



eating
disorders
Nova Scotia

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia (EDNS) works from Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. We are grateful to be able to work on this land and thank the generations of people who have taken care of it. Our organization recognizes we are all Treaty People.

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Message from the Board Chair

I'm honoured to have served as Eating Disorders Nova Scotia's Board Chair for 2022-2023. As a former Peer Mentor, I've seen firsthand how this organization meaningfully impacts and improves the lives of those struggling with eating disorders. I've also witnessed the organization's tremendous growth led by our Executive Director, Shaleen Jones, and her dedicated team. This year has been no different as Eating Disorders Nova Scotia grew to expand Peer Support across Canada.

While our board members bring different skills, education and experience to the table, we all have lived experience, or a personal connection to Eating Disorders. We know that eating disorders are a complex, severe illnesses and we care deeply about the support that Eating Disorders Nova Scotia provides.

This year, the Board of Directors continued to provide insight on key initiatives and ensure that the organization has the resources needed to carry out its strategic



objectives. We are especially proud to have witnessed Eating Disorders Nova Scotia's collaborative efforts towards growing Peer Support across Canada. We know that this initiative will increase the accessibility of Peer Support and recovery resources for individuals living with an eating disorder.

A special thank you to those who have donated and championed the organization's work over the past year. Your generosity fuels recovery and ensures people impacted by Eating Disorders are able to receive the information and support they deserve.

As we reflect on the past year and look forward to the road ahead, I encourage you to stand with us and contribute to the organization as a board member, volunteer, Peer Mentor or donor.

Together we can ensure that no one has to face an eating disorder alone.

Collette Deschenes

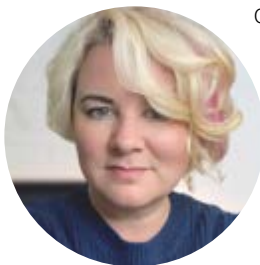
Collette Deschenes

Message from the Executive Director

This year has been pivotal for Eating Disorders Nova Scotia. We passionately believe that everyone should have access to the support they need for recovery. This year we've made tremendous progress in increasing access to support not only within Nova Scotia, but across Canada.

Through our partnership with Body Brave, and with funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada we have been working to scale and spread our Peer Support services, integrating these supports with the eating disorder information, curated self-guided resources, self-reflection and assessment tools from Body Brave.

In 2021, we started offering professionally led services in addition to our Peer Support programs. With support from the Mental Health Foundation of



Nova Scotia, subsidies were provided to ensure these services would be accessible. Last year our team of clinicians, including Dietitians and Therapists, supported over 200 people.

I am grateful to our donors and funders who share our vision, and whose support and generosity make these outcomes possible. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our exceptional Staff, Board Members, and Mentors who bring such dedication and compassion to all they do.

Shaleen Jones

Shaleen Jones

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS...1

"They (Eating Disorders Nova Scotia Mentors) make a huge difference and I'm so grateful for their time and being there for me. Thank you for providing this support, it's invaluable."

Individual Peer Mentoring

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia's one-on-one mentoring program provides personalized, informal and non-judgmental encouragement and support to individuals navigating recovery. All our Peer Mentors have lived experience with Eating Disorders recovery and have completed our training program. **This year:**

32 NEW MENTORS were trained with 3 training cohorts;

486 SESSIONS of Individual Peer Mentoring were provided;

64 PEOPLE were matched with a Peer Mentor for one-to-one mentoring.

"Virtual options have been great. I'm not sure I would've had the courage to attend an in-person program, so it was a lot easier by doing it online."

Virtual Peer Support Groups

Our weekly, drop-in Virtual Peer Support Groups are open to anyone 18+ who is living with disordered eating or an eating disorder. Facilitated by our Peer Mentors, these groups are a casual space for support and encouragement. **This year:**

51 GROUPS were delivered (*up 70%*);

169 PEOPLE registered for the group sessions.

"This was the first place I felt comfortable sharing about the intersection between my gender identity and eating disorder struggles. I appreciated having a space facilitated by people who not only accepted but understood."

Trans+ Virtual Peer Support Groups

The Trans+ Virtual Peer Support Groups are designed for Two-Spirit, Trans, and Non-Binary individuals who are interested in exploring their relationship with food, gender, bodies, and more. Groups are facilitated by trained Two-Spirit, Trans, and Non-Binary Peer Mentors. Groups run for 6 weeks, giving participants an opportunity to connect with their peers. **This year:**

117 PEOPLE participated (*increase of 112%*);

41 GROUP SESSIONS were held (*increase of 242%*).

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS...2

"I love this support group chat! [...] and love the wisdom I get from others who have been through similar things! It's also a good distraction and helps me feel more grounded"

Peer Support Chat

Our Online Peer Support Chat is a text-based chat program for anyone living with an eating disorder or disordered eating. The group support is anonymous and moderated by a trained Peer Mentor. This year we changed how we offer this program, providing individual, text-based support three times a week in real-time via the Body Brave Careteams platform, plus the option to send and receive messages outside of those times. **This year:**

174 CHAT SESSIONS were held (*an increase of 13%*);

256 CHAT INTERACTIONS took place (*an increase of 20%*).

"The group sessions with other caregivers has changed the way I feel and support my ED teen. Without them I don't know where we'd be now. This is a much needed and extremely valuable service."

Family and Friends Peer Support

Those who care for someone with an eating disorder — family, partners, and friends — are also supported by Eating Disorders Nova Scotia. Family Peer Supporters lead our monthly Family and Friends Peer Support Group and provide one-on-one support. **This year:**

90 SESSIONS of individual mentoring were provided;

10 SESSIONS of Family and Friends Peer Support were held;

64 PARENTS were supported.

"The workshop gave me hope. For myself I'm newly discovering that my lifetime of eating patterns that I've felt ashamed of has a name. I'm 49 and new to the healing journey."

Virtual Workshops Groups

Our virtual, educational workshops and info sessions aim to engage folks in learning opportunities ranging from body image, neuro-biological impacts of an ED, nutritional considerations and more. In 2022-23 we hosted a wide variety of workshops with diverse facilitators, like Coping with the Holidays, Exploring Journaling, Breaking the Restrict-Binge Cycle, and Creating a Safer Social Media Space. **This year:**

38 WORKSHOPS were hosted with 29 different facilitators;

1101 PEOPLE registered for workshops hosted by EDNS.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS...3



Peer Support Training

All our Peer Mentors complete a specialized **30-hour Peer Support training course** that covers how to best draw upon their own lived experiences to support others. The training includes five live sessions with our staff and seven self-paced learning modules.

“My favorite part about being a Peer Mentor is to witness the life-altering changes in my mentees as they begin to feel more autonomous, motivated, and empowered in their own journey and demonstrate how recovery from an eating disorder is possible.”

— *Breagh Christie, Peer Mentor*

Accessing Care

We further expanded access to our professionally led services, adding **additional Registered Dietitians and Mental Health Clinicians**. To reduce barriers and allow for more equitable access to services, generous subsidies are available for anyone without insurance or financial means with support from the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia.

This year:

NUTRITION COUNSELLING

111 CLIENTS were supported *(more than double the previous year)*

615 SESSIONS were provided *(an increase of 15%)*

COUNSELLING

93 CLIENTS were supported *(an increase of 58%)*

428 SESSIONS provided *(an increase of 12%)*

“My therapist is very supportive in my recovery journey. I am grateful to have this service. It’s a game changer to have someone who understands the struggles of an eating disorder.”

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS...4



Growing Peer Support Across Canada

In the fall of 2022, the Public Health Agency of Canada awarded Eating Disorders Nova Scotia \$1.27 million over two years for the **national expansion of existing Peer Support programs**. The youth-focused project is in partnership with Body Brave in Hamilton. It offers easy-to-access resources, tools, and programming that are

designed and delivered by people with lived experience of an eating disorder. Like all our other Peer Support services, it is **free to access and doesn't require a formal diagnosis**. A National Youth Advisory Council is helping to guide the expansion. The program is launching under the name **Body Peace** in fall of 2023.

“Peer support programs are proven to have a positive impact on health and well-being, including for the treatment and management of Eating Disorders and disordered eating. Eating Disorders Nova Scotia is using peer support in their work with youth and their families to help facilitate recovery and promote overall well-being.”

— Andy Fillmore, Member of Parliament for Halifax

OUTREACH INITIATIVES

We expanded our outreach efforts increasing awareness of available resources for recovery, assisting with system navigation as needed, and encouraging folks to seek support. We also delivered educational sessions for health care providers, community organizations, and others to increase knowledge of Eating Disorders and how to support people experiencing them.

20 OUTREACH PRESENTATIONS and workshops were delivered to more than 600 people;

2500+ PEOPLE connected with us through phone, email, or direct message on our social media channels.

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia was selected for the Bell Let's Talk Day [Video Spotlight](#), which featured just 11 outstanding mental health charities in Canada.

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia was invited to present at several national conferences in 2022–2023, including:

BodyPeace Conference

Canada Health Infoway Conference

Canadian Collaborative Mental Health Care Conference

Crossroads Interdisciplinary Health Conference

Frayme's Learning Institute

"This is probably one of the best, well rounded presentations I have ever attended on eating disorders. I appreciated that it included a comprehensive take on all the different aspects involved in the development and maintenance of the disorders."



At the provincial and national levels, **Eating Disorders Nova Scotia** works to raise awareness of the prevalence and impact of Eating Disorders and advocate for person-centered care, increased access to support and treatment, and measuring outcomes that are meaningful.

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia is a member of:

Nova Scotia Health's Eating Disorders Program Steering Committee (*Nova Scotia*)

Nova Scotia Health's Eating Disorders Program Family and Patient Advisory Committee (*Nova Scotia*)

Stepped Care 2.0 Collaborative (*Nova Scotia Health, Stepped Care, and Mental Health Commission of Canada*)

Quality Mental Health Care Network (*Mental Health Commission of Canada*)

E-Mental Health Care Collaborative (*Mental Health Commission of Canada*)

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia was invited to testify for the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women's hearing on the Mental Health of Young Women and Girls, resulting in the report entitled: [A Step-by-step Approach to Supporting the Mental Health of Young Women and Girls in Canada](#).

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia is currently involved in several research projects including:

Understanding and Mitigating the Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Children, Youth, and Families living with an Eating Disorder: A National Implementation Study of a Virtual Parent-Led Peer Support Intervention (*Canadian Institutes of Health Research*). *This resulted in the new Family Peer Support Project.*

The Increase in Economic and Social Costs for Eating Disorders in Youth Across Canada: How Much Did the COVID Pandemic Cost Youth, Families, and the System (*Canadian Institutes of Health Research*).

Early Intervention for Eating Disorders in Ontario Integrated Youth Services: Best Practices for Implementation, Adaptation, Evaluation and Spread. Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) — Transforming Health with Integrated Care (THINC) Implementation Science Team Grant.

Utilizing Peer Mentors to Improve Transitions for Youth with Eating Disorders: A Feasibility Study in partnership with NS Health, IWK, Dalhousie University with funding from the Nova Scotia Health Research Fund.



2023 HIGHLIGHTS...1

130+ people received clinical subsidies

220 clients received professional care

615 nutritional counselling sessions were provided

529 therapy sessions were provided

2500+ people connected with us

1101 people registered for **38** virtual workshops

2023 HIGHLIGHTS...2

32 new peer mentors were trained

117 people participated in our
Trans+ Peer Support group

(LGBTQ2SA+ people now represent 22% of our clients)

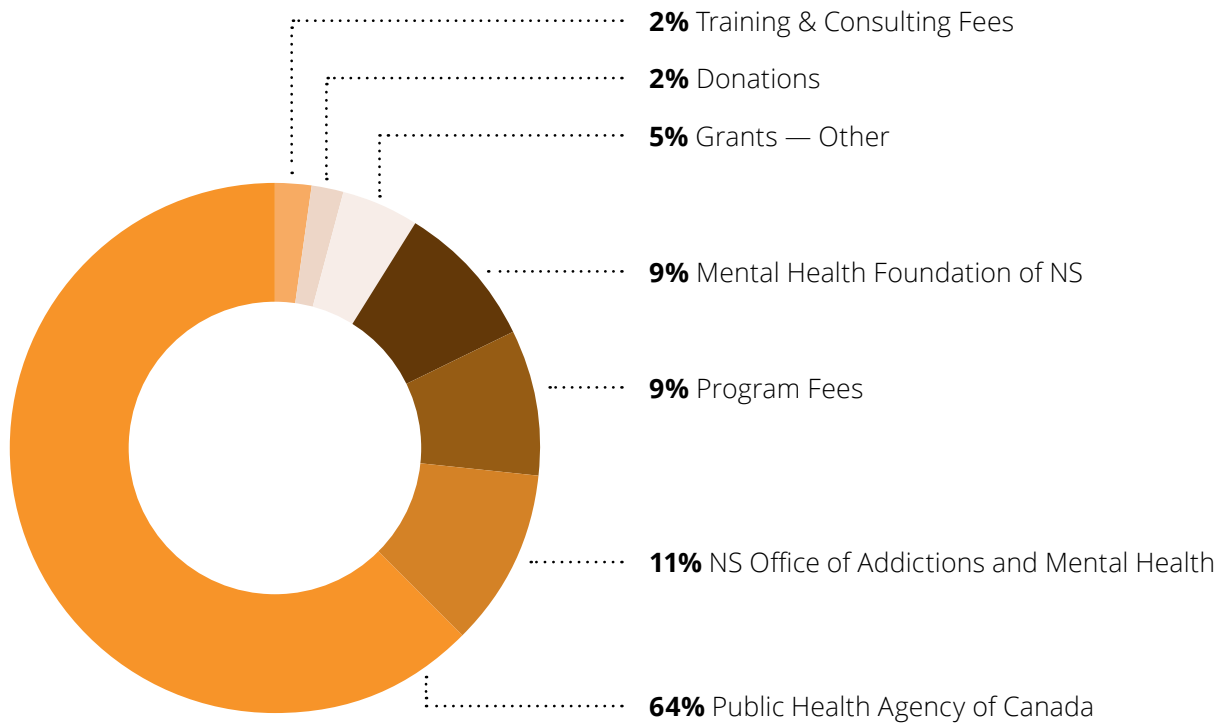
256 people accessed our
online Peer Support chat

486 individual Peer Mentoring
sessions were delivered

64 people were matched
with a Peer Mentor

\$2500 via grocery gift
cards provided to **70** people

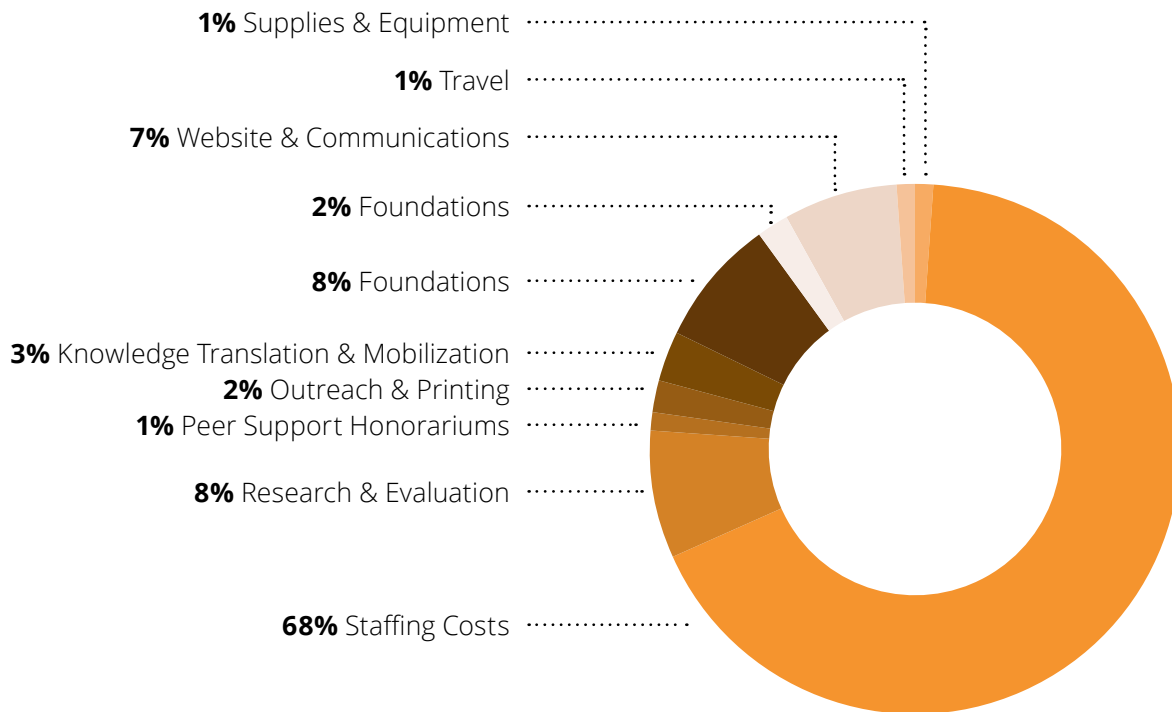
FINANCIALS...1



Revenue

Public Health Agency of Canada.....	\$620,187
NS Office of Addictions and Mental Health	\$105,000
Program Fees	\$89,068
Mental Health Foundation of NS	\$83,329
Grants — Other	\$46,530
Donations	\$16,028
Training & Consulting Fees.....	\$15,200
Total	\$975,396

FINANCIALS...2



Expenses

Accounting Fees.....	\$16,462
Dues and Fees.....	\$4,797
E-platform.....	\$81,400
Insurance.....	\$700
Knowledge Translation & Mobilization.....	\$27,664
Outreach and Printing.....	\$19,369
Peer Support Honorariums.....	\$12,719
Research & Evaluation.....	\$84,052
Staffing Costs.....	\$704,714
Supplies & Equipment.....	\$6,390
Travel.....	\$12,107
Website & Communications.....	\$73,410
Total.....	\$1,043,784

Board of Directors

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Collette Deschenes

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Mark Thibodeau

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Becca Bishop

Clarisse Nga Fouda

Jennifer Brady

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CLINICAL AND OPERATIONS MANAGER

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YOUTH PEER SUPPORT COORDINATOR

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PEER SUPPORT NAVIGATOR

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PEER MENTOR

Daphne Wornovitzky

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Nicole Otto, RD

Kathryn Fraser, RD

Breanne Hopkin, RD

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Dr. Hali Bauld

Retired Staff

Sarah Roht

Admin Lead, PHAC

Catherine Armor

Communications Coordinator

Issac Wright

Safe, Seen and Supported Project Coordinator

Mollie Cronin

Artist in Residence

Alexis Jones

Recreation Therapist

Mallory Gorman

Recreation Therapist

Amber Gross

Project Lead, Eating Disorders within African Nova Scotian Communities

Peer Mentors

Alicia Broughm

Barbara Beaton

Breagh Christie

Brennah Stairs

Brianna Comeau

Bryn Joy

Caitlin Robinson

Candle Kozak

Caroline Mastropaolo

Catherine Moleski

Chasity St. Louis

Chloe Grande

Chris Brown

Doris Ward

Emily Chaytor

Fulvia Ferraro

Gabrielle Smith

Hannah Bing

Isaac Wright

Jaime Delaney

Jasmine Clearly-Gosine

Jennifer MacDonald

Katie Lamarche

Krysten Rutherford

Makenzie Dunn

Matthew Moulton

Melanie Macleod

Monique Silver

Nat Quathamer

Olivia Bezanson

Rachel MacDonald

Sally Wolchyn-Raab

Sara Densmore

Yaejin Kim

Megan Blanche

Ellen Boucher

Allison Sippel

Victoria Hendrycks

Ashley Huff

“Peer support to me is an act of compassion both towards myself and to others. Using skills I have learned in recovery to support others has allowed for me to maintain my recovery. I am incredibly grateful to be able to provide peer support.”

Donors

Thanks to the generosity of the community. When people reached out for support, we were there.

Acadia CAFP	Kelly Christie
Alexandra Cherry	Kelly Peckham
Amy MacFarlane	Keri Hardman
Anne Marie Coolen	Lori Harrop
Asmita Sodhi	Maria Wilson
Charlotte Britten	Mark Thibodeau
Collette Deschenes	Maryse Pelletier-Hibbert
Craig Gorveatt	Matthew Moulton
David Miller	Michelle Lemieux
Gina MacDougall	Patricia MacDonald
Hali Bauld	Rachel Crosbie
James Armour	Rika Kebede
Janet McCleave	Rowena Nunn
Japna Sidhu-Brar	Sandra and Jamie Baillie
Jennifer Gauthier	Scott Ellis
Jessica Inkpen	Shaleen Jones
Kathleen Thompson	Sonia Kumar
Katie Amber	Tau Lambda Xi Sorority
Kayla Hamelin	Victoria Taylor

And all of those who chose to remain anonymous.

We are grateful for the support from our 2022–23 funders.

Nova Scotia Office of Addictions and Mental Health
Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia
Community Foundations of Canada
Bell Let's Talk Community Foundation
Community Foundation of Nova Scotia

Special thank you to Sobey's for providing \$2500 in gift cards to support those experiencing food insecurity. Nourish to flourish!

"Thank you for all you do! I have benefited from your free resources, and I know they make a huge difference for our community."

"Thank you for the valuable support you provide for individuals and their families/friends. The family support group saved my life at a very challenging time."

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