Midwifery
Regulatory Council
of Nova Scotia

300-120 Western Parkway
Bedford, NS B4B 0V2
(902) 455 5867

– MRCNS Council Meeting –
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 10, 2026; 1:00pm - 3:00pm (Atlantic)
ONLINE

MRCNS Council Members in Attendance:

T. Crawford RN, Acting Chair	M. Lamson RM
J.K. Wallace, Treasurer	P. Anderson
J. Kearns	A. Houstoun MD

Staff in Attendance:

J. Wright, Registrar/ED	J. Neil, Executive Assistant

Regrets:

0. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions (no attachment) (T.Crawford)

The meeting was called to order by T.Crawford at 1:02 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda (ATCH 1) (T.Crawford)

T. Crawford offered a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by: K.Wallace **Seconded by:** A.Houstoun
No objections. **Approved**.

2. Approval of November 18, 2025 MRCNS Council Meeting Minutes (ATCH 2) (T.Crawford)

Council reviewed the minutes from the November 18, 2025 Council meeting, highlighting a financial update, the reapproval of the financial audit report, and the approval of a new definition of postpartum.

T.Crawford offered a motion to approve the last meeting minutes as presented.

Moved by: A.Houstoun **Seconded by:** J.Kearns
No objections. **Approved.**

3. Correspondence (ATCH 3,4) (J.Wright)

J.Wright reviewed correspondence that needs to be officially recorded, including the letter confirming additional funding from HHR and the official resignation letter as Chair from Theresa Pickart. The council agreed on the importance of honoring Theresa's significant commitment to MRCNS over more than a decade.

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4. Financial Update (J.Wright)

J.Wright provided a financial update, noting the council has $128,000 left and is working to expedite the financial audit before the June 1st planned amalgamation. They clarified that the surplus funds include $50,000 in legal retainer money, which, although already paid, still appears on the books. J.Wright is actively negotiating with the Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) regarding funding for council salaries during the two-month period between the fiscal year end (March 31st) and the amalgamation (June 1st).

The council discussed the possibility of another organization (NSCN) paying their bills during the final months before amalgamation. Jenny Wright explained that the *Act* only requires a "functioning council", and the financial source is technically irrelevant to the council's legal standing. They reassured the council that finances are sufficient until the end of the current fiscal year. M.Lamson raised a question about the financial comfort level should the amalgamation be delayed, and J.Wright confirmed that a short delay would be manageable, as salaries are the biggest expense.

5. Committee Updates

None.

6. Old Business

Bylaw Amendment and Acting Chair Continuity

Council approved an amendment to Council Bylaw 3 via email on January 7th, which added wording around the recruitment period for the chair. J.Wright recommended maintaining the status quo with the current council structure and reappointing Teri Crawford as the acting chair until amalgamation. They expressed concern that initiating a formal recruitment process for a new chair would be pointless and difficult given the short time remaining.

> **Duties of Council Members**
> **3** The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair and shall have all the powers and perform all the duties of the Chair in the absence or disability of the Chair, or during the period of recruitment and appointment of the new Chair, together with such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Council.

Vote conducted via email on 2026-01-07. No objections. **Unanimous Approval-Motion carried.**

7. New Business (J.Wright)

Committees Reappointment and Acting Chair Motion

As per MRCNS bylaws, the Council will reappoint the Registration and Registration Appeals Committee for 2026-27, as well as the HR Committee (ad-hoc).

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MOTION:
The council unanimously approved a motion to reappoint all current members to their respective committees (two statutory and one ad hoc, HR committee) until amalgamation.

Moved by: A.Houstoun **Seconded by:** K.Wallace
No objections. **Unanimous Approval-Motion carried.**

MOTION:
A.Houstoun moved to reappoint Teri Crawford as the acting chair during the ongoing recruitment process. Council unanimously approved, supporting the goal of maintaining normal structures during a period of significant change.

Moved by: A.Houstoun **Seconded by:** K.Wallace
No objections. **Unanimous Approval-Motion carried.**

8. Strategic Direction Update: Monitoring and Oversight (J.Wright)

DHW Meeting and Legislative Language Success

J.Wright shared exciting news from a DHW meeting regarding the submission of legislative language for regulations. They reported that the DHW had no challenges or questions regarding the council's language on scope of practice, which included sexual reproductive health and infant care up to 12 months. The only regulatory hang-ups DHW had were related to incorporating facility inspections, primarily concerning nurses.

Developing Bylaws and the "Inactive" Registration Category

Following the success of the legislative language, the focus shifts to drafting bylaws. Jenny Wright explained that under the new structure, there will be two classifications: active practicing and active practicing with conditions. They requested to keep the term "inactive" for midwives on leave or who have retired, to maintain public records and prevent them from returning to practice without fulfilling requirements.

Update on Amalgamation with NSCN

- **Corporate Matters**

  J.Wright provided an update on the amalgamation, detailing regular meetings with the new regulator's leadership and corporate teams. Key operational challenges include aligning the registration periods, as nurses register in November and midwives in March, necessitating a shorter license period for risk management. A corporate lawyer was hired to manage the process with the CRA and handle due diligence.

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- **New Regulator Name and Communication Strategy**

  The new regulator will be called the Nova Scotia Nursing and Midwifery Regulator (NSNMR). The initial website will be a placemaker, directing users to the existing nursing and midwifery sites. A crucial priority is ensuring clear communication to midwives regarding who to contact for practice, policy, and Quality Assurance Program (QAP) issues to facilitate a smooth transition.

- **Amalgamation Timeline and Progress**

  Teri Crawford emphasized the immense job of unifying two organizations, noting that focusing only on "day one" requirements has clarified the initial steps. Jenny Wright agreed, highlighting the success in having new legislation passed without government questions, which Crawford acknowledged as commendable. The working group aims to develop governance bylaws, a selection process for the amalgamated board, initial board policies, and the first board agenda by June, all of which will need approval by the MRCNS Council and NSCN Board.

- **Amalgamation Governance Working Group**

  T.Crawford and M.Lamson are on the joint governance working group with D.Davidson and O.Adeyi, with support from J.Neil, H.Totten, and M.Geddry, and are advised by external legal counsel from McInnes Cooper. This group makes recommendations to both the MRCNS council and the NSCN board, with the goal of reaching decisions by consensus. T.Crawford presented the draft terms of reference for the joint working group to Council.

  MOTION:
  Anne Houstoun moved to accept the terms of reference for the joint working group as presented.

  Moved by: A.Houstoun **Seconded by:** J.Kearns
  No objections. **<u>Unanimous Approval-Motion carried</u>.**

- **Guiding Principles for Bylaw Development**

  The next task for the joint working group is bylaw development. T.Crawford outlined the 3 guiding principles for the working group's approach:

  1. developing only the bylaws required for migration,
  2. utilizing existing bylaw templates and functional bylaws from both organizations and other professions, and
  3. adhering to the principle that "perfect is the enemy of good" to ensure timely progress.

  Crawford confirmed that the working group will meet every two weeks until amalgamation and will provide regular feedback to the council.

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9. Executive DIrector / Registrar Update (J.Wright)

Unauthorized Practice and Public Safety

J.Wright reported a serious incident of unauthorized practice involving a non-registrant calling themself a midwife, resulting in a crisis for the mother and baby, requiring the infant to be flown to the IWK. A cease and desist letter and undertaking, prepared by Matt Lafond, is being issued jointly with the New Brunswick registrar because the individual is unfindable. J.Wright explained that the regulatory body's power is limited to issuing cease and desist orders for protected titles, but egregious cases can be escalated to a police investigation after the regulator has done its work to compile the evidence.

Addressing Misleading Information and Public Trust

J.Wright and M.Lamson discussed the difficulty in going after individuals who offer birth attendance but avoid using the title "midwife". Wright asserted that providing midwifery services without being licensed, or misleading the public about clinical skills, is illegal. The core regulatory concern is protecting public trust by ensuring the public understands the difference between a midwife and other birth attendants like doulas, and preventing unlicensed individuals from providing clinical care or denying necessary medical intervention.

Proposed Media Campaign Against Unauthorized Practice

T.Crawford suggested a media campaign as a legitimate regulatory role to clarify "what is a midwife and what is not a midwife" and why licensed midwives are important. Jenny Wright confirmed that a similar social media campaign had already been initiated and agreed that it needs to be continued, calling unauthorized practice one of the top five regulatory issues in the province.

10. Scheduled Policy Review (T.Crawford)

The following policies were reviewed and discussed by the Council as per the review schedule:

POLICY: Continuing Competence in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

J.Wright introduced a simple policy amendment to add RQI (resuscitation quality improvement), a BLS course endorsed by the AHA and Heart and Stroke, to the list of approved CPR providers because it is now commonly used by midwives in health authorities. The addition to the policy was approved unanimously by the council.

MOTION:

To add RQI to the list of approved CPR course providers.

Moved by: A.Houstoun **Seconded by:** M.Lamson
No objections. **Unanimous Approval-Motion carried.**

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POLICY: Clinical Experience Requirements

Wright provided an update on the ongoing review of clinical experience requirements, noting it is a complex issue with little standardized, empirical evidence across Canada or internationally. Research from Ontario suggests midwives make the most mistakes early and late in their careers, leading to consideration of a new model with increased regulatory intervention and support during the first few years after graduation and the final five years of practice.

Note: The goal of the Council is to revise this policy to be flexible but robust. While considering making changes to the ***Clinical Experience Requirements***, Council should also consider that this relates to another policy, ***Clinical Experience Shortfalls.***

No decision has been made at this time.

11. Other (T.Crawford)

A.Houstoun requested the Council recognize the life and accomplishments of a former registered midwife, Kirsten Martin, who recently passed away in December. Anne Houstoun noted that Kerstin Martin was a "moving force" in getting midwifery regulated in Nova Scotia and volunteered extensively to put the policies and legislation in place, even introducing Dr.Houstoun to their first home birth. The Council agreed to post a notice on the website honoring the life and career of Kerstin Martin.

12. Closing (T.Crawford)

T.Crawford thanked J.Wright for the information provided on amalgamation, and mentioned that she and M.Lamson would do their best on the working group. A.Houstoun expressed their appreciation for T.Crawford's work as the acting chair during a high-intensity transition period to a new organization.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.