

**Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia
Board Meeting Minutes
Future Inns, Halifax Nova Scotia
Friday, January 31, 2025 at 8:30am**

A meeting of the Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia was held on January 31, 2025 at Future Inns, Halifax NS.

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

Regrets: Ms. Sherry Whyte-wood

Guests: Dr. Ben Davis, Dean of Dentistry, Dalhousie University
Mr. Steve Jennex, Executive Director of the NSDA

Agenda 1 Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

At 8:31, Dr. Sunita Sharma called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and proclaimed a land acknowledgement.

Agenda 1(a) Mandate of the PDBNS and Expectations for Board Members

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

Agenda 2 Introductions

The Chair welcomed and introduced Dr. Ben Davis and Mr. Steve Jennex, our guests for today's meeting.

Agenda 3 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 4 Approval of the Agenda

The Chair reviewed the agenda.

It was moved – Dr. Russell MacSween

Motion 2025-2

“That the agenda be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried

Agenda 5 Approval of the November 30, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

a) Errors and/or Omissions

The Chair asked if there were any errors or omissions in the minutes from the November 30, 2024 meeting. None being identified, the Chair stated that the minutes of the November 30, 2024 meeting are approved as presented.

b) Business Arising

Business arising is incorporated into the agenda.

Agenda 6 Review of email motion

This motion was circulated by email, voted on, and passed unanimously by the Board on January 3, 2025

It was moved and seconded – Ms. Michelle Fowler / Dr. Sachin Seth

Motion 2025-1

“That the PDBNS *Standard of Practice Regarding Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Abuse* (V16) be approved as presented.”

Motion Carried

Agenda 7 **Dalhousie Faculty of Dentistry Dean's Report**

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

Agenda 8 **Nova Scotia Dental Association (NSDA) Report**

Mr. Steve Jennex provided a report for the NSDA which has been included in the resources, of which he gave a verbal overview. Among the initiatives highlighted were the NSDA's defense of water fluoridation, Bill 459 (the Health Professional Associations Continuation Act), and the New Member "Boot Camp" Event.

Agenda 9 **Nova Scotia Dental Assistants Association (NSDAA) Report**

A report from the NSDAA had been submitted and was included in the resources.

Highlights included:

- education sessions hosted by the NSDAA,
- updating of Bylaws, Policies and Procedures and Terms of Reference,
- the upcoming AGM in May, and
- initiatives to support dental assisting students financially with respect to the NDAEB exam.

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, 2024. We are finishing up with corporation renewals and have given an extension to January 31, 2025 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.

We have launched the CE audit module and those chosen for the audit were advised in December and have been given until the end of January to upload their CE.

Agenda 11 **Registrar's Report**

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

An overview was provided on the recent activities of the various Statutory Committees. The Complaints Committee had heard 10 complaints since the Registrar's Report in September 2024.

Of the 10 complaint decisions heard:

- 5 were dismissed,
- 1 resulted in a caution,
- 2 resulted in a written reprimand, and
- 2 were referred to the Discipline Committee.

There are presently:

- 4 complaints scheduled to be heard soon by the Complaints Committee, and
- 19 other complaints at various stages of investigation.

It was moved and Seconded – Dr. Erin Hennessy / Ms. Michelle Fowler

Motion 2025-3

“That the NSRDDA Continuing Competence Document be approved as presented for circulation to stakeholders for a 30-day feedback period from February 3, 2025 to March 5, 2025.”

Motion Carried

It was moved and Seconded – Dr. Sachin Seth / Mr. Greg Fevens

Motion 2025-4

“That the NSRDDA Dental Practice Review Document be approved as presented for circulation to stakeholders for a 30-day feedback period from February 3, 2025 to March 5, 2025.”

Motion Carried

Dr. Mackey provided an update on that activities of the various regulatory organizations connected with the PDBNS.

It was moved and Seconded – Dr. Tim Silver / Mr. David Melvin

Motion 2025-5

“That the CDRAF Fees for 2025 be approved as presented at \$12.50 per licensed dentist.”

Motion Carried

It was moved and Seconded – Dr. Erin Hennessy / Mr. David Melvin

Motion 2025-6

“That the PDBNS enter into an agreement with the ACFD whereby the ACFD may use the PDBNS Medical Emergencies Course in its Gap Training Program indefinitely for a one-time fee of \$8500.”

Motion Carried

Agenda 12 Chair’s Report

Dr. Sunita Sharma provided a report which has been incorporated into the agenda.

Dr. Sharma outlined that the year started with the continued work and preparation for the upcoming migration under the RHPA. She highlighted the topics she addressed at the recent NSDA Governing Council meeting.

Dr. Sharma shared that she would continue to support David Melvin (HR and Governance Chair) in her role as Board Chair and as a member of the committee. She expressed every confidence in him as he takes on this role.

Agenda 13 Board Committee Reports

a. Human Resources and Governance Committee

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

i. Performance Reviews

Staff performance reviews were held at the Provincial Dental Board office on November 29, 2024.

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

The plan is to hire a summer student at the PDBNS office. The government 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.

It was moved and seconded – Dr. Asile El-Darahali / Mr. Greg Fevens

Motion 2025-7

“That the PDBNS Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Anti-Racism (EDIAA) Committee become the PDBNS Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Reconciliation, and Accessibility (EDIRA) Committee to align with the 2023 [Health Equity Framework](#) established by the Nova Scotia Department of health and Wellness.”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded –Dr. Erin Hennessey / Dr. Scott Schofield

Motion 2025-8

“That Dr. Sachin Seth be appointed Chair of the PDBNS EDIRA Committee”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded – Mr. Greg Fevens / Dr. Russell MacSween

Motion 2025-9

“That Dr. Asile El-Darahali be appointed to the PDBNS EDIRA Committee”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded Dr. Asile El-Darahali / Dr. Russell MacSween

Motion 2025-10

“That Ms. Michelle Fowler be appointed Chair of the PDBNS Dental Assisting Scope of Practice Committee”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded Dr. Scott Schofield / Mr. Greg Fevens

Motion 2025-11

“That Dr. Nada Haidar be appointed Vice-Chair of the NSRDDA Complaints Committee effective upon migration of the PDBNS under the Regulated Health Professions Act”

Motion Carried

b. Finance and Audit Committee

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

Motion 2025-12

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

Motion Carried

iii. It was moved and seconded Dr. Tim Silver / Mr. David Melvin

Motion 2025-13

“That Jason Cooke’s legal fees for 2025, 2026 and 2027 be approved as presented effective immediately”

Motion Carried

It was moved and seconded – Dr. Erin Hennessey / Mr. Greg Fevens

Motion 2025-14

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

Motion Carried

c. **Standards and Guidelines Committee**

Dr. Scott Schofield 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. **Update on Appeal of Discipline Committee Decision to the Board**

Dr. MacSween, who is Acting Chair for this process, shared a very brief update on the process as he understood it would unfold.

Agenda 15 **New Business**

a. **Complaint to Minister of Health against Registrar from member of the public**

The Registrar shared that he and PDBNS legal counsel were receiving regular communications from a member of the public who is asserting that the Registrar is to blame for his dismissal from a dental practice. The individual has also been emailing the Minister of Health, copying the PDBNS and its legal counsel.

Dr. Mackey explained that he had been called by a dentist who was seeking advice on managing a situation and wondering if it was permissible under the circumstances for the patient to be dismissed. The Registrar reported that he had directed the dentist to the *Guidelines for Ending the Dentist-Patient Relationship* on the PDBNS website and told the dentist that they would have to make a determination if the situation represented a loss of trust.

b. **Professional Liability Insurance (PLI) for Dental Assistants**

Dr. Mackey presented a proposed policy on PLI for Dental Assistants which had been developed in consultation with other provinces where PLI is required for dental assistants.

Effective for the dental assisting licensing year beginning on May 1, 2025, dental assistants will be required to carry PLI. Verification of PLI will have to be uploaded at the time of license renewal.

- The insurance policy must provide a minimum coverage of \$2 million per occurrence and \$3 million over the term of the policy.

- The policy must be specific to dental assisting.
- As for the cost, dental assistants can purchase a 12-month Prolink PLI policy for:
 - \$19.50 through the [Canadian Dental Assistants' Association](#) (if they are a member of the NSDAA), or
 - \$81 directly through Prolink. (This pathway will be established by early March.)

On March 19, 2025, the PDBNS will host a webinar with representatives from Prolink who will provide information and answer questions about PLI for dental assistants. (Attendees will receive 1 credit hour of continuing education in Category 3.) Details and a link to register will follow.

It was moved and seconded Michelle Fowler / Dr. Asile El-Darahali

Motion 2025-15

“That effective May 1, 2025, licensed dental assistants be required to have personal liability insurance (PLI). The policy must be “occurrence-based”, and the coverage must be a minimum of \$2 million per occurrence and \$3 million aggregate.

Motion Carried

c. Rectangular Collimation for Intra-oral Radiography

Dr. Sharma has shared that there were questions at the NSDA Governing Council meeting about whether the PDBNS will mandate the use of rectangular collimation in dental offices. There was general discussion and Dr. Mackey was directed to survey other jurisdictions across Canada on this topic.

Agenda 16 Upcoming Meeting Dates

May 30, 2025 (Future Inns, Halifax)
 September 26, 2025 (Future Inns, Halifax)
 November 29, 2025 (Location TBD)
 January 30, 2026 (Future Inns, Halifax)
 May 29, 2026 (Future Inns, Halifax)
 September 25, 2026 (Future Inns, Halifax)

It was moved and seconded – Dr. Asile El-Darahali / Dr. Erin Hennessey

Motion 2025-16

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

Motion Carried

It was moved – Dr. Asile El-Darahali

Motion 2025-17

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

Motion Carried

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sunita Sharma', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Sunita Sharma, Chair

May 30, 2025