

# The *Birch Leaf News*

## The Birches Rebuild Project Update

In 2021 the Government of Nova Scotia announced that our facility would be replaced. Since that time, our team has been hard at work laying the groundwork for that project!

### What project highlights do we have to share at this time?:

- The new Birches Nursing Home facility will be a 48 bed home, which means a welcome increase of 6 more nursing home beds on the Eastern Shore!



We are thrilled that the project to build this new facility is moving forward at an impressive pace. Our seniors in long term care are a priority, and deserve the safest space to live that we can provide.

- The team has been thrilled to select, through RFP process, highly skilled experts to support the project including a Project Manager, Site Selection Consultant, and Architect / Prime Consultant. These folks will help us ensure that the project continues to move forward swiftly, that the project follows the proper processes to ensure success, and that the new building incorporates current best practice in long term care facility design!

- The next phase of the project includes a Site Selection Process. Possible sites will be considered based on a number of key factors. These factors include those required through the funding for the project, and those based on making sure the new facility can best support the local community, recruit the right staff mix, and offer excellent quality care!

Infrastructure renewal is one of the key focuses of the strategic plan we developed in consultation with our community in 2018, so it is a privilege for our team of internal leaders and external experts to work on these upgrades for The Birches. The next few years are certainly going to be exciting as we work towards this exciting accomplishment that the community has been looking forward to for so long!

- As we move towards the design phase, there will be lots of chances for our stakeholders - including staff, residents and families - to get engaged and help make sure the new Birches looks and feels like home for those who live and work there!

# Who's Who...?

## Erin Beaton

In December, our President & CEO, Dion Moulard-Pettipas, was pleased to announce that Erin Beaton, Senior Director Innovation and Accountability, would be taking on the role of **Administrator** for The Birches. This change will better allow Dion as President & CEO and Erin as Senior Director to support both The Birches and Ocean View through a number of important projects in coming years, including the Birches rebuild project!

Erin joined our team in 2021, with a rich history of working in health care from coast to coast. She has a wide range of experience in everything from quality improvement, to risk management, public health, administration, human resources, mental health, and OH&S!

A true life-long learner, Erin holds a long list of educational achievements that will help her contribute to our work, including a Diploma of Health Services Administration, BA in Organizational Management, Masters of Business Administration, Certificate in Legal Aspects of Healthcare Administration, and Graduate Certification in Evaluation.

Most recently, Erin is currently in a PhD program (Doctor of Philosophy in Health Quality) focused on quality improvement at the front line level. Her research will be centered in Ocean View and The Birches, looking at how we can empower frontline staff to implement and sustain quality improvements!

Erin has a passion for leadership, innovation, and quality improvement. What energizes her most is collaborating with people, and empowering them to understand, embrace, and shape their role in safety culture. She believes that resident safety cannot exist without employee safety!

"I've always worked in positions that were systems... very high level. And not that that isn't rewarding, but the impact and the opportunity we have in a place like this is endless. There's so much opportunity to be able to initiate change, shepherd it, be part of it, and actually see it through," says Erin.

"At the end of the day I want to do the right things for the right reasons."



# What's Going On?

- A mandatory CCA registry was recommended by the 2018 Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Long-Term Care. New legislation, the **Continuing Care Assistants Registry Act** received Royal Assent in April 2021 and establishes a **mandatory registry for all CCAs in Nova Scotia** for the purposes of collecting workforce planning data such as the name of the CCA, where they work, and whether they work full-time, part time, or casual.

## Who needs to register for the CCA Registry?

Anyone in Nova Scotia who is working in the role of a CCA in any employment setting.

### This includes:

- Certified Continuing Care Assistants (CCA)
- Certified Home Support Workers (HSW)
- Home Health Care Providers/Home Health Aides (HHP/HHA)
- Certified Personal Care Workers (PCW)
- Retired Nurses
- International Educated Nurses (IEN)
- Conditional Hires
- On the Job Trained

### Who can help here at TBNH if I have questions?

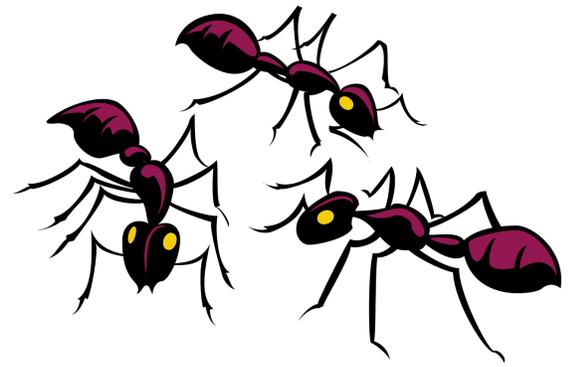
Get in touch with Janelle, our new CCA Team Leader, for help finding answers to your questions about the registry!

For more information and FAQ, please visit :

<https://www.novascotiacc.ca/ccaregistry-information/>

# What's Going On?

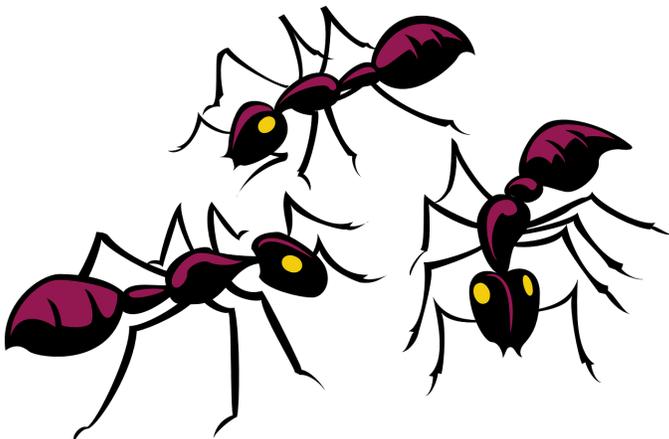
*It's that time of year again. The sun is shining, the weather is getting warmer, and ... the bugs are back!*



## How to Prevent Ants in our Facility:

During the late spring and summer, ants begin building their mounds and start searching for food, and if we're not careful they may start taking up residence in and around our facility! Fortunately, there are easy and effective methods for us all to help prevent this!

- Keep **food and sugary beverages OUT of Resident's Rooms** if possible, and when residents do eat / drink within their rooms, make sure the area is **cleaned well** afterwards so crumbs / spills don't attract ants!
- Make sure to **discard waste in appropriate bins**.
- Make sure all food items are **cleaned up and stored in sealed containers** after use, in ALL areas of the facility including staff areas.
- **Dirty dishes should be cleaned up as soon as possible**, in ALL areas of the facility including staff areas.
- Extra care should be taken by ALL, especially on evenings and nights when housekeeping staff are not around, to **clean up dropped pieces of food and spills quickly**. Our housekeeping team will also take extra care to ensure they are cleaning the floors well to get rid of any stray food crumbs while they are at work!
- Despite our best efforts, if there are **ants in the facility, report it asap to our Maintenance team!** We work with a pest control provider, and they use safe, best practice treatments to resolve any issues.
- If you see even **one ant**, please go ahead and squish them and then report it to maintenance! Solo "scout" ants try to find sources of food for their colony. If a scout ant finds food in our facility and has the chance to report back to their colony, there may soon be a whole lot of ants showing up!



- Please **do not bring any pesticides or other chemicals into the facility at any time** (e.g. Raid, ant traps, and homemade solutions). They are not permitted under the Pesticides By-Law and WHMIS Legislation.

**Thanks for reading and doing all you can to help keep pesky ants out of our spaces!**

# HOT TOPIC... Impacts of Absenteeism

Did you know? Absenteeism has many impacts! Sometimes being absent from work is absolutely unavoidable, but other times there may be creative ways for staff to report to work that could be explored, or ways to prevent recurring illness!

So what are the impacts of absenteeism on day-to-day life at TBNH for residents and staff? Does absenteeism matter? What do the impacts look like?

- There is an impact on the staff who are at work, who feel pulled in many directions. They may have to focus only on safety at times when they might normally have been able to focus on fun and quality of life for residents! Staff may feel pressured to rush or put themselves at risk to provide the level of care they believe residents deserve. Our team takes pride in their work and the care they provide, so it becomes difficult to prioritize one thing and let something else drop.



- Mealtime is so important to our residents and absenteeism sometimes means meals may not be served the way they normally would.
- In the interest of efficiency, when absenteeism is high, the team may feel pushed to make more general sweeping decisions instead of being able to offer true person-centred and individualized care.
- It's more of a struggle to do things safely. For example, lifts and transfers become harder to safely coordinate because there is a lack of staff to assist with 2-person lifts. And there are simply less staff around to notice issues!
- Absenteeism can result in care staff being mandated to stay past their shift. Those who are mandated may be more at risk of being exhausted or burned out.
- It becomes difficult for us to safely allow vacation time, so folks may not get the break they need to recharge. This results in staff feeling upset and frustrated, impacting retention and possibly further increasing absenteeism!
- Things may not be completed by the time the next shift comes in, creating issues throughout the 24 hour period. Important tasks may even need to get pushed to the next day, resulting in lots of impacts.
- Sick calls may require a lot of legwork on the part of management and admin staff, to replace shifts and to make sure illness is not COVID-19 related.
- Residents and families notice that staff are under increased pressure, so they may not want to make requests or ask questions. In the worst case scenario, this decreases their confidence in us.

We know that sometimes sick days and other absent days cannot be avoided! But if staff are starting to feel burnout or facing challenges coming to work, we urge them to speak to their manager! Let us help you get the support you need to be at work doing the great work you do!

# Advocacy MATTERS!

Recently, the Government announced a long-awaited wage increase for CCA staff!

## **A celebratory message from Michele Lowe, Executive Directors, NHNSA:**

“Yesterday was a great day and a step in the right direction toward recognizing the compensation inequities in LTC. Thank you for your support in demanding fair wages and compensation for our CCA's, the largest workforce in LTC.

Your participation in our advocacy efforts during the provincial election helped influence this wage increase! While we have more work to do, here are two outcomes from our election advocacy that are worth celebrating!

- Create a dedicated Ministerial portfolio for Seniors and LTC.
- Increase wages for staff in LTC (leader in CCA compensation in Atlantic Canada)”



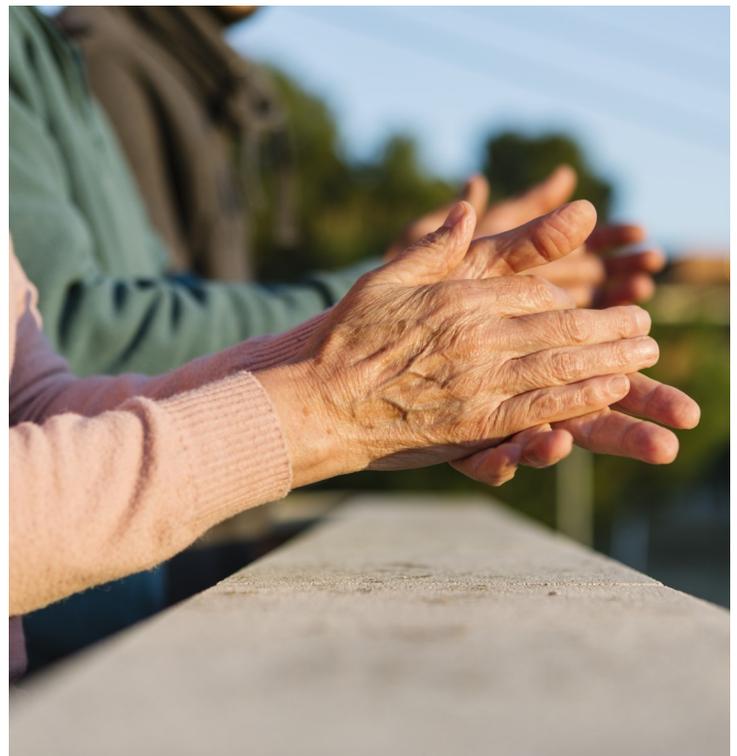
**DEMAND**  
wages and  
compensation that  
reflects real value  
of our workforce.

NHNSA Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association  
Sponsored by the:  
NURSING HOMES OF NOVA SCOTIA ASSOCIATION, 2021

## **A celebratory message from Dion Moulard-Pettipas, President and CEO:**

“Many of you may have heard today that Government has finally recognized the collective voices of the leadership teams and the labor movement in long term care that the CCA staff are underpaid and deserve better wages.

This is a milestone to celebrate. More work needs to be done to make working and living in long term care better! But for now... we pause and celebrate the wonderful news for our CCAs!!”



## Let's Learn About... Protection for Persons In Care Act (PPCA).

What do you need to know about PPCA if you witness or are aware of resident abuse?

- When witnessing resident abuse, it is important to intervene and make sure the resident is safe/secure!
- Once the situation is stabilized, immediately report it to the manager.
- The Protection for Persons in Care Act (PPCA) requires you to report all allegations or instances of Resident abuse.
- Some things it is important to note: No adverse employment or other action can be taken against someone who makes a report in good faith. It is an offense under the act to knowingly make a false report.

**To learn more about this important Act,  
you can visit <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ppcact/>**

## Spotlight on Quality & Risk - Privacy

At Ocean View and The Birches, we are committed to protecting personal health information (PHI). We collect, use and disclose the personal health information entrusted to us for several purposes. Staff and other authorized persons are only allowed to collect, use and disclose the PHI that is needed to: (1) fulfill the functions of their roles and (2) for purposes permitted under Nova Scotia law, in particular the *Personal Health information Act* (PHIA).

### ***Confidential information may include:***

- Financial information e.g., bank information, budgetary data
- Employee demographic information, e.g., name, address, social insurance number, etc.
- Personnel (human resource) matters

### ***The PHI we collect may include:***

- Demographic information including a resident's name, date of birth, address, phone number, next of kin, health card number, physical and mental health care history, the nature of a resident's illness, cause or treatment of illness, condition, information given by resident and/or family in relation to condition, the death of a resident, transfer of resident to hospital, financial information related to resident payments or eligibility for health care, etc.

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## Spotlight on Quality & Risk *continued*

### **GUIDELINE: Emailing Personal Health Information (PHI)**

The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) requires custodians to implement procedures to prevent the interception of the information by unauthorized persons where they intend to disclose personal health information (PHI) electronically (e.g., email).

***As a rule, email is not considered a secure method of disclosing PHI and should not be relied upon where more secure methods of communication are available;*** however, if you **reasonably** believe that emailing the information is the only available method of communication or the only way to send the information, the following best practices are adhered to:

#### **Before Emailing:**

- Consider whether a more secure method of communication, such as telephone conversation for example, may be a reasonable option.
- Ensure sending the PHI to the minimum number of people who need to know the information.
- Confirm the correct name/email address of the intended recipient(s). ***Use caution with auto-populated recipient email addresses.***
- Exclude identifiable information in the subject line of the email.
- ***Where possible, include PHI in an attachment.*** Where PHI is being sent in the body of an email, only disclose the minimum amount of information required by the recipient and ensure that all personal identifiers are removed (***e.g., Mr. Alan Smith could be Mr. S, or AS.***)
- When sending an email, limit identifying program specific details where it may reveal specific information about the health of an individual.
- If possible, encrypt and always password protect attachments containing PHI. Passwords should be communicated by phone or, when that is not a reasonable option, at minimum, in a separate message.
- Double-check recipient address(es) in the "To" fields before you send the email.
- Include Subject line: CONFIDENTIAL EMAIL for the use of the individual to which it is addressed.

#### **Have Questions? Want more information?**

If you have questions, please speak to your manager or supervisor.

You may also contact our **Privacy Officer: Erin Beaton**

Senior Director, Engagement & Accountability & Administrator, The Birches  
[ebaton@oceanv.ca](mailto:ebaton@oceanv.ca) (902) 465-6020 ext. 2625

#### **Resources:**

- Nova Scotia Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)

<https://novascotia.ca/dhw/phia/PHIA-legislation.asp>

- PHIA Toolkit

[www.novascotia.ca/DHW/PHIA](http://www.novascotia.ca/DHW/PHIA)

- Ocean View Confidentiality Policy (A1700)  
Corporate Manual, Privacy Section

# Let's Learn About... Ransomware

Ransomware is a type of malicious software that takes over your computer and prevents you from accessing files until you pay a ransom, usually in the form of cryptocurrency. Although we maintain controls to help protect our networks and computers from this type of attack, vulnerabilities and attack scenarios are changing daily so we rely on YOU to be our first line of defense.

Here are some simple things you can do to help avoid a ransomware/malware attack:

- **Think Before You Click!** Often, scammers will include malicious links or attachments in emails that look harmless. Be skeptical of any emails you weren't expecting / didn't initiate, like a message saying you have won a contest you did not enter, are receiving a package you didn't order, receipt for something you didn't buy, or an invoice for something you didn't order! You can bet that these messages are scams!
- Do not provide **sensitive personal information**, including usernames and passwords, over email.
- Watch for email senders that use **suspicious or misleading** domain names.
  - o Ex – [jsmith@buxtnei-dealstioni.ru](mailto:jsmith@buxtnei-dealstioni.ru)
- Be especially **cautious when opening attachments** or clicking links if you receive an email containing the below warning indicating that it originated from an external source. **"CAUTION: The sender of this email is not from within Ocean View / The Birches. Please DO NOT click on any links or attachments unless you know the sender."**
- If staff can't tell if an email is legitimate or not, please forward or inform IT about it so we can investigate at [dsnow@oceanv.ca](mailto:dsnow@oceanv.ca) or 902-465-6020 ext. 2711

In the unfortunate event that your computer is infected with ransomware, you will typically be locked out of all programs and a "ransom screen" will appear. If staff click a link or attachment that they suspect is malware or ransomware, they should disconnect from the network or shut down your computer immediately. Then, contact Doug right away at [dsnow@oceanv.ca](mailto:dsnow@oceanv.ca) or 902-465-6020 ext. 2711!

Thanks again for helping to keep our network, and our people, safe from these cyber threats!



## What's Going On... a note from our Diversity Committee!

**National AccessAbility Week** – May 29—June 4 – a Canadian celebration intended to recognize the valuable contributions of Canadians with disabilities; and to recognize the accomplishments and ongoing work to counter discrimination against persons with disabilities and promote a culture of inclusion.

**National Indigenous History Month** – June / **National Indigenous Peoples Day** – June 21 – an opportunity to celebrate and learn more about the cultural diversity of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Although these groups share many similarities, they each have their own distinct heritage, language, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs — June is an excellent time to learn more about each group!

**Pride Season** – In Canada, local Pride events span over the course of several months. Pride Season is a unifying term that refers to the period between June and September when LGBTQ2+ communities and allies come together at different times throughout the summer to spotlight the resilience, talent, and contributions of LGBTQ2+ folks!



## What's Going On?

- We had a fancy feline visitor recently, with some very snazzy transportation! Staff person Kerry brought her kitty for a visit on a recent walk!



- Time is flying here at The Birches, and we never had the chance to share some of our photos from the Winter with you until now! We just HAD to share these smiling faces:

