

**Provincial Recovery Council for
Mental Health and Addictions**

Annual Report

April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

In accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, I am pleased to present the 2024–2025 Annual Report for the Provincial Recovery Council for Mental Health and Addictions (the Recovery Council). The Recovery Council is a Category 3 government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act** and plans and reports under these requirements. As Chair, my signature below acknowledges the Recovery Council is accountable for the results reported.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the passing of Dustin Spurrell, a valued Recovery Council member, on November 17, 2024. Dustin's dedication, warmth, and unwavering commitment to informing and improving the provincial mental health and addictions system was invaluable and leaves fellow Recovery Council members with fond memories and a lasting impact on system input and enhancement. Dustin will be greatly missed, and our sincere thoughts are with his family and loved ones.

This year, the Recovery Council advised on the continued implementation of **Our Path of Resilience: An Action Plan to Promote Life and Prevent Suicide in Newfoundland and Labrador**, the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan: Reducing Alcohol Harms and Costs in Newfoundland and Labrador**, and other program materials that are transforming the mental health and addictions system in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Furthermore, I had the opportunity to present on behalf of the Recovery Council to the All-Party Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions during its consultation process.

When the Recovery Council was first appointed, one of our main priorities was the replacement of Waterford Hospital. When I assumed the role of Chair, construction had just begun. Personally, it has been an honour to be part of the replacement of Waterford Hospital and opening of the new adult Mental Health and Addictions Centre in April 2025

Sincerest gratitude to all members of the Recovery Council for their continued dedication to mental health and addictions issues in the province. On behalf of the Recovery Council, I also extend appreciation for the efforts of staff within the Department of Health and Community Services for their support in making our work possible.

Sincerely,



Date: 2025-08-15

Jeff Bourne, Chair
Provincial Recovery Council for Mental Health and Addictions

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Overview

The Recovery Council reports to the Minister of Health and Community Services, provides the voice of lived and living experience, and advises on key mental health and addictions matters to support decision-making and policy development. The Recovery Council also provides input and supports the Department of Health and Community Services with oversight on the completion of all actions outlined in the five-year provincial action plans: **Our Path of Resilience: An Action Plan to Promote Life and Prevent Suicide in Newfoundland and Labrador** and the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan: Reducing Alcohol Harms and Costs in Newfoundland and Labrador**.

The Recovery Council also provides input and advice on matters related to:

- Ongoing transformation of the provincial mental health and addictions system;
- Mental health, substance use and addictions issues affecting individuals and their families;
- Person-centered care, promoting the use of recovery-focused, harm reduction and inclusive approaches;
- Family and caregiver issues and perspectives;
- Peer support;
- Reducing stigma and discrimination; and
- Other priorities as they emerge.

The vision of the Recovery Council is that provincial policies and programs reflect the needs of persons with lived and living experience. Further information about the Recovery Council is located on the Department of Health and Community Services website, and can be found [here](#).

Membership

Recovery Council members are selected through an Expression of Interest and are appointed by the Minister of Health and Community Services.

Membership, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, may bring experience from a variety of sectors; however, the primary experience most relevant to the Recovery Council includes:

- Personal lived or living experience with mental illness, substance use, and/or addiction;
- Family experience with mental illness, substance use, and/or addiction; and
- Experience with the provincial mental health and addictions system.

Membership aims to include individuals with diverse experiences, including but not limited to regional representation, age, ethnicity, disability and gender.

Member terms: Recovery Council members are appointed for a term of three years and may be re-appointed for one further term of three years for a maximum of six years. Where the term of office expires and a successor has not been appointed, the member may continue to hold their position until a successor is appointed.

Funding

Members are not remunerated for their participation on the Recovery Council. Administrative costs associated with Recovery Council meetings are covered by the Department of Health and Community Services. Therefore, financial statements are not required.

The Recovery Council does not maintain a separate office, and secretariat support is provided by the Mental Health and Addictions Division, Department of Health and Community Services.

Meeting Frequency

In the 2024-25 reporting period, the Recovery Council held six virtual meetings. These meetings were held:

- May 28, 2024;
- August 14, 2024;
- September 25, 2024;
- November 27, 2024;
- January 29, 2025; and
- March 29, 2025.

As meetings were held virtually, no expenses were incurred.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Recovery Council maintains a strong partnership with the Department of Health and Community Services, the Provincial Indigenous Health Team and the Provincial Advisory Council for Mental Health and Addictions in providing oversight on **Our Path of Resilience** and the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan**.

The highlights of 2024-25 include:

- Provided input and oversight on the implementation of **Our Path of Resilience** and the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan** actions.
- Prepared and tabled an Annual Report for 2023-24, which was also posted on the House of Assembly's website.
- Presented recommendations to the All-Party Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions.
- Three members attended the INSPIRE Forum and the Chair took part in a panel discussion on the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan**.

Report on Performance: Objectives 2023-2026

The Recovery Council provides support to the Minister of Health and Community Services in an advisory capacity. As such, the following objective will guide its direction for the period April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2026, and will be reported yearly for the duration of this period.

Issue: Provide input and support the Department of Health and Community Services in completion of all actions contained within **Our Path of Resilience** and the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan**.

Annual Objective: By March 31, 2025, the Recovery Council will have provided the Minister of Health and Community Services with advice on key mental health and addictions matters to support decision-making and policy development, as well as provided input and oversight to advance work on all actions contained in **Our Path of Resilience** and the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan**.

Indicators:

- Provided input on all actions completed in **Our Path of Resilience** and the **Provincial Alcohol Action Plan**;
- Obtained expert and group member expertise;
- Invited community groups and other organizations to present information;
- Attended presentations on mental health and addictions policies and programs;
- Provided advice to the Minister of Health and Community Services; and
- Made recommendations on government-led mental health and addictions initiatives.

Initiatives Measure: Provided commentary and recommendations.

Indicator	Outcome
Provided input on all actions completed in Our Path of Resilience and the Provincial Alcohol Action Plan	<p>The Recovery Council provided input on an alcohol screening, brief intervention, and referral tool for the Provincial Alcohol Action Plan.</p> <p>Council members also provided input on actions completed under Our Path of Resilience and the Provincial Alcohol Action Plan during updates provided by the Mental Health and Addictions Division.</p>
Obtained expert and group member expertise	<p>The Recovery Council continued to utilize the combined expertise of its members by providing feedback on actions under both action plans, policing transformation, an alcohol screening, brief intervention and referral tool, and in preparing a presentation for the All-Party Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions.</p>
Invited community groups and other organizations to present information	<p>The Recovery Council invited an official with NL Health Services to present on the role of the Strategic Health Network.</p> <p>The Recovery Council also invited officials from the Department of Health and Community Services Mental Health and Addictions Division to present updates on both Action Plans, as well as an</p>

	<p>official with the Department of Justice and Public Safety to present on Police Transformation. A few members also attended a tour of the new adult Mental Health and Addictions Centre, which included an overview of the facility and changes from the Waterford Hospital.</p>
<p>Attended presentations on mental health and addictions policies and programs</p>	<p>Recovery Council members attended presentations on Our Path of Resilience and the Provincial Alcohol Action Plan.</p> <p>Three members of the Recovery Council attended the INSPIRE Forum, held in St. John's, November 19-20, 2024. The Chair took part in a panel discuss on the Provincial Alcohol Action Plan.</p>
<p>Provided advice to the Minister of Health and Community Services</p>	<p>The Recovery Council provided feedback and advice to the Minister of Health and Community Services on several areas related to mental health and addictions. Priority topics included: the alcohol screening, brief intervention and referral tool under the Provincial Alcohol Action Plan and several actions under Our Path of Resilience, including the First Responders Warm Line and the additional Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Systems Navigator.</p> <p>The Recovery Council presented to the All-Party Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions as part of its consultation process.</p>
<p>Made recommendations on government-led mental health and addictions initiatives</p>	<p>The Recovery Council made recommendations to the All-Party Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions.</p> <p>The Recovery Council also provided commentary and made recommendations to the Minister of Health and Community Services on many areas related to mental health and addictions.</p> <p>The Recovery Council also provided recommendations on the Department of Justice and Public Safety's Police Transformation initiative.</p>

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

The appointment terms for current members of the Recovery Council expired in January 2025. Members continue to serve until they are reappointed or replaced. The process for seeking new members will begin in the coming year.

The Recovery Council is excited about the new adult Mental Health and Addictions Centre

which will officially open on April 13, 2025. The new facility is co-located on the Health Sciences Centre Campus and replaces the Waterford Hospital. The new 102-bed facility will provide patient-centered, quality health care with key features, including individual inpatient rooms; shared spaces for recreation, art therapy, horticulture; outdoor terraces; and updated spaces for counselling and therapy.

The Recovery Council continues to hold its meetings virtually. This improves access for people living in rural communities and allows for regional representation. However, it does not allow for the same level of interaction afforded by meeting in person. This emphasizes the importance of bringing the Recovery Council together at events, such as the annual INSPIRE Forum.

The Recovery Council looks forward to the opportunity to support recommendations stemming from the All-Party Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions. This Committee was established in 2023 in response to the continued need for promotion, prevention, early intervention, treatment and support for people living with mental health, substance use and addictions issues.

The Recovery Council will continue to provide guidance on the development of person-centered, community-based mental health and addictions programs as they are implemented throughout the province.

Appendix A: Recovery Council Membership 2024-25

Name	Position
Jeffrey Bourne	Chair
Dr. Jason Chaulk	Co-Chair
Mike Herrell	Member
Amnesty Cornelius	Member
Serena Payne	Member
Alexandra Young	Member
Joanne Power	Member
Margaret Noseworthy	Member
Sandra Hewitt-Parsons	Member
Harriett Rutie-Lampe	Member
Jill Ralph	Member
Olive Williams	Member

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