

News Release

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Pilot project aimed to enhance nursing retention and recruitment announced for Carmelite House in Grand Falls-Windsor

The Honourable Ross Wiseman, Minister of Health and Community Services along with Debbie Forward, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses' Union and Karen McGrath, Chief Executive Officer, Central Health today announced the implementation of a national pilot project at the Carmelite House in Grand Falls-Windsor. This particular pilot project is aimed at increasing retention and recruitment of Registered Nurses (RN) in long term care (LTC).

This national project is led by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) and is funded by Health Canada and provincial governments. Sites in nine provinces have been selected to participate in the pilot project. The Carmelite House in Grand Falls-Windsor has been selected as Newfoundland and Labrador's site. Through implementation of this pilot project at the Carmelite House, RNs will spend 80 per cent of their salaried time in direct patient care and 20 per cent of their salaried time in various ways such as professional development, mentoring, engaging in work-related activities and enhancing resident-centered care environment.

"This is a very positive pilot project because it addresses recruitment and retention issues," said Minister Wiseman. "Ultimately, the implementation of the 80/20 RN staffing model at the Carmelite House is a step towards further enhancing the retention and recruitment of RNs in LTC settings while at the same time bringing together all partners to enhance the care that we provide together."

In addition to the partnership between CFNU, Health Canada, the Department of Health and Community Services and Central Health; three other national organizations have supported this project including the Canadian Nurses Association, the Canadian Healthcare Association and the Dietitians of Canada.

"This is an excellent example of how we can collaborate to enhance the work environment for nurses in this province," said Ms. Forward. "Nurses have told us that they want access to more continuing education, mentoring, involvement in meaningful projects and flexible work practices. We are also well aware of the challenges related to

nursing retention and recruitment in this province. This pilot project is a step towards addressing both of these issues and we are very supportive.”

An evaluation of the 80/20 staffing model found that the study unit experienced a number of positive outcomes. These included a significant decrease in overtime hours, sick time stayed low, patient satisfaction scores increased and education hours were sustained throughout the study period.

“The 80/20 pilot project is enormously beneficial to nursing staff working at Carmelite House,” said Ms. McGrath. “We know that nurses are very busy caring for clients and we recognize that it is challenging to find time within the day to devote to matters such as education and program development. Through the 80/20 pilot project, nurses will have dedicated time to concentrate on these important matters.”

The 80/20 pilot project will take place for 12 months over a 16 month time frame, to allow for summer and Christmas vacation, and will include all RNs working at the Carmelite House.

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