles for school psychologists.

- December 18, 1980: the Psychologists Act was proclaimed.
- 1981: The Board charged with the development of Regulations and Guidelines was established. It was comprised of Dr. Gerald Gordon, Chair, Mr. Ronald Backman, Vice- Chair, Dr. Jim Clark, Dr. Irmgard Lenzer, and Dr. Charles Hayes.
- 1981: A Task Force on Education developed arguments in favour of a Ph.D. program in clinical psychology at Dalhousie, presented to a Commission on Higher Education.
- 1982: A Task Force on Professional Autonomy, chaired by Wayne MacDonald, wrote a position paper on professional autonomy for hospital psychologists.
- 1984: APNS gets phone number, answered by a machine housed in Vic Catano’s basement.
- 1985: Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology was formed. APNS opposed it (on the basis of doctoral registration). CRHSPP was established without us.
- Mid-1980s: A frequent topic of discussion at executive committee meetings was how to raise the profile of psychology within the provincial government. A series of legislative briefing notes were designed to educate government officials on various topics pertaining to psychology in the province.
- Fall 1988: Meeting addressing various issues regarding the practice of psychology as an autonomous profession. Following that fall retreat, the Professional Affairs Committee, was formed.
- Late 1980s: The preparation and delivery of the association’s submission to the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Health Care.
- Fall 1989: Decision made to seek formal affiliation with APA and CHRSP.

1990s

- August 1990: Nova Scotia became the 4th province to be admitted as an American Psychological Association Affiliate.
- 1990: A national effort to include psychologists under the health exemption for the GST. APNS spearheaded the work in Atlantic Canada.





1990s Con't

- 1992: APNS became a founding member of the Coalition of Small State, Provincial and Commonwealth Associations, which between them had enough votes for a seat on the APA Council.
- 1992: A Traumatic Stress Working group was formed to provide recommendations for how APNS should respond to major disasters.
- 1992: The first APNS Private Practice Directory was produced with about 20 names.
- 1992-1999: Theresa Ferguson and later Lauren Marsh-Knickle assumed the position of Administrative Coordinator which became Executive Director bringing APNS on par with other professional associations.
- 1993: A Community Liaison Committee (forerunner of the Advocacy Committee) was formed to help media and public groups who were looking for psychologists to interview or provide community talks.
- 1995: The Advocacy Committee is established.
- Late 90s: The School Psychology Committee became increasingly visible with advocacy interactions with the NS Department of Education promoting the appropriate role of psychologists and psychological services within the school system.
- 1998: The Post-Trauma Services Committee expanded its network of volunteer providers and formalized its MoU with the province's Emergency Measures Office.
- Late 1990s: APNS became the 2nd Canadian Provincial Association to ever sit as a voting representative at the APA Council of Representatives.

2000s

- May 2004: The Advocacy Committee hosted a forum on prevention of violence in schools, using the APA developed video.
- Late 2004: The advocacy committee began to develop the Legislative Network, a grassroots advocacy network, identifying grassroots coordinators who could lead advocacy with political candidates in the run-up to an election, as well as developing a toolkit of materials and resources.

- February 2005: APNS participated in CPA's national advocacy initiative - the first Psychology Month
- February 2006: A panel of psychologists answered call-in questions on "Relationship Checkup."

2010s

- March 17, 2011: APNS met with and submitted a thorough brief to Mental Health Commission Panel to provide input for the new Mental Health Strategy.
- October 6, 2011: APNS psychologists volunteered to do depression screening at Dalhousie's first, and very successful, "Beyond the Blues" depression screening day.
- June 14-16, 2012, APNS co-hosted the 73rd annual convention of the CPA. We used this opportunity to advance our advocacy agenda, inviting targeted political leaders to meet with psychologists and our advocates at a wine and cheese reception.
- 2013: Advocacy committee representatives met with the Minister of Health to discuss proposal for integration of psychological services into primary care.
- 2015: APNS celebrated fifty years of advocacy, connection and education
- 2017: APNS began the sit & chat bench program of donating a public bench to raise awareness of the value of personal interaction as a way to enhance mental and physical health.
- 2018: APNS presented to major Atlantic employers at a Medavie Blue Cross hosted meeting
- 2018: APNS released a position statement strongly supporting banning the practice of conversion/reparative therapy in the Nova Scotia.

2020s

- 2021: APNS began consultation with the Government of Nova Scotia on regarding Universal Mental Health and Addictions Care
- 2025: APNS Celebrates 60 years! Keep your eyes peeled for celebration details coming later this spring.



No, that's not gaslighting: Does mental health terminology mean what we think it means?

First published on Sep. 13, 2024 in OpenThink., by Grace Wang, Clinical Psychology PhD ('27).

In 2022, Merriam-Webster crowned gaslighting, defined as “the act or practice of grossly misleading someone especially for one’s own advantage,” as the Word of the Year. It felt like one day, we were thinking “What’s gaslighting?” and the next, we can’t open social media without reels and posts and media articles warning us of the top ten signs we’re being gaslit.

Uses of the word “gaslighting” has skyrocketed, and it’s certainly grabbed our attention, with the number of Merriam-Webster lookups of the word “gaslighting” increasing by an astonishing 1740%.

But what if we’ve been misunderstanding—and also misusing—the word without even knowing it?

Everyone’s doing it, so what’s the problem? It’s true that “You’re gaslighting me!” has widely become accepted to mean that someone’s not taking responsibility for their actions, that they’re being insensitive or untruthful, simply that they hold a different perspective, and everything in between.

However, in reality, gaslighting is different, and much more harmful. True gaslighting is to manipulate or deny another person’s experience or reality, often to cause confusion and doubt. True gaslighting can be an attempt to coerce or control that other person, and we see it happen most in relationships that are highly unhealthy or that involve abuse.

For example, say that Sam and Avery, a romantic couple, are having a fight about Sam staying late at work. Avery, with his frustration at level 10, snaps: “This is the fourth night in a row you’ve forgotten about our plans because of work! Don’t you care about me at all?”



Sam, also upset, yells back. “Of course I care, you idiot! You’re here whining about me being late but you don’t understand the first thing about why this job is so important. How do you think I put dinner on the table every night? You just have to make life that much harder for me, don’t you?”

Is Sam gaslighting? She’s being harsh, absolutely, but she’s not gaslighting. There’s nothing in what Sam says that inherently misleads Avery or denies his experience in the situation. Here, Sam is just expressing her own frustration, albeit in a very hurtful way.

So what would gaslighting look like? If she were truly gaslighting, Sam would have said something to sow seeds of doubt in Avery’s experience, like claiming that she never was late this week (even though she was). She might say “What are you even talking about?” or “That never happened!” or “You’ve just been at home all day. Don’t you think that messes with your perception of time?”

Using words correctly is more important than their shock-value

As I head into my fourth year pursuing a PhD in Clinical Psychology, and my eighth year studying psychology overall, the misuse of mental health language is high up on my pet-peeve list. Why? First, I’ve noticed that when this terminology is misused, it’s often with malignant intent: in other words, it’s weaponized. Second, and more importantly, it can lead to outcomes that are anywhere from mildly unhealthy to downright destructive, such as people using these terms to falsely diagnose themselves or others.

To move away from misusing psychology lingo, we have to first determine if the word we’re using means what we think it means. If it doesn’t, then we look for words that accurately fit the situation.



“No, that’s not gaslighting: Does mental health terminology mean what we think it means?” By Grace Wang

(continued from page 11)

Let’s go back to what Sam said to Avery during their fight. She wasn’t gaslighting, but she was doing other hurtful things that can damage their relationship. Sam was insulting Avery by calling him an idiot, criticizing him by saying he’s whining, being invalidating by claiming he doesn’t understand the importance of her work. She also guilt-tripped Avery with “How do you think I put dinner on the table every night?” and blamed him for making her life harder.

From “She stayed late at work again? She must be a narcissist!” and “Isn’t their relationship so co-dependent?” to “My boss is really traumatizing!” and “Can you take your shoes off? I’m just so OCD,” there’s no question that gaslighting isn’t the only word that we’re seeing more and more often, but perhaps less and less accurately.

Words have power, and to misuse them is to abuse that power. When we accurately label what’s happening in ourselves and around us, we not only avoid mislabelling and misdiagnosing, but also open ourselves to nuanced and important conversations about our emotions and mental health. And to do so is all of our responsibility.

Thank you to Dalhousie University, OpenThink and Dr. Lynne Robinson, Director of OpenThink, for allowing us to reprint this article

Psychology in the News



Artificial intelligence is impacting the field. As AI transforms our world, psychologists are working to channel its power and limit its harm.

Zara Abrams, APA (January 2025)

Artificial intelligence (AI), which is driving what some call the fourth industrial revolution, has been a harbinger of change. Its power and potential have wrought excitement and fear across nearly every sector of society, from finance and transportation to education and health care.

[Read the full article here.](#)



Kids As Young As Six Think Girls Are Worse Than Boys At Computer Science

Josie Cox · Forbes · (Dec 9,2024)

Children as young as six years old are internalizing gender stereotypes in relation to technology, which could exacerbate inequality in a rapidly evolving labor market, a new meta-analysis of research conducted across 33 countries shows.

[Read the full article here.](#)

[Read the study here.](#)



APNS Welcomes Our Newest Members!

Thank you for supporting APNS in its efforts to promote the interests of Nova Scotia psychologists through connection, community and advocacy.

New Members:

Sophia Fajnerova, MA
 Ron Lehr, PhD
 Lindsey Nadon, PhD
 Cheryl Oxford, MA
 Sreethu Rashakrishnan, MSc
 Kenisha Reid, MA
 Steph Ryan, PhD
 Nicole Tibbetts, MSc

New Student Members:

Jenna Bissonnette	Amber Myatt
Peyton Clark	Tessa O'Donnell
Caroline Couronne-	Robin Perry
Grenouile	Jan Slattery
Haley Green	Alexia Stroud-Caules
Eva Lipton	Michaela Watkins
Allison Mizzi	

Congratulations to the following who have recently become Registered Psychologists

Luci (Margaret) Belknap	Isabelle Harrigan	Patricia Miller
Carey-Anne Best	Nicola Hermanto	Katie Niven
Zoe Best	Katherine Hollerer	Michelle Petitpas
Kaytlin Constantin	Kulsoom Malik	Kiersten Sippio
Jessica Garden	Sarah Mansfield-Green	Laura Smith
Isaac Hahn		

Congratulations to the following who have recently become Candidates

Hanna Bincik	Lindsey Nadon	Lindsay Rosenberg
Julia Hall	Jennifer Parlee	Hillary Rowe
Anastasija Jemcov	Sreethu Radhakrishnan	Brittney Russell
Ashley Kennedy	Nicole Rector	Zainub Wajid
Wissam Kheir	Kenisha Reid	Elizabeth Wanstall
Kayla Mooney		

This information provided by NSBEP as of January 8, 2025



Early Career Psychologist Interest Group

APNS is looking for a psychologist to lead the Early Career Psychologist Interest Group. The mandate of the APNS ECP is to provide support, resources and advocacy for Early Career Psychologists. (In Nova Scotia, Early Career is defined as being a psychologist within their first 10 years of practice.) For more information, please contact ecp.apns@gmail.com.

Child and Adolescent Psychology Interest Group (CAP-I)

Saturday, January 25, 2025 - **POSTPONED**
 10:00 - 11:30 am
 Halifax Central Library, Room 301

Spring Date
 Saturday, April 26, 2025



Volunteering with APNS

Active committee members receive a volunteer voucher that may be used for any APNS workshop or APNS membership fees. Please also note that participation in an APNS committee can count towards your NSBEP Continuing Competence credits.

Voucher Value:

- Executive Committee Members - \$175
- Chairs of other APNS Committees - \$100
- Committee Members - \$50
- APNS Designated Representatives - \$100

Criteria:

- Volunteer must have served for a min of 1 year.
- Volunteers must take an active role in the committee.
- Volunteers accrue no more than \$275/year in benefits.
- Benefits must be used within 1 year of being awarded.

Psychology Positions Available in Nova Scotia

See full listings [here](#).

Associate Psychologist Positions Available – Dartmouth

POSITION: Registered Psychologist (Child and Adult Psychologist positions available)

ORGANIZATION: Dartmouth Psychological Services

LOCATION: Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Associate Psychologist Position Available – Halifax

POSITION: Registered or Candidate Registered Psychologist

ORGANIZATION: Aulakh Psychological & Counselling Services

LOCATION: Central Halifax, Nova Scotia

Associate Psychologist Position Available - Saint Margarets Bay,

POSITION: Registered or Candidate Registered Psychologist

ORGANIZATION: Natural Psychology, Inc.

LOCATION: Saint Margarets Bay, Nova Scotia

Associate Psychologist Position Available – Bedford

POSITION: Psychologist or Psychologist (Candidate Register)

ORGANIZATION: Marsh-Knickle and Associates

LOCATION: Bedford, Nova Scotia

Psychologist Position Available – Halifax

POSITION: Full-time or Part-time Psychologist

ORGANIZATION: Coastal Psychology Inc.

LOCATION: Halifax, Nova Scotia

Psychologist Position Available – Bedford

POSITION: Registered or Candidate Registered Psychologist

ORGANIZATION: Sunnyside Psychological Services

LOCATION: Bedford, Nova Scotia

Associate Psychologist Position Available – Bedford

POSITION: Psychologist Positions

ORGANIZATION: Dr. C.K. Perrier & Associates

LOCATION: Bedford, Nova Scotia

Psychologist Positions Available – Halifax

POSITION: Two Psychologists – Part-time and Full-time

ORGANIZATION: Dr. Daniel Chorney & Associates Psychological Services

LOCATION: Halifax, Nova Scotia

Part-Time Psychologist Position Available – Halifax

POSITION: Psychologist Part-time (with potential for Full-time)

ORGANIZATION: Fenwick Psychology & Wellness Associates Inc.

LOCATION: Halifax, Nova Scotia





PSYCHEDELIC PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING

OUR MISSION

Since 2019 our mission has been to support those in medical need of psilocybin. By educating and mobilizing practitioners, our dedicated team is committed to building a strong ecosystem for psychedelic care in Canada.

JOIN US IN HALIFAX

TRAINER: RICH TYO

DATES: MARCH 3-7, 2025

APPLICATIONS OPEN

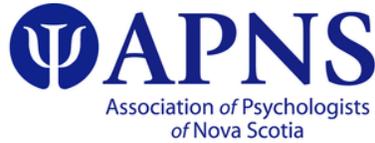
- ✓ Professional Trainer
- ✓ In-Person Learning
- ✓ Community of Practice
- ✓ Patient Intake Support
- ✓ Expand Your Practice.

JOIN A COHORT

LEARN MORE & APPLY | therapsil.ca

Interested in advertising in the NS Psychologist?
Contact the office at apns@apns.ca





Committees & Representatives

EXECUTIVE

President: Kim O'Connor
 Past President: Chimène Jewer
 President Elect: Tara Power
 Secretary: Melissa McGonnell
 Treasurer: Dawson Wambolt
 Member at Large: Marcel Peloquin
 Member at Large: Lindsay Victor
 Member at Large HR: Kathryn Bell
 Student Representatives:
 Alzena Ilie & Emily Wildeboer

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Claire Halpern apns@apns.ca

REPRESENTATIVES

Council of Provincial Associations in Psychology/
 Practice Directorate
 Rep: Chimène Jewer
 Observer: Executive Director

APA Council of Representatives: Jacquie Cohen

COMMITTEES

Advocacy: Bev Butler, Chair
 Cultural Diversity: Jason Chatman, Chair
 Nominations & Elections: TBC
 Post Disaster Committee: Janice Howes, Chair
 Private Practice Committee: Dion Goodland, Chair
 Communications Committee: Todd Leader, Chair

INTEREST GROUPS

Child & Adolescent Psychology Interest Group (CAP-I)
 Lindsay Bates and Rachel Panton, Co-Chairs

Early Career Psychologist Group Leaders
 Ena Vukatana
 Julie Wershler

Contact the APNS Office for more info on how to become involved in APNS committees.

2024/2025 APNS Members Rates

Registered Psychologist	\$ 275
Candidate Register (1st year)	\$ 215
Candidate Register (2nd year)	\$ 245
Candidate Register (3rd year)	\$ 275
Student	Free
Retired/Inactive/In Absentia	\$ 75

Thank you for reading!

ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS OF NOVA SCOTIA	(902) 422- 9183
www.apns.ca	Suite 645, 5991 Spring Garden Road Halifax NS B3H 1J6

