

Social Work Recruitment & Retention

60 SECOND UPDATE



The 2023-2028 Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy brings together stakeholders who are responsible for implementing the Strategy and ensuring its effectiveness. A lot has happened since the April 2024 update. We are excited to share some of the progress that's been made over the last six months!

The Strategy is focused on increasing the recruitment and retention of provincial social workers and includes: 7 pillars, 23 goals, and 87 actions.

The Steering Committee is reviewing the Strategy to ensure that it aligns with the pressures and priorities currently experienced across departments.

Progress on Pillar 1: **Recruitment**

University of New Brunswick-Saint John's Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program welcomes its first cohort of students this month. The program's seats have been filled and 35 students are starting the program. The BSW program is a four-year program but there is also a 2+2 pathway for graduates from New Brunswick Community College's Social Service Community Worker program.

Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick's (CCNB's) Technique en service social et communautaire program also welcomes its first cohort of students this month! This program is recognized by the NBASW for social work technician registration. The work to develop a new college to university bridging program from CCNB to Université de Moncton is ongoing.

The NBASW has received funding from the Department of Health to develop a foreign qualification recognition program. To do this, the NBASW has hired a new staff person who will be responsible for developing the program to support foreign educated social workers in becoming licensed to work in New Brunswick.

Progress on Pillar 1: **Recruitment (cont.)**

The NBASW has begun the second year of its partnership with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Centre of Excellence for Health to educate youth about the social work profession.

Progress on Pillar 2: **Retention**

The NBASW surveyed members in spring 2023 as part of the Strategic action to improve data quality and reliability. 663 members responded to this year's survey – thank you to all members who participated. The preliminary survey results are promising and seem to indicate that the Strategy is headed in the right direction. By surveying members annually, the NBASW will be able to track the efficacy of the Strategy and address any future needs identified.

The NBASW has continued to work in partnership with the Department of Social Development (SD), the Department of Health (DOH), and the New Brunswick Institute for Research, Data and Training to develop a report on Social Work Recruitment and Retention in New Brunswick. Using coded data from each organization and from the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission this report will be able to identify trends in the professional trajectories of social workers and provide a landscape of the social work profession in NB.

Progress on Pillar 3: **Role**

On June 7, 2024, the NBASW Act received royal assent, providing the Association with the power to regulate social work technicians! Social work technicians are paraprofessionals who are specially trained to support social workers in their roles by implementing portions of social worker case plans, as directed by the social worker. Having the NBASW regulate social work technicians will ensure that clients receive high quality paraprofessional services, in addition to providing a pathway to the social work profession.

The NBASW released the Social Worker and Social Work Technician Scopes of Practice document to coincide with adoption of the new NBASW Act (2024). The scopes of practice document defines the boundaries of each profession and highlights the activities that fall within. Information on the scopes of practice and the pathways to social work technician licensure can also be found in the brief promotional document attached.

Progress on Pillar 4: **Image**

The NBASW has been working in partnership with the DOH in their healthcare recruitment campaign to recruit social workers from Quebec and Ontario to New Brunswick.

SD is supporting the roll-out of the fall Child Protection Public Campaign. This campaign has been launched and will feature shorter versions of the videos that were previously launched.

The NBASW and the DOH are also partnering on a Mental Health and Addiction Public Campaign! Following the success of the Child Protection Public Campaign, the NBASW and DOH are working with the same marketing firm, M5, in developing this campaign. The aim is to have the campaign launched in March 2025 for social work month.



Progress on Pillar 5: **Child Protection**

SD continues to implement best practices, including disseminating Child Protection (CP) Public Campaign videos, expediting permanent status for social workers, and providing social work students letters of intent to employ.

SD has created a new human resources position that is focused on social worker recruitment and retention and implementing strategic actions.

SD continues the work of implementing multidisciplinary teams in CP and incorporating regulated social work technicians into these teams.

Progress on Pillar 6: **Mental Health & Addiction Services**

Ten Education Training and Knowledge (ETK) trainers have been hired provincially across Vitalité and Horizon. These positions will provide social workers with increased education as well as mentorship following the trainings. These supportive roles are expected to help people stay in the field and in the health system longer. The training plan is currently being developed.

To fill the social work gap in the Restigouche area, Vitalité has been offering enhanced recruitment incentives.



Progress on Pillar 7: **School Social Work**

A School Social Worker Committee representing the Anglophone sector has developed documents highlighting the roles of school social workers and school social work technicians, to have included in the Educational Support Services (ESS) team system. These documents will allow other professionals to understand some of the key tasks that social workers and social work technicians can perform within a school setting.

EECD continues to work with provincial schools of social work to explore social work field placements within schools.