



April 25, 2023

Hon. Tim Houston
Office of the Premier
7th Floor, One Government Place
1700 Granville Street
Halifax, NS
B3J 1X5

Hon. Michelle Thompson
Department of Health and Wellness
Barrington Tower
1894 Barrington Street
P.O. Box 488
Halifax, NS
B3J 2R8

VIA EMAIL: PREMIER@novascotia.ca, Health.Minister@novascotia.ca

Dear Premier Houston and Minister Thompson,

We are writing to follow up on the healthcare worker retention bonus announced by your government last month. It has become clear that those currently off on medical leave will only receive a portion of the bonus for the time they worked in the fiscal year of April 1, 2022, until March 31, 2023.

Last week we heard from Katie Doyle, a mother of three in Brookfield and an LPN who has worked in Nova Scotia for 18 years. Katie has had to be off from work -- a role she calls her "dream job"-- since August of last year for surgery and treatment of colon cancer. Since Katie's story was published last week dozens of nurses have contacted her and our offices to say they are in a similar position.

Natasha Denney has worked at the Colchester East Hants Health Centre since 2018 and staffed the COVID ICU during the first waves of the pandemic. After being diagnosed with breast cancer, the single mother of a young child has gone through two surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation treatment.

Michelle Thompson is a nurse with 31 years of experience who is off due to injuries from two car accidents that she is still recovering from.

These nurses, and the many others we have heard from, are dedicated, long-term employees of the province who through no fault of their own are currently off on leave to manage their health and plan to return to work.



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5151 GEORGE STREET, SUITE 601
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA B3J 1M5
P: 902-424-4134 | 1-888-247-0448

In the same way that your government changed course and ensured nurses and staff off on maternity and parental leave will now be included in the program, we are asking that you also make a change to include those who are off from work due to medical leave.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Claudia Chender
Leader, NSNDP



Susan Leblanc,
NSNDP Health Spokesperson



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