

Northern Zone Community Health Plan 2019-2022

Submission Date March 2019



Cover photo: As part of the First Annual Fundy Shore Winter Carnival several community members built this igloo in the centre of Parrsboro. The Carnival was supported by the SPAR and Along the Shore CHBs in partnership with the Municipalities of Cumberland and Colchester County.

Photo Credit: William Bollwerk

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Message from the Northern Zone Council of CHB Chairs

Bill Schurman
Chair, Northern Zone Council of CHB Chairs

On behalf of the ten (10) Community Health Boards in the Northern Zone, it is with pride we present our first-ever Northern Zone Community Health Plan. This plan outlines recommendations to Nova Scotia Health Authority to support the work of Community Health Boards and ultimately the health of our communities where we live, work, learn and play.

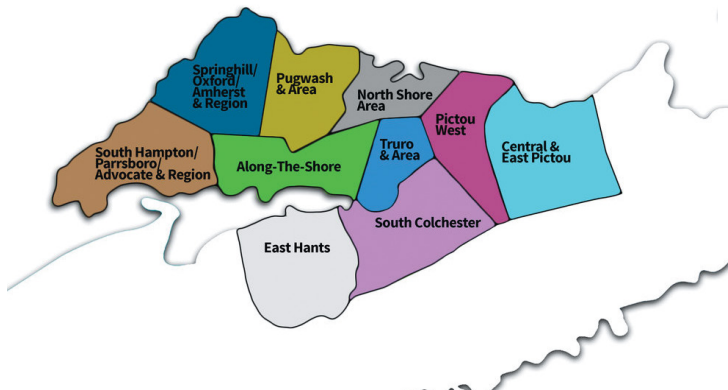
Based on the data gathered from community partners, the Council of Chairs feels that our 2016-2019 plans are still relevant and will be extended to 2022. Elements of this new plan complement existing plans developed independently in the Colchester East Hants, Cumberland and Pictou areas. By renewing our collective commitment to those plans, we maintain our focus on enhancing and operationalizing our current priorities, all of which are strikingly similar in the individual plans.

The Northern Zone Council of Chairs recognizes and extends our sincere appreciation to the members of the Community Health Planning subcommittee for their dedication and commitment. The committee, comprised of Community Health Board members from each of our Community Health Plan Areas supported by Community Health Board Coordinators and other NSHA staff, worked tirelessly to ensure this plan represents our collective vision for the health of our respective communities and our region.

We would like to recognize the following CHB members involved in the subcommittee:

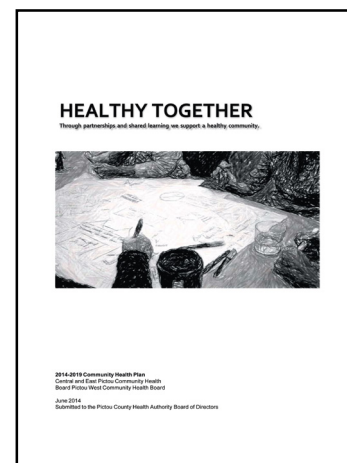
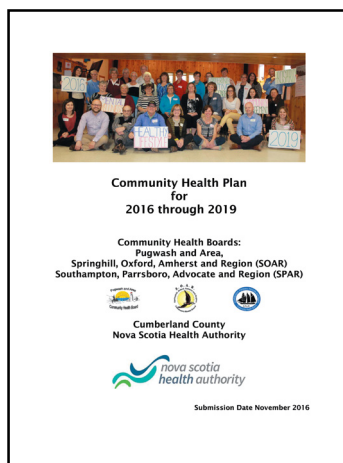
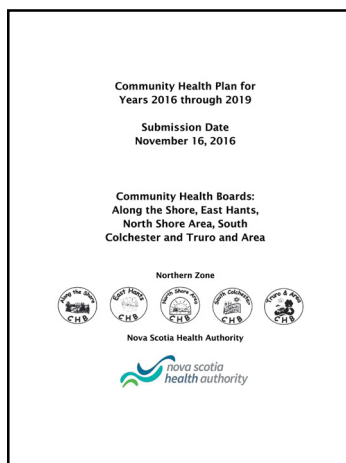
- Raye Leier, Truro & Area CHB (Subcommittee Chair)
- Mary MacLellan, Pictou West CHB
- Julie Martin, Central & East Pictou CHB
- Barb Oke, Pugwash CHB

Background and Context



Community Health Boards (CHBs) have been working at the community level for over 20 years supporting community-based projects and partnerships to improve the health of their communities. In the Northern Zone, there are ten CHBs: Along the Shore; Central and East Pictou, East Hants; North Shore Area; Pictou West; Pugwash and Area; South Colchester; Southampton, Parrsboro, Advocate and Region (SPAR); Springhill, Amherst, Oxford and Region (SOAR); and Truro and Area.

The Northern Zone currently has three Community Health Plans. The priorities identified in these plans are as relevant today as they were when the plans were first introduced in 2016. With this in mind, and after reviewing the most up to date evidence and data available, the ten Northern Zone Community Health Boards agreed to extend their current plans until 2022. This is the first time the CHBs have worked together to complete a Northern Zone Community Health Plan. The current Community Health Plans can be found at <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/chb-health-plans>.





The four health promotion priorities common to all three plans are:

- A. Mental Wellness and Sense of Belonging
- B. Healthy Active Lifestyle and Supportive Environment
- C. Thriving Communities, Prosperity and Affordability
- D. Community Engagement, Connection and Inclusion.

In the planning process for the 2019-2022 Community Health Plans, the NSHA asked for recommendations on actions they could undertake to support the work of the CHBs at the community level. This request was met with great excitement by community partners and participants in the planning process.

How we achieved this work:

A Community Health Planning Subcommittee was established in June 2018 to develop these recommendations.

Once established, we undertook several activities:

- Engaged community stakeholders for input and feedback
- Reviewed Community Profiles and Population Health Data
- Applied a Social Determinants of Health lens to our work
- Updated the Northern Zone CHBs throughout the process by reporting to the Council of Chairs
- Presented the final report to the Council of Chairs for review and approval

The purpose of this document is two-fold:

First to confirm the NZ Community Health Boards will continue to utilize their existing 2016-2019 plans to guide their work as they move forward over the next 3 years.

Second and most importantly, to make recommendations to Nova Scotia Health Authority on actions they can undertake to enhance and support the work of the CHBs at the community level.

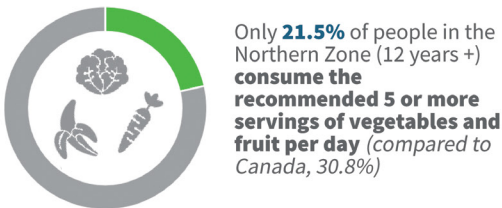
Community Profile

The Northern Zone is made up of four counties; East Hants, Colchester, Cumberland and Pictou. The total population is just over 146,000 people and there are 14 municipal units.

Mental Wellness and Sense of Belonging



Healthy Active Living



Thriving Communities, Prosperity & Affordability

In the Northern Zone...

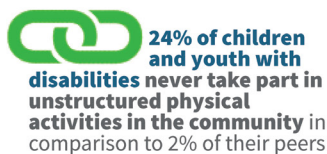
- **18%** of people have a **low income** (compared to Canada, 14.2%)
- **40%** of households **spend at least 30% of income on shelter costs** (compared to Canada, 40%)
- **7.8%** of people (15 years +) in the Northern Zone are **unemployed** (compared to Canada, 7%)



1 in 10 households (10.7%) in the Northern Zone (of people 12 years +) are **food insecure** (compared to Canada, 7.8%)



Community Engagement, Connection & Inclusion



51% of Nova Scotians **volunteer within their community** (compared to Canada 44%). **Youth contributed to 23%** of all volunteer hours in the province of Nova Scotia



Understanding Who We Are

Health Indicators	Northern Zone by County (CD) and Census Subdivision (CSD)					
	Colchester County (CD)	Cumberland County (CD)	Pictou County (CD)	East Hants Municipal District (CSD)	Nova Scotia	Canada
Population (2016)*	50,585	30,005	43,748	22,453	923,598	35,151,728
Proportion (%) of 2016 NS population*	5.5	3.2	4.7	2.4	100.0	Not applicable
% change in population since 2011 census*	-0.8	-4.3	-4.2	+1.5	+0.2	+5.0
Proportion (%) of senior population (65 years and over) (2016)*	21.4	25.7	22.7	15.4	19.9	16.9
% change in senior population since 2011*	+18.9	+12.9	+16.9	+29.9	+19.9	+20.0
Land area (sq. km.) (2016)*	3,628.12	4,277.86	2,846.28	1,786.56	52,942.27	8,965,588.85
Population density (persons per sq. km.) (2016)*	13.9	7.0	15.4	12.6	17.4	3.9
Language: Mother Tongue English – for total population excluding institutional residents (%) (2016)*	96.3	97.0	96.6	95.3	91.0	56.0
Lone parent families (number) (2016)*	2,560	1,565	2,410	990	46,900	1,612,805
% change in lone parent families since 2011*	-0.2	-3.1	-2.2	+11.9	+0.4	+5.6
Lone male parent families (number) (2016)*	565	330	480	210	9,305	350,465
Lone female parent families (number) (2016)*	2,000	1,235	1,930	780	37,595	1,262,340
Aboriginal Identity for population in private households (%) (2016)*	5.2	3.1	3.7	3.8	5.7	4.9
Visible Minorities – population in private households (%) (2016)*	3.4	2.7	2.8	1.8	6.5	22.3
Immigrants – population in private households (%) (2016)*	4.0	2.9	3.0	4.0	6.1	21.9

Nova Scotia counties are “census divisions” and the regional municipalities “census sub-divisions.” Statistics Canada considers regional municipalities as a ‘subdivision of county municipality’ (SC), which is a geographic area created as an equivalent for municipality by Statistics Canada, in cooperation with Nova Scotia, for the purpose of disseminating statistical data.

Engagement Process

The Community Health Planning Subcommittee determined the best way to develop recommendations was through the engagement of our community partners and stakeholders from across the Zone.

We hosted a community conversation in Truro inviting representatives of over 100 community organizations from across the zone. We followed up with an electronic survey to all those who were invited and unable to attend. A total of 53 people responded representing 40 organizations from across the zone who shared their input.



What we heard:

- Relationships, communication and trust are essential to address the challenges that we face as a community.
- Opportunities that create connection, build inclusion and promote a sense of belonging are essential to improving the health and wellness of all of our communities, especially those who are systemically marginalized and excluded.
- There are high rates of poverty causing significant challenges, including access to employment, transportation, food, housing, social supports and health services.
- People value opportunities for community-based, community-led programs and supports that promote wellness and healthy living.



Health Promotion Priorities and Recommendations

The Northern Zone Community Health Boards were provided with an exciting opportunity to make recommendations for actions the NSHA can undertake to support the Community Health Plan Priorities.

These recommendations are being addressed directly to the NSHA based on information gathered from our community partners. We recognize that some of the recommendations may appear to be actions or activities the NSHA may be currently engaged in, however based on the feedback from our stakeholders, we have identified the importance of seeking innovative and concrete actions that the NSHA can take to address these priorities.

We respectfully request a response before the fall of 2019 followed by annual updates highlighting the work being done. Because the recommendations came from the community, we also believe it is important to follow up with our community stakeholders each year to get their continued feedback on the success of the recommendations; what is working well, what could be improved.



Mental Wellness and Sense of Belonging

Recommendations:

1

The NSHA develop and monitor specific goals, objectives and actions to strengthen relationships and improve communication with community partners to increase trust, engagement and help reduce stigma.

Potential Measures of Success:

- Community partners report enhanced communication, collaboration and trust with NSHA
- NSHA staff are represented and engaged in committees and/or coalitions that aim to address mental wellness and sense of belonging
- NSHA staff are actively engaged in work to help reduce stigma and promote mental wellness

2

The NSHA support the work of community stakeholders to ensure everyone has equitable access to services through navigation, outreach and/or transportation assistance.

Potential measures of success:

- Community members and clients receive increased support with navigation of services and community resources
- Increased outreach provided to communities who face barriers to access, including transportation challenges

Healthy Active Lifestyle and Supportive Environment



Recommendations:

1

The NSHA develop and monitor plans to connect and engage community partners and all levels of government to implement policies that address accessibility and inclusion.

Potential Measures of success:

- There is increased implementation of policies and practices that promote safe, healthy and inclusive spaces for all (Accessibilities Act, Healthy Workplace Policies, Gender Neutral Washrooms,).
- There is increased implementation of inclusive policies and practices that will reduce/eliminate barriers to participation such as: low to no cost extra-curricular activities, opportunities for all abilities
- There is increased use of publicly funded spaces, such as schools, community halls and municipally-owned spaces, at no cost to the community

2

The NSHA develop and monitor specific plans to strategically increase support to community groups and municipalities to advocate for supportive environments where the healthy choice is the easy choice.

Potential measures of success:

NSHA staff will actively support the implementation of policies and practices that create healthier places and spaces, including:

- There is greater implementation of healthy eating policies for public spaces such as schools, hospitals and municipal spaces
- There are transportation policies to support active transportation, community walkability and other methods to reduce our carbon footprint (public transit, car-sharing)
- Municipal policies that support reduced harm from substance use such as smoke free places, municipal alcohol and cannabis policies are in place.
- There is increased uptake on tools to support building healthy communities, such as health impact assessment tools

Thriving Communities Prosperity and Affordability



Recommendations:

1

The NSHA develop, implement and monitor work with community partners to support their advocacy for a comprehensive approach to addressing poverty.

Potential measures of success:

- NSHA staff are active in supporting efforts to advocate for change on a number of Social Determinates of Health, including, but not limited to:
- Access to a living wage,
- Access to healthy, safe and affordable housing
- Improving community food security
- Increasing access to affordable transportation

2

The NSHA increase support and aid to community groups to provide barrier free and accessible programs available to all.

Potential Measures of Success:

- NSHA has increased partnerships with community-based organizations
- NSHA is sharing funding opportunities and supporting partners in achieving their goals
- NSHA champion and support the work of partners that contribute to the development of healthy communities

Community Engagement, Connection and Inclusion



Recommendations:

1

The NSHA actively seek out and develop relationships in communities that have been systematically marginalized and excluded, and support linkages that promote connection, engagement and shared resource networks.

Potential measures of success:

- NSHA staff have increased capacity to provide culturally safe and supportive approaches to their work in community
- Community partners report increased trust and stronger relationships with NSHA
- NSHA supports and facilitates, when requested, opportunities for building meaningful connection, relationships and increasing engagement with diverse communities

2

The NSHA strengthen and promote meaningful opportunities to volunteer and expand opportunities for connection and inclusion which enable people to increase their sense of belonging.

Potential Measures of success:

- NSHA actively champions and supports volunteerism both internal to NSHA and in the broader community.
- NSHA integrates an inclusion lens to the recruitment process for volunteers and identifies and reduces barriers to participation (such as representation, transportation, childcare, accessibility, language, etc.)
- NSHA enhances its volunteer recruitment, orientation and recognition strategy to ensure meaningful opportunities for volunteers matched to skills and interests.
- Volunteerism is increased in the Northern zone as reported by NSHA, Community Partners and local data.



Conclusion

Across the Northern Zone, there has been a great deal of excellent work done with community partners and NSHA to improve the health of our communities. Our hope is that this Community Health Plan will inspire more innovation and strengthen relationships throughout the Northern Zone which will, in turn, improve population health. We recognize the valuable role NSHA can play in actively supporting these recommendations in our communities. We know that collectively, we can do much more work to reduce barriers, address challenges and create healthy, supportive environments for all our community members. We look forward to a response from NSHA on these recommendations and to working together to improve the health of our population.

Contact info

You can reach out to learn more about all of the Community Health Boards in Northern Zone at:

<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/northern-zone>

To contact us:

northernCHBs@nshealth.ca