

Health Centre Herald

Dr. Kingston Memorial
Community Health Centre

Feb 23, 2018

What is a nurse practitioner?

CBC has raised the question “do all Nova Scotians need a family physician?” in their series *The Search*. There is not an easy answer for this...in an ideal scenario, the family physician is the keystone for community members to access health care. However, there are many health professionals and others who have a vital role in preventing illness and promoting health and well-being. And there are others who have the skills to provide illness care as well as prevention/health promotion.

We are fortunate to have a nurse practitioner working in our Centre in collaboration with other clinicians including family physicians and family practice nurse. A nurse practitioner (NP) is a registered nurse (RN) with advanced education. This enables her to do health assessments/ health promotion/ prevention. She can also diagnose and treat common illnesses and injuries. She can prescribe some medications and/or renew prescriptions and order some diagnostic tests.

She can refer to as well as accept client consultations from other healthcare providers.

NPs use their skills and knowledge to complement and supplement the care provided by others including family physicians, registered nurses, therapists, nutritionists, social workers and pharmacists. These clinicians work together to ensure the patient sees, and is cared for, by the person whose skills most closely match the needs of the patient.

NPs provide care in diverse health care settings, from community clinics and health care centres, to hospitals, medical practices, nursing homes and home care. A NP's scope of practice follows specific standards and conditions as outlined in provincial legislation.

Healthy People Healthy Communities

Let's Talk

By Dawn Ostrem

When I moved to Cape Breton five years ago I mentioned to someone that I had bad nerves. What I meant was that I got nervous about everyday things - speaking in front of large crowds or climbing ladders. I didn't realize, for some people in the older generation, saying “bad nerves” was a way of describing mental illness. I'm not sure of the range of mental health issues that “bad nerves” covers. However, using the term makes sense. When people are not encouraged to talk about mental health specifically they may use a gentle, blanket expression. Saying “bad nerves” may sound less frightening than bipolar, alcoholism or depression. So, let's talk...about stigma.

Let's replace “mental health” with “physical health” for a moment. It is not out of the ordinary to ask how people are feeling. We ask things like, “how is your bad hip?” or “are you over that nasty cold yet?” These conversations may actually come in second place for small talk frequency after “what

do you think of this weather?” But, we don't generally ask, “how are you feeling mentally today; is your recovery going well?” or “are you digging your way through this bout of depression alright?” It would feel like you were meddling, to be sure. Conversations about mental health are often secretive and hidden. A person may ask, but not during every day chit chat, lest the conversation be embarrassing. While it is not necessary to pry, when the opportunity to discuss mental health presents itself, it's good thing that our comfort level is changing.

Perhaps no one wants to be asked about their health, mental or otherwise, when seeing friends on the street. But, that does not mean we shouldn't invite people to talk more openly in our small communities. “Why? Talking is the best way to start breaking down the barriers associated with mental illness,” according to the Bell Let's Talk campaign. “But, sometimes it's hard to know what to say.” While it is important to think hard about the agenda any corporation may have for running a campaign, it is also important to place value on the widespread way in which Let's Talk has put mental health on the radar since it began in 2011.

It has been a huge reason for increased comfort levels. There may be valuable criticism about who receives the \$100 million raised. But, increasing the conversation is Let's Talk's real success. And that takes time.

Someone you know may be dealing with severe depression, for example. He or she has been able to get along well on medication for most of his or her life, but, has never said a word to anyone about the struggle. Imagine if it were diabetes, back problems or recurring bouts of cancer. In places like this many would not think twice about offering a helping hand, a kind word, or token of support. The world of mental health is still eerily silent. A sufferer's existence is often lonely. While not always easy, finding a way to ease into a conversation about “bad nerves” in a caring and frank way is important. Then, we can really start talking.

Dawn Ostrem is project coordinator for the MIND-BODY-SPIRIT Project.

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**New Horizons Arts For Seniors
Proudly Presents "Senior Moments"
L'Ardoise Community Centre**

Thursday March 8th, 2018 7:00 - 9:00

Admission: Non perishable food items or coin collection for local food banks

- ◆ Theatre, song & dance: Various Skit performances by Richmond County New Horizons' Theatre group

Special Guests: "Cape Breton Highland Dancers"

- ◆ Zine Showcase
- ◆ Photovoice Gallery

Canada

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's
New Horizon for Seniors Program

Music Care Training & Certification

The MIND-BODY-SPIRIT Project is asking residents to apply for a FREE two-day training course in Level 1 Music Care. The course is on April 16 & 17, 2018 at the Louisdale Lion's Hall.

We are looking for applicants who will use their training to bring other community members the joy of music to improve their well-being

To apply for this **FREE** training please fill out an online application at:

<https://form.jotform.com/80073355692256>

For more information please contact Dawn Ostrem
(MBS project coordinator) at
Mindbodyspiritpc.dkmchc@gmail.com

Falls Prevention - Did you know? Falls are the main cause of injuries to seniors. Learn what you can do to reduce your risk by booking a Falls Prevention Presentation, home assessment or learning preventative exercises.

Estate Planning - FREE Estate Planning workshop includes meal and time to socialize afterwards. Feb. 28, 2018 10-12pm
Louisdale Parish Hall (*registration required*)

Fraud Prevention - March is Fraud Prevention month. Check out the [Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre \(CAFC\)](#) website which explains how to report a suspected fraud, provides statistical reports regarding frauds in Canada, and identifies a number of ongoing and reported scams across the country to promote awareness.

For more information, to book a presentation for your group or to learn more about available programs please contact:

Seniors' Safety and Social Inclusion Coordinator Michele MacPhee. Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre.
Phone 902-587-2800 Ext 5 seniorsafetycoordinator.dkmchc@gmail.com

Sponsor List

101.5 The Hawk is the Quad Counties Hit Music Station
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Mission:

Quality health services and programs that are accessible and responsive to our communities' needs.

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