

**Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia
Board Meeting Minutes
Future Inns, Halifax Nova Scotia
Friday, January 26, 2024 at 9am**

A meeting of the Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia was held on January 26, 2024 at Future Inns, Halifax NS.

In Attendance: Dr. Russell MacSween (Chair)
Dr. Sunita Sharma (Vice-Chair)
Dr. Tim Silver
Dr. Sachin Seth
Dr. Erin Hennessy
Dr. Asile El-Darahali
Dr. Scott Schofield
Mr. David Melvin
Mr. Greg Fevens
Ms. Michelle Fowler
Ms. Sherry Whytewood
Dr. Doug Mackey (Registrar)
Dr. Curtis Gregoire (Deputy Registrar)
Ms. Jane Donovan (Executive Assistant)
Ms. Kaitlynn Zegray (Administrative Assistant)

Guests: Dr. Ben Davis (Dean of Dalhousie University Faculty of Dentistry)
Dr. Caleb Porter (NSDA)

Agenda 1 Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

At 9:00, Dr. MacSween called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and proclaimed a land acknowledgement.

Agenda 2 Mandate of the PDBNS and Expectations for Board Members

Dr. MacSween highlighted the resources pertaining to this and verbally reviewed the Board's mandate of public protection and the expectations for Board members.

Agenda 3 Introductions

The Chair introduced the newest PDBNS Board member, Ms. Michelle Fowler, a registered dental assistant appointed by government. Introductions were made around the table and general instructions were given.

Agenda 4 Conflict of Interest Declaration

The Chair asked the Board members if they had or were aware of any other Board members who had a conflict of interest with any of today's agenda items. None was identified.

Agenda 5 Approval of the Agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda.

It was moved – Mr. David Melvin

Motion 2024-1

“That the agenda be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried

Agenda 6 Approval of the November 25, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

a) Errors and/or Omissions

The Chair asked if there were any errors or omissions in the minutes from the November 25, 2023 meeting. None being identified, the Chair stated that the minutes of the November 25, 2023 meeting are approved as presented.

b) Business Arising

Business arising is incorporated into the agenda.

Agenda 7 Dalhousie Faculty of Dentistry Dean's Report

Dr. Ben Davis provided a written report of which he gave a verbal overview.

Canadian Oral Health Summit

The Canadian Oral Health Summit will be held June 20th-22nd, 2024 in Halifax. This conference is a joint effort between the association of Canadian faculties of Dentistry (ACFD) and the Canadian association of Dental Research (CADR), The Network for Canadian Oral Health Research (NCOHR) and the Institute for Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis (IMHA).

A Third Pathway to Licensure

A study to research and develop a third pathway to licensure for internationally trained dentists who did not graduate from an accredited school was introduced by the Canadian Faculty of Dentistry (ACFD). An \$8.2-million- federal grant was secured to develop this third pathway.

Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP)

Universities are excited about the CDCP which has been created to increase access to oral health care. However, there are concerns that the CDCP may have detrimental effects on the Faculty of Dentistry by decreasing their patient pool, thus decreasing their experiential learning for students.

Academic Licensure

Nova Scotia is one of the very few, if not the only, jurisdiction in Canada that currently does not have some form of academic licensure. This would be an increasingly important tool in Dalhousie's recruitment of academics.

Communication with the Provincial Dental Board of NS

The Dean expressed that he would like to have more open communication with The Provincial Dental Board, while still respecting the confidentiality expectations of both organizations.

Agenda 8 Nova Scotia Dental Association (NSDA) Report

Dr. Caleb Porter provided a report for the NSDA which has been included in the resources.

Federal and Provincial Governmental Dental Programs

The NSDA has been an active player in advising the federal government on the development of the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP). In January the NSDA President and Executive director were in Ottawa with the other Provincial/ Territorial dental associations and the CDA to meet with the Deputy Minister of Health and his team.

The NSDA President and Executive Director will be undertaking a series of regional dental society “Road Show” visits over the winter to update members of the CDCP.

CE Video Series and Quizzes

In January the NSDA added a pair of new CE Videos and accompanying quizzes to its website which are available for all members and any interested staff. The videos are focused on the NSDA Suggested Fee Guide and its correct use, as well as patient communication. Passing the quiz at the end of the video generates a completion certificate for CE verification purposes.

Membership Database Upgrade

Prior to the holiday break, the NSDA staff completed the migration to their new membership database and website platform. The upgraded system provides enhanced data reporting capability, easier data manipulation and custom report generation, and enables their website to have greater functionality on mobile devices.

Agenda 9 Nova Scotia Dental Assistants Association (NSDAA) Report

Ms. Sherry Whytewood provided a verbal report from the NSDAA.

The NSDAA membership renewal process took place in November, and the number of renewals is consistent with the previous year.

Agenda 10 Licensing Report

Ms. Jane Donovan provided a licensing report which has been included in the resources.

Licensing numbers were provided up to December 31, 2023. We are finishing up with corporation renewals and have given an extension to January 31, 2024 to complete renewals.

We are still meeting with Alinity on a weekly basis to further expand our utilization of the database. We are presently working on the temporary authorization application and renewal, application forms for new applicants, and also the dental assisting renewal form, which we hope to have done soon. We would like to be able to send out the email to all licensed registered dental assistants relatively soon so that they can review their profiles and make any changes necessary prior to us sending out the renewal notice

Agenda 11 Registrar's Report

The registrar provided a report which has been included in the resources.

a. Statutory Committee Update

Complaints

The Registrar provided an overview of the proceedings of the Complaints since the previous Board meeting. These are available to registrants and the public in Board Business publications on the PDBNS website under the publications tab.

2023 saw a record number of complaints heard by the Complaints Committee. The Committee heard 36 complaints in total. (The historical yearly average is 20 complaints.) 34 of these were against dentists and 2 were against dental assistants. Of the 36 complaints, 23 were dismissed, 3 resulted in formal reprimands, and 9 were referred to the Discipline Committee. Of the 9 referrals to the Discipline Committee, 3 were against a single dentist (Dr. Errol Gaum as published in the November 2023 Board Business) and 1 was against a dental assistant. There are presently 5 complaints scheduled to be heard in the coming weeks and 11 others are in various stages of investigation.

Discipline Committee

On November 6, 2023 the Discipline Committee reconvened to continue hearing the matter of a registrant who was arguing their right to appeal a decision of the Complaints Committee following the second hearing of a complaint. The registrant had been granted a *de novo* second hearing with a new Complaints Committee panel after appealing the decision of the first Complaints Committee panel. Prior to the second hearing, there had been a Consent Order signed by the respective legal counsels for the

registrant, the Registrar, and the Discipline Committee that the decision of the second panel could not be appealed. The registrant was arguing that the Consent Order should not stand and therefore they should be afforded a third hearing at the Complaints Committee level.

In its November 15, 2023 written decision, the Discipline Committee dismissed the dentist's appeal. The complaint will now be referred to a newly populated panel of the Discipline Committee for a hearing.

Mandatory Continuing Dental Education (MCDE)

Random sampling has taken place to select 15% of dentists and dental assistants whose MCDE cycle ended on December 31, 2023. There are 34 dental assistants and 24 dentists who have been selected for audit with submissions to be received by February 2, 2024. The MCDE Committee will meet February 9, 2024 to review the submissions.

The Chair of the MCDE Committee, Dr. Kevin Walsh, is soon to undertake a jurisdictional scan of other Canadian dental regulatory authorities' continuing education requirements. This will help set the stage for a revision of our CDE requirements under the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA).

Dental Practice Review Committee (DPR)

In accordance with the Dental Practice Review Regulations, 15% of licensed dentists in private practice were selected using a random sampling process stratified by district to complete a self assessment document which is to be returned by February 15, 2024. The Committee will meet March 6, 2024 to review the documents. Through a random selection process, 15% of those who complete self assessment documents will receive a site visit later in the year. Office site visits for the 2023 DPR process are almost completed. The majority of these have been conducted by the Chair of the DPR Committee, Dr. Mariette Chiasson. As was indicated in the November 2023 Board Business, where concerns arise, they tend to be in the realm of recordkeeping.

Registration Appeal Committee

The Registration Appeal Committee has had no activity since the last Board meeting.

b. Canadian Dental Regulating Authorities Federation (CDRAF)

i. CDRAF Fees 2024

It was moved and seconded - Mr. Greg Fevens and Dr. Erin Hennessy

Motion 2024-2

“That the CDRAF Fees for 2024 be approved as presented at \$12 per licensed dentist.”

Motion carried

ii. Meeting with Fair Registration Officials re Pathways to Licensure for Internationally Trained Dentists.

On December 4, 2023, The Registrars and representatives from the NDEB met virtually with the fair registration officials (“fairness commissioners”) from the provinces in which one exists – Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta. Their goal was to demonstrate to the fairness commissioners the confidence that the DRAs have in current certification processes with respect to fairness to candidates and rigour in public protection.

c. Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry (ACFD)

i. Foreign Credential Recognition Program

The Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry Project has been successful in its funding submission to develop, implement, and evaluate a new pathway to certification for Internationally Trained Dentists (ITDs) whose knowledge, skills and abilities are comparable to graduates of accredited dental programs.

The stated aim of this government funding program is to reduce barriers of foreign credential recognition (FCR) processes and reduce time for ITDs to enter the labour market.

The project will be piloted at three Canadian dental faculties. This new pathway would not replace the existing pathways (NDEB Equivalency Process and Degree Completion / Qualifying Programs). Rather, it would be an alternate pathway for individuals who need some gap training, but not necessarily a full 2-3-year program at a Canadian faculty of Dentistry.

Although it was the ACFD which submitted the funding proposal, this is a joint initiative between the ACFD, NDEB, and CDRAF. Dr. Sachin Seth is representing the PDBNS in the working group for this initiative and will attend a meeting in Vancouver in February.

d. Royal College of Dentists of Canada (RCDC)

The RCDC is well underway toward the June 18, 2024 delivery of the National Dental Specialty Examination (NDSE). There are in fact nine separate examinations, one for each of the nationally-recognized dental specialties in Canada.

The application window opened on January 18, 2024 and goes until March 31, 2024. On the communications front, a dedicated NDSE website has been created. Candidates and others have access to necessary resources such as the eligibility, dates and deadlines, examination protocols for each of the specialties.

Examination development workshops began in January 2024 with more to take place through to the end of March. There are 19 Nova Scotian dental specialists who have agreed to be examiners contributing to the NDSE process.

e. Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC)

On December 7, 2023, the CDAC Board hosted an in-person meeting of stakeholders to provide updates on:

- CDAC's progress in its first year as an independent organization,
- the CDAC accreditation process, and
- CDAC's financial position and funding needs for 2024.

In a January 21, 2024 report to stakeholders, Ms. Jennifer Tewes (CDAC Board Chair and Registrar of the College of Alberta Dental Assistants) shared a progress update on various aspects of CDAC's operations and initiatives to respond to stakeholder feedback. As part of increasing CDAC's transparency, all stakeholders will be invited to CDAC's Annual Meeting on June 1, 2024.

f. Nova Scotia Regulated Health Professions Network ("The Network")

The Network's activities have been largely focused on collaborating to navigate the challenges related to new legislation. A system has been developed whereby the Network will manage government's reimbursement to the individual regulators for fees waived under the Patient Access to Care Act (PACA).

g. Update on Legislative Changes

The Registrar updated the Board on the progress with legislative changes. The PDBNS will be in the first cohort (Phase 1) of health regulators to be migrated to the Regulated Health Professions Act, this migration expected by fall 2024.

Government is presently working on the development of general regulations which will govern all health professions. A process has also been initiated toward the development of profession-specific regulations for dentistry and the other health professions in Phase 1. For both sets of regulations, government has made it clear that DHW is “holding the pen” on the creation of the regulations with some consultation with the professions. More in-depth consultation is expected for the profession-specific regulations than that which took place for the general regulations.

Agenda 12 Chair’s Report

Dr. Russell MacSween provided a report which has been incorporated into the agenda.

a. National Dental Examination of Clinical Competence (NDECC)

In early December Dr. MacSween spent time in Ottawa at an NDECC evaluation session. The NDECC is an examination for graduates of non-accredited dental training programs.

b. Regulated Health Professionals Act

- i. On December 13 Dr. Sunita Sharma and Dr. Russell Macsween attended a virtual information session for elected officials of the Network. It was hosted by the Network’s Executive Director, Jennifer Hemeon, and featured Mark Lucas of the DHW. Mark is the department’s lead for the implementation of the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA). What was presented was a brief timeline of the government’s work to date and plans going forward regarding the development of the general regulations and profession-specific regulations. The bulk of the presentation was addressing areas of the Network’s submission to DHW that required explanation and clarification.
- ii. On January 4, 2024, The Provincial Dental Board was informed that we will be part of Phase 1 of the migration to the RHPA.

c. NSDA

- i. On January 18, 2024, the Chair and the Registrar had a dinner meeting with NSDA President, Dr. Julie Waterbury and NSDA Executive Director, Steve Jennex at their request. Topics of mutual interest for the organizations were discussed.

- ii. On January 19, 2024, Dr. Russell MacSween had the pleasure of attending the NSDA Governing Council meeting at the Prince George Hotel. Much of their discussion currently is centered around the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP).

Agenda 13 Board Committee Reports

a. Human Resources and Governance Committee

Dr. Sunita Sharma provided a report from the Human Resources and Governance Committee report which was included in the resources.

i. Performance Reviews

Staff performance reviews were held at the Provincial Dental Board office on November 24, 2023.

ii. Performance Goals

Staff performance goals were made and will be re-evaluated at the same time next year.

iii. Staff Compensation (moved to *in camera* session at end of meeting)

iv. Application for Summer Student

Dr. Sunita Sharma mentioned the plan to hire a summer student at the PDBNS office. The federal funding application has been submitted.

v. Appointments and Reappointments

The Human Resources and Governance Committee put forth motions to approve appointments to statutory committees. All individuals listed had indicated their willingness to be appointed. (There were no reappointments to statutory committees required at that time.)

It was moved and seconded - Dr. Sunita Sharma / Dr. Sachin Seth

Motion 2024-3

“That Dr. Frances Tompkins be appointed to the Complaints Committee for a 3-year term effective February 1, 2024.”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded – Dr. Sunita Sharma / Mr. Greg Fevens

Motion 2024-4

“That Ms. Marina Crawford be appointed to the Discipline Committee for a 3-year term effective February 1, 2024.”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded - Dr. Sunita Sharma / Dr. Tim Silver

Motion 2024-5

“That Dr. Sachin Seth be appointed Chair of the Standards and Guidelines Committee effective January 26, 2024.”

Motion Carried

b. Finance and Audit Committee

It was moved and seconded - Ms. Sherry Whytewood / Mr. Greg Fevens

Motion 2024- 6

“That the meeting be moved *in camera*.”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded – Mr. Tim Silver / Dr. Sachin Seth

Motion 2024-7

“That the *in camera* session be ended.”

Motion Carried

c. Standards and Guidelines Committee

Dr. Sachin Seth reported the Standards and Guidelines Committee had no recent activity, but that it was anticipated that this Committee would become more active as we migrate under the new legislation.

Agenda 14 Old Business

a. Radiology Inspections

The Registrar outlined recent activities with the Nova Scotia Dental Association (NSDA) on its exploration of establishing a relationship with Biolantic. The NSDA is considering the feasibility of partnering to deliver a radiography inspection program but needs a better understanding of the required frequency of inspections.

b. PDBNS Strategic Plan 2024-2026

The Registrar pointed out that this plan, which was approved at the November 2023 Board meeting, has been published on the PDBNS website.

c. Update on New PDBNS Website

The Registrar provided an update on the development of the new website. Work in the background has been completed. The Board's website designer, Jean St-Amand, has recommended migrating to the new website within the next few months. Content and branding can be switched as necessary when the migration to the RHPA takes place.

Agenda 15 New Business

a. Dental Record Custodian Issue

The Registrar outlined recent activities to secure dental records from the office of a dental specialist who had unexpectedly passed away. There is no clear plan for another dentist to take over the office. Most of the records have been distributed to the offices of the referring or regular dentists with the remaining ones to be distributed in the coming weeks.

b. Media Relations

The Registrar shared recent communications with the media regarding a dentist in the midst of a criminal trial.

Agenda 16 Upcoming Meeting Dates

Early March 2024 (Location?)
May 31, 2024 (Future Inns, Halifax)
September 27, 2024 (Future Inns, Halifax)
November 30, 2024 with reception on the Friday evening prior (Location TBA)
January 31, 2025 (Location TBD)
May 30, 2025 (Location TBD)

It was moved and seconded – Dr. Asile El-Darahali / Dr. Sachin Seth

Motion 2024-8

“That the meeting be moved *in camera*.”

Motion Carried

It was moved – Dr. Asile El-Darahali

Motion 2024-9

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

Motion Carried

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Russell MacSween'.

Dr. Russell MacSween, Chair

May 31, 2024