

A “longer” History of the Public Health Association of Nova Scotia 1992-2011

2002

(and 1992-2002 within this 2002 report)

PHANS 2002 AGM

On Thursday Oct 3rd PHANS held its 29th Annual General Meeting at the IWK hospital. Over 30 people attended the event, where they listened to keynote speaker, Dr. Christina Mills, President of the Canadian Public Health Association. Individuals participating in the meeting, had the opportunity to sign up for PHANS / CPHA memberships for half the normal price. It was a stimulating evening that will help launch efforts to strengthen public health and primary care in Nova Scotia.

2002 - The Board of the Public Health Association of Nova Scotia (PHANS) at its October 28 meeting passed a motion to table at the next CPHA Board meeting that CPHA and the PTBAs collaborate on a unified response to both the Kirby and Romanow reports. Further, PHANS recommended that all parties be reflected on the respective submissions. CPHA has since placed this motion on the agenda, and indicates support of the approach.

We need your input on the Kirby Report in order to prepare for the discussion and draft a submission with CPHA and the other provincial and territorial associations. We would like to know any questions that should be asked to engage thoughtful discussion.

History - PHANS 10-Year Highlights & Reflections 1992-2002

The past 10 years have been bracketed by milestones in health reform in Nova Scotia, and PHANS has been involved every step of the way. From the Royal Commission on Health Care to the Working Group on Midwifery Regulation, through the Blueprint Committee and every Task Force, Working Group and Subcommittee in between, PHANS has had a role and a voice.

The chronology of PHANS' activities over the past decade reveals three themes or focuses for our activities:

1. Health Reform;
 2. Public Health and Its Relationship to Health Promotion and Disease Prevention;
- and,
3. Efforts to Involve PHANS Members More Actively.

Health Reform

During the years following the Royal Commission on Health Care, PHANS became a credible independent voice for health system reform. This credibility was the result of hard work and persistence. For example, PHANS has been represented on nearly every Task Force, Committee and Commission related to health reform that was struck during the past decade. We've had members on the Task Force on Primary Health Care, the Ministerial Task Force on Physician Policy Development, the Task Force on Nursing, the Blueprint Committee, the Provincial Health Council and the Working Group on Midwifery Regulation.

We have offered critiques of nearly every document that these bodies have produced and met with every Minister of Health to state our positions on all aspects of health system reform. PHANS also made presentations to the Law Amendments Committee regarding the Act to Establish Regional Health Boards (Bill 95) and participated on a review committee to revise this legislation.

We've also been involved in joint efforts to influence health reform, including Strengthening Community Health and the Think Tank on Health System Reform.

PHANS contributed to health reform nationally as well as provincially. At the 1994 CPHA conference, our resolution calling for CPHA to develop a position paper on midwifery was passed and we subsequently contributed most of the text for the position paper that was published in 1995. We also participated in a national effort to develop Child Health Goals.

Public Health and Its Relationship to Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

PHANS efforts in this arena have been through advocacy and lobbying, as well as through participation and representation on a dizzying variety of committees and projects.

In recent years, PHANS has worked to help government decision makers in departments other than health -- for example, environment, education, agriculture -- understand the concepts of population health and the determinants of health and how these are affected by decisions and initiatives that occur far from the Health Department.

Perhaps the most intense and effective of these PHANS initiatives was our critique of the provincial government's 'Government by Design' document. PHANS' analysis -- titled "Nova Scotia's Health Goals, Determinants of Health and Government by Design" -- was circulated extensively among government departments and Regional Health Boards.

PHANS furthered this initiative by organizing a major intersectoral conference in May 1995. "Sickness, Health and the Economy" was attended by over 100 participants from federal, provincial, regional and local governments.

PHANS also raised the profile of public health by initiating annual Public Health Awards at this conference as well as by producing a brochure describing our vision of public health.

PHANS has represented public health on groups addressing issues including:

- ▶ Heart health
- ▶ Smoking
- ▶ AIDS
- ▶ Drug Abuse
- ▶ School Health Education
- ▶ Sex Education
- ▶ Cervical Screening
- ▶ Gambling
- ▶ Environmental Illness
- ▶ Environment and Health
- ▶ Nutrition

PHANS has lobbied and advocated for all of these issues, for health reform and public health, and for (and against) other causes, including:

- ▶ Infant formula contracts at the Grace
- ▶ The availability of condoms in schools
- ▶ The loss of Medical Officers of Health
- ▶ User fees
- ▶ Liberalized sale of alcohol
- ▶ Support for the Provincial Health Goals
- ▶ Parks and protected areas
- ▶ Pit and Quarry regulations
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Accountability and transparency for Regional Health Boards
- ▶ Home care
- ▶ Primary health care projects
- ▶ Emergency Contraceptive Program
- ▶ Extending the Canada Health Act
- ▶ Network for Health Surveillance in Canada

Over the past year, PHANS has been working on a strategic plan to promote healthy public policy across government departments and to systematically consider the effects that government policies have on health.

2003-2004

(Quotes follow from the President's Report)

Leadership Report (2003-2004)

We spoke at the beginning of the evening about the basket – its design and shape representing the public health infrastructure requirements and investments.

- Last year we said it was important to have an independent review of public health in Nova Scotia. That independent review is now in progress.
- Last year we received an endorsement from the provincial and territorial association about the public health capacity framework. A consultation is underway in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Newfoundland/Labrador and Manitoba to refine that Framework.
- Last year the National Advisory Committee on SARS and Public Health (Naylor Commission) released its report Learning From SARS: Renewal of Public Health in Canada. At the same time CPHA initiated efforts to convene a Coalition of Public Health. As a result, today we have a public health agency with a Chief Officer of Public Health; a number of consultation underway to define the functions and core competencies of public health.

The challenge – to maintain the shape of and strengthen the basket we need monitor and advocate for the implementation of the Independent Review and Naylor recommendations. The color and the richness of those colors represent our work with partners.

- Last year we agreed it was important to partner with other organizations in support of an independent review of public health in Nova Scotia. Doctors Nova Scotia, the Health Charities Network, Dalhousie Health Professions, and the Atlantic Research Centre for Health Promotion endorsed the review and substantially contributed to the terms of reference for the Review.
- Last year students came forward and asked that we support their efforts to learn more about public health
- Two years ago we said it was necessary to explore partnering with the other provincial and territorial associations and specifically within the Atlantic Region. Last year our Atlantic partners agreed to pursue a partnership and start by securing a grant. With assistance from CPHA, the Atlantic Provinces as well as Manitoba are collaborating on a partnership grant to refine the public health capacity framework.
- Last year Gerry Defoe retired from CPHA and Elinor Wilson became the new Chief Executive Officer. This year the Board of CPHA has initiated a governance review to insure we are properly organized to move forward. This review included looking at the relationships with the provinces and territories.
- Last year CPHA initiated the establishment of the Coalition of Public Health in the 21st Century. This year there are approximately 50 organizations participating in the effort to advance public health.

The challenge – Continue forging these partnerships so that the colors of the basket are strong and rich.

We have spoken about the texture of the basket throughout the evening. Educating all publics about public health.

- Within the last year we have developed a number of tools
 - the public health capacity framework,
 - the CPHA communication tool kit “Working For You”, and
 - the Coalition fact sheets.

There is truth to a challenge by Roy Romanow that in order to make progress on public health we must engage the public’s imagination. We hold the people of Nova Scotia and all Canadians in the basket. The synergistic effect of successfully addressing all three of these challenges – the infrastructure/investment requirements, our partnerships and our efforts to educate all publics will ensure Nova Scotians and Canadians are healthy and safe: at home, work, school and play 24/7.

2004 – 2005

(Quotes follow from the President’s Report)

- PHANS developed an initial Public Health Capacity Framework when there was beginning to be a lot of conversation in Canada (pre-SARS)
 - The Provincial and Territorial Associations endorsed it as a practical tool
 - Collaborative partnership evolved to conduct initial consultations
- Independent Review of Public Health in NS
 - Evolved out of the 2003 PHANS AGM
 - Partners
 - Health Charities Network
 - Doctor’s Nova Scotia
 - “The Renewal of Public Health In Nova Scotia” September 2005
- CPHA Governance Review
 - Development of the Advisory Council
 - Composition, Linkage to CPHA Board, Implementation
- National Public Health Goals
Draft goals statements were refined in the summer of 2005 and reviewed at the CPHA conference; 11 goals have been developed; Next week the Deputy Ministers of Health will be presented with these goals.

2005-2006

(Quotes follow from the President's Report)

PHANS decided to focus on a few key areas. - Early Childhood Development, Independent Review of Public Health and Atlantic Partnership. In addition to our key areas of focus, last year PHANS was active provincially, regionally and nationally.

Provincially:

- We celebrated and partook in the official launch of the Independent Review of Public Health in Nova Scotia
- PHANS was represented on numerous committees/forums including the Nova Scotia Health Promotion Advisory Committee, the Public Health Research and Knowledge Translation Network, the Chronic Disease Management Forum, a consultation on Problem Gambling, and a Scoping Review and Research Synthesis of Community-level Interventions that Modify Social Environments and Influence Health.
- PHANS proposed and had approved a standing committee on public health in capital health region.
- Presented an Honorary Mention for the Public Health Award to Carolyn Whitby for her work around the Annapolis Valley Health Promoting Schools Program.

Regionally:

- PHANS in collaboration with the Atlantic public health associations presented the Public Health Capacity Framework at the Atlantic Regional Network Conference.

Nationally:

- CPHA launched its new governance board and the new Advisory Council. All provincial and territorial public health associations have a seat on the Council.
- The new federal government caused concern for many of us with cancellation of the national daycare plan. PHANS partnered with Circle Time for Child Care to advocate for restoration of this program. A press conference took place in which PHANS was one of five speakers and a petition of over 9,000 names was presented.

We have made progress in Nova Scotia, and more than ever we need to collectively stand up and be noticed. We need to build strong partnerships, we need to ensure our messages are consistent, and we need to engage the public. We can not do this alone, each and everyone one of us has a role to play. Together we do make a difference.

2006-2007

(Quotes follow from the President's Report)

The public health policy subgroup included early childhood development and public health renewal. The structural/operational sub group included the membership committee, revising the bylaws, and the Atlantic partnership. The human resources subgroup included supporting public health practice (through the core competencies and examining educational opportunities) and human resource development. In addition to our key areas of focus, last year PHANS was active provincially, regionally and nationally.

Provincially:

- PHANS was represented on numerous committees/forums including the Public Health Research and Knowledge Translation Network; Capital Health Population Health Committee, Provincial Injury Prevention Strategy, a workshop on the Canadian Community Health Nurses Association Standards of Practice, annual general meeting of Smoke Free Nova Scotia and a Scoping Review and Research Synthesis of Community-level Interventions that Modify Social Environments and Influence Health.
- PHANS participated in the Ministers Task Force on Safer Streets and Communities
- Community consultation by Capital District Health Authority (Quest)

Regionally:

- PHANS participated in a maritime consultation for the CPHA/ National Collaborating Centre – Determinants of Health on health literacy.
- The Public Health Association collaborated with PHANS and the other Atlantic public health associations on an Atlantic consultation of core competencies.

Nationally:

- Prevent Violence Canada was established in February. This organization includes representatives from all provincial and territorial public health association, including PHANS.
- Canadian Public Health Association is collaborating with PHANS on its spring 2008 national meeting being held in Halifax.

We have made progress in Nova Scotia, and more than ever we need to collectively stand up and be noticed. We need to build strong partnerships, we need to ensure our messages are consistent, and we need to engage the public. We can not do this alone, each and everyone one of us has a role to play. Together we do make a difference.

2007-2008

(Quotes follow from the President's Report)

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Ten Board meetings were held in various locations around Halifax and Dartmouth. Teleconferencing was provided at meetings to enable Board members from distant areas in Cape Breton and the South Shore to attend regularly.

Starting the year off with nine of our sixteen Directors being new, first-time board members required us to take some time to acquire a good understanding of our purpose and develop effective ways to work together to achieve it. We reviewed and discussed PHANS' history, mission and By Laws, identified our priorities and developed a two year work plan. Systems were maintained to document and update membership lists; an annual budget was developed; and membership in the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks was renewed. We also developed policies to guide Board decision making when responding to requests to support various activities and/or groups. (both policies are posted on the Members' login section of the PHANS website)

STRENGTHENING THE ORGANIZATION

As with most organizations, having a good sense of who we are and where we want to go in the future is influenced by an awareness and gratitude for the work accomplished by our predecessors. Protecting the documents that enable us to do that is thus an important thing to do. PHANS has been in existence since at least the 1930's or 1940's, and possibly before that, as an affiliate or branch member of the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) which was founded in 1910. I can recall events in the 1960's. PHANS has files stored in the Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM) going back to 1972.

This year the Board initiated plans to gather and archive PHANS files from 2000 to 2004 with NSARM. We have also agreed to join with the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) as they gather partners across Canada, to support a pan Canadian project, open to all disciplines in public health – to write the history of public health in Canada from Confederation to the present day.

We have inherited a good organization, with a clear mission – but as with all things, there is always need to review and update policies and operational guidelines. Hence we are recommending By Law revisions to reflect current practices such as email and teleconferencing and because we are a small, low budget organization, a more cost effective way to manage an annual audit of our financial accounts. We are also recommending an enhanced mission statement in response to the need for PHANS to not only focus on advocating for policy change but also to work towards enhancing the capacity of the public health workforce. This need was identified by PHANS members

responding to the PHANS Membership Survey in 2006 and again at our last Annual Meeting when two Resolutions were presented asking PHANS to support Skills Enhancement for Public Health and the Core Competencies for Public Health – two important capacity building initiatives of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

ENHANCING MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

Modern technology has enabled PHANS to communicate with members more efficiently than ever before at a very low cost (\$232.00 this year). Some 80% of PHANS members have joined the PHANS list serve where they may post and receive news about upcoming meetings, events, conferences, links to new reports, resources and services about public health. Members also have access to an archive of PHANS board meeting minutes, By Laws and policies on a Members only log in section on the PHANS website www.phans.ca (47 members are registered there). Our website also receives 25 to 30 visitors from the public each month.

The PHANS Membership Committee is reporting a 50% increase in our membership this year – up to 110 members. Most of this increase is likely attributable to the 2008 Annual CPHA Conference being held at the World Trade & Convention Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia from June 1 to 4, 2008 whereby a person with an up to date membership in CPHA was able to access a reduced registration fee and many of them chose a conjoint membership in PHANS and CPHA. This event also enabled PHANS to reach out and engage many of its members as volunteers in a range of activities at the conference. In fact we had a wonderful response from members when we asked for volunteers and are very grateful for all their help. The PHANS Conference Committee report describes this work in more detail. Congratulations to this Committee and thank you everyone for a job well done!

In the coming year we want to continue to find ways to involve members in PHANS activities and continue to grow our membership. The PHANS Membership Committee and PHANS Communication Committee will be working to build on these achievements.

ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC POLICIES THAT SUPPORT HEALTH

Speaking on your behalf and advocating for public policies and decisions that support a broad vision of health for Nova Scotians has drawn PHANS into a broad range of local, provincial and national initiatives.

Local/provincial initiatives

- Smoke Free Nova Scotia (SFNS) – PHANS is an associate member and supports SFNS activities. News, updates and minutes are posted for members on the PHANS list serve.
- Steering Committee to oversee the implementation of a Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Alliance for Nova Scotia – PHANS is a member of the Steering Committee.

- Public Health Renewal - PHANS contributed to the review of public health in 2005 and maintains an active presence in the renewal process. A meeting was held with Dr Robert Strang and Janet Braunstein Moody of the NS Dept of Health Promotion and Protection on May 14, 2008 regarding the actions underway to renew the public health system in Nova Scotia.
- Community Action on Homelessness – a PHANS member attended their Roundtable on Complex Health and Housing needs to explore solutions that address homelessness in HRM.
- Town council of Wolfville, Nova Scotia- PHANS endorsed their Smoke Free Vehicles By Law to protect children from second hand smoke in private vehicles.
- Nova Scotia Poverty Reduction Coalition – PHANS endorsed their “Framework for a Poverty Reduction Strategy in Nova Scotia”.
- Student Organization for Public Health Awareness (SOPHA) Dalhousie University – PHANS assisted them to access speakers and resources for their Public Health Awareness Week.
- Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre (AHPRC) – At their request, PHANS spoke to eight delegates from emerging public health associations in the Balkans about PHANS. AHPRC and CPHA are working on a project called “Strengthening Balkans Civil Society’s Voice for Public Health through Public Health Associations”. Their goal is to develop new Public health Associations in the Balkans(Bosnia and Serbia). The delegates were in Halifax attending the CPHA Annual Conference.
- Position statements on three public health issues (the renewal of public health; poverty reduction; and early child development) were prepared to present to the three provincial party caucus in Nova Scotia (Conservative, Liberal and New Democratic Parties). Plans are underway to visit each caucus.

National initiatives

- CPHA Annual Conference, Halifax, NS – PHANS provided volunteer support and organized two very successful events – a fun night and dinner at Pier 21 and a Public Forum “Poverty and Public Health: exposing a complex relationship”.
- CPHA Advisory Committee – the President of PHANS sits on this Committee. Meetings are by teleconference every two months. The Advisory Committee provides the CPHA Board with collective intelligence and advice on issues of a local and regional nature; acts as a mechanism to link to the grassroots; and assists to disseminate information from CPHA to other communities and networks.
- CPHA Board – PHANS supported the nomination of two PHANS members to the CPHA Board (Hope Beanlands and Jane Farquharson). Elections for four CPHA Board positions will close on November 14, 2008.
- Election Canada 2008 –a federal election primer was developed to provide questions to ask political candidates about healthy child development and healthy communities. It was circulated broadly to members and contacts of community health boards and family resource centres throughout Nova Scotia.
- Follow-up to the Resolutions approved at the 2007 PHANS Annual General Meeting.
 - *Resolution 1 – Skills Enhancement for Public Health* – PHANS endorsed Skills Enhancement for Public Health and agreed to encourage Nova Scotia’s public health organizations and practitioners to participate in the Skills

- Enhancement for Public Health program.
- *Resolution 2 – Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada – PHANS* endorsed the Core Competencies for Public Health and agreed to encourage the adoption and implementation of core competencies among Nova Scotia's public health practitioners.

PHANS followed through with its support for these two Resolutions by advertising both programs on the PHANS website; providing links to both program's websites on the PHANS website; advertising both programs on the PHANS list serve; and by sending out notices and reminders to register for the Skills Enhancement Modules within the required sign-up dates. PHANS also shared copies of the Resolutions with other Public Health Associations in Canada and the Community Health Nurses Association of Canada (CHNAC). As a result CHNAC approved two similar resolutions at their Annual General Meeting in May 2008; and a PHANS representative attended a workshop with Capital Health Public Health staff on the newly released Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada and the renewal of the Public Health System.

- *Resolution 3 – Prevention of Violence Canada - PHANS* endorsed and agreed to support the work of Prevention Violence Canada.

PHANS followed through with its support for this Resolution by volunteering a representative on the National Steering Committee. This group was established in February 2006 and has representatives from all provincial and territorial Public Health Associations. PHANS also assisted by collecting donations to pay for the expenses of a Town Hall Breakfast meeting held at the Annual CPHA Conference.

2008- 2009

(Quotes follow from the President's Report)

This has been a stable year for the PHANS Board of Directors with the addition of only one new member last year. The priorities this year have been:

- Development and approval of PHANS Bylaws
- PHANS advocacy
- Enhancing public health competencies through the Core Competency Workshop.

As well, PHANS continues to be flexible and responsive to current issues, speaking on your behalf and advocating for healthy public policy and decisions that support a broad vision of health for Nova Scotians.

PHANS BOARD

Eleven Board meetings were held this year with the majority of meetings held via conference call. Board members have indicated a preference for most meetings to be held by conference call as this facilitates participation by all members regardless of location and enhances engagement as all members are participating by telephone. I

would like to thank Public Health Services, Capital District, First Nations & Inuit Health, Health Canada, and Department of Health Promotion & Protection for supporting the conference calls.

With only one new Board member this year, we had a stable and experienced Board of Directors, which I think has contributed to our success in achieving the ambitious goals set for 2008/09.

BUILDING A STRONG AND VIBRANT PHANS

The PHANS Membership Committee is reporting a small increase in our membership this year, with current membership at 113 members (this is an increase of 3 members). PHANS members have represented PHANS at Violence Prevention Canada and Smoke Free Nova Scotia meetings. As well, many PHANS members have participated as members of the Core Competency Workshop Working Group - without you this workshop would not have been possible.

Both the PHANS website and list serve continue to support members by facilitating information sharing regarding upcoming meetings, events, conferences, links to new reports, resources and services related to public health. PHANS Members also have access to an archive of PHANS board meeting minutes, By-Laws and policies on a 'Members Only' section on the PHANS website www.phans.ca

We are always interested in exploring new ways to involve PHANS members in activities and have some new ideas to encourage and facilitate input from PHANS members regarding areas of focus for the Board - stay tuned!

PHANS BY-LAWS

A major initiative over the past year has been the revision and approval of the PHANS By-Laws. This was identified as a priority project for the Board as the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies did not approve the current PHANS By-Laws. As well, a review of the By-Laws by the Board indicated areas for improvement and revision.

The Board revised the current By-Laws by incorporating the standards of the Registry of Joint Stocks and adding additional By-Laws based on a review of public health associations across Canada. The new and improved By-Laws were presented to PHANS member for approval at a Special Meeting held on June 16, 2009. The PHANS By-Laws and Memorandum of Association for a Non-Profit Society were approved by the membership and subsequently approved by the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

We feel this process has strengthened the current By-Laws - for example, one of the new By-Laws 'Voting by Proxy' should facilitate participation and feedback from all members across Nova Scotia on important issues.

The new By-Laws are posted on the PHANS website.

Core Competency Workshop

The mission of PHANS is two-fold:

- Work towards a society that supports a broad vision of health for Nova Scotians by advocating for policy change and
- Work towards enhancing the capacity of public health workers in Nova Scotia by providing networking and educational opportunities.

To support the PHANS mission, the idea of a workshop to enhance the capacity of public health practitioners related to the core competencies was strongly supported by the PHANS Board. A working group was struck to plan the event - many PHANS members participated and helped to lead this process. As well, recognizing the work happening across the public health system related to 'Living the Core Competencies', this work was integrated from the initial planning stages.

I would like to thank all members of the workshop planning group for a wonderful workshop...another great example of the commitment and engagement our members!

Advocacy

Recognizing the impact of policy on the health of Nova Scotians, PHANS is committed to advocating for healthy public policy.

In 2008/09, PHANS met with the New Democratic Party Caucus, Progressive Conservative Caucus and the Liberal Caucus. These meetings presented an opportunity to provide information regarding the work of PHANS, as well as, to highlight PHANS position statements on three public health issues: the renewal of public health; poverty reduction; and early child development.

The development of the June 2009 election bulletin supported both PHANS members and non-members to discuss and highlight relevant public health issues with their local political candidates. The feedback on the election bulletin was very positive.

PHANS welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively and support other groups and organizations to support healthy public policy and to advocate on issues of concern. To help navigate through the many requests received by PHANS for letters of support, participation in events, etc - PHANS has developed a Template listing criteria that need to be considered before PHANS will support the request. This ensures alignment with PHANS vision and mission and helps PHANS to support important issues in a timely way.

Local/provincial initiatives

- Smoke Free Nova Scotia (SFNS). PHANS is an associate member and supports SFNS activities. News, updates and minutes are posted for members on the PHANS list serve.
- Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Alliance for Nova Scotia Steering Committee. PHANS is a member of the Steering Committee.
- National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. Hope Beanlands, Scientific Director gave an overview of this NCC and current work underway at the June Special Meeting.

National initiatives

- CPHA Advisory Committee. The President of PHANS is a member of the Canadian Public Health Association Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee provides the CPHA Board with collective intelligence and advice on issues of a local and regional nature; acts as a mechanism to link to the grassroots; and assists to disseminate information from CPHA to other communities and networks. Meetings are by teleconference every two months

2009-2010

(Quotes follow from the President's Report)

PHANS's Mission was our guide:

- To work towards a society that supports a broad vision of health for Nova Scotians by advocating for policy change.
- To work towards enhancing the capacity of public health workers in Nova Scotia by

providing networking and educational opportunities.

Accomplishing this mission as volunteers has been, is and always will be a challenge. Recognizing our strengths and limitations, selecting priorities and making evidence informed decisions are some of the guiding principles that have enabled us to sort through the multiplicity of needs, demands and expectations. This year we focused on advocacy, our raison d'être, and our ongoing work to build a strong and vibrant organization. Developing a strategic plan to guide PHANS' activities through to 2012 was a major accomplishment.

A team of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers came together to provide the expertise and energy that enabled PHANS to accomplish this work. I extend a most sincere thanks to all of you on behalf of the PHANS Board for a job well done. I also want to thank the Board of Directors for their steady and generous support this past year. It has been a good year.

ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC POLICIES THAT SUPPORT HEALTH

Speaking on your behalf and advocating for public policies and decisions that support a broad vision of health for Nova Scotians has drawn PHANS into a broad range of local, provincial and national initiatives. Supporting ways to strengthen the capacity of the public health workforce is part of this advocacy work. Nova Scotia's Minister of Health Promotion and Protection, Maureen MacDonald, as a frequent recipient of our letters to government recently responded "I do appreciate PHANS ongoing involvement in initiatives that support public health in Nova Scotia".

LOCAL/PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

Public Health Renewal - PHANS contributed to the review of public health in 2005 and maintains an active presence in the renewal process. This past June three Board members met with Dr Robert Strang and Janet Braunstein Moody of the NS Dept of Health Promotion and Protection regarding the actions underway to renew the public health system in Nova Scotia. We were encouraged to hear about the ongoing accomplishments being made on the 21 renewal actions. However, there is more work to do to ensure that prevention is recognized as a key component of a strong and sustainable health care system and concern about the sustainability of the renewal process at this time of severe fiscal restraint.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia - This past October, PHANS joined with the Foundation as a health promotion partner as they presented the positive news heard from their poll on health promotion. The Foundation asked Nova Scotians about their thoughts on the value of health promotion strategies and their importance as a government spending priority. The response was clear: more funding to support strategies is in demand. For any Nova Scotia wishing to view the poll more closely, the Foundation has posted the information to its website at www.heartandstroke.ns.ca.

Getting Back to Balance - PHANS joined in the Getting Back to Balance dialogues with Nova Scotia's Minister of Finance, Graham Steele. The Resource paper "Key public health messages: poverty and health" developed by PHANS Poverty Reduction Working group helped emphasize our message that poverty reduction and early childhood development are critical areas for action in improving health in Nova Scotia. Even with the current financial challenges, it is important to maintain a focus on the most vulnerable members of our society.

Nova Scotia's alcohol sales and revenue targets - collaborated with Injury Free Nova Scotia – to exchange letters with Nova Scotia's Minister of Finance, Graham Steele regarding this province's alcohol sales and revenue targets negatively impacting the health of the population

Use of advertising from alcohol companies during Halifax Regional Municipality sponsored events – voiced our support to Councillor McClusky and her motion to ban alcohol sponsorship. The motion was defeated at council but the fact that it was brought forward was in itself considered a small victory.

Smoke Free Nova Scotia (SFNS) – PHANS is an associate member and supports SFNS activities. News, updates and minutes are posted for members on the PHANS list serve.

NATIONAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) Centennial Conference (June 13-16/2010 Toronto). It was a privilege to attend on behalf of PHANS and I thank you all very much for supporting me to be there. For a more descriptive coverage of the events I suggest you peruse "The Daily" (CPHA's daily news coverage) on the CPHA website at www.cpha.ca Some of the highlights for me were:

- The centennial Panel of 5 eminent public health leaders (in Madeleine Stout, Roy Romanow, Jake Epp, Monique Begin, Marc Lalonde) tracing some of the major public health milestones during their tenures.
- Chief Public Health Officer David Butler-Jones' presentation – “The Twelve Great Achievements in Public Health” and his conclusion “...there is more to be done.”
- “This is Public Health Historical Expo” – take a virtual tour of this walk through exhibition about the history of public health in Canada at <http://cpha100.ca/expo-0> (Nova Scotia's own Liz Lambie – public health nutrition - is among more than 100 leaders recognized).
- The Canadian Network of Public Health Associations - This newly formed group will replace the CPHA Advisory Committee. The first face-to-face meeting was held on the Sunday AM for two hours, prior to the CPHA conference. All provinces and territories were represented. It was co-chaired by Debra Lynkowski (CPHA) and myself (for the Provincial Territorial Public Health Associations). Discussion included the identification of common goals and objectives for the Network and ways to work together. The group will meet every 2 months by teleconference for 1-1.5 hours. Future Agenda items include: working in partnership to enhance Canada's Public Health Core Competency work; roundtable exchanges; ageing of the public health workforce; Network membership; and Network Terms of reference.
- Prevention Violence Canada 6th Annual Town Hall breakfast meeting. The meeting included a presentation about a Model Core program paper on Violence prevention in British Columbia; discussion about increasing the capacity for collecting data, researching violence, promoting the primary prevention of violence, gender and social equality and equity, strengthening care and support services for victims, and the next meeting at the 2011 CPHA Conference – Montreal. As follow-up I updated Jeannette Combes about this meeting and confirmed with her that she is willing to continue to be PHANS' representative on the national committee.
- And so much more! Including a gala dinner and awards presentations (chaired by Hope Beanlands who is also a member of PHANS) Check out who received awards at <http://www.cpha.ca/en/conferences/archives/conf2010/awards.aspx>

A Tobacco Survey - PHANS collaborated with Smoke Free Nova Scotia (SFNS) to coordinate implementation and completion of this survey within Nova Scotia's nine health regions. Funding came from the Canadian Public Health Association (under contract from Health Canada) to undertake a project titled *The Next Stage: Delivering Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Knowledge through Public Health Networks* - a survey on public health and tobacco control targeted to provincial/territorial health regions and units. The survey data will provide valuable information about tobacco control activities that are being undertaken at local/regional levels. We very much appreciated the opportunity to work with Smoke Free Nova Scotia to accomplish this project.

Gun Control Registry – PHANS supported a national campaign against Bill C-391, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act (repeal of the long gun

registry). Letters were sent to all Nova Scotia Members of Parliament, Party Leaders and the MP who initiated the Bill in Parliament. PHANS is supporting a campaign of health organizations to NOT support this legislation.

The Public Health Knowledge Translation Network – PHANS participated in the formation of this national network. Teleconference meetings with a number of public health organizations from across Canada were facilitated by the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (NCCMT) – the Network provides a forum for public health organizations and other related organizations to collaborate on the promotion and use of evidence-informed public health (EIPH) and knowledge translation (KT). The group will meet three or four times a year by teleconference. A smaller working group is being formed to look at capacity building/skills development in KT, EIPH and use of evidence by public health disciplines, workforce and students.

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

Some of PHANS initiatives to enhance the capacity of the public health workforce have been underway for sometime, such as PHANS' website and list serve. Members are provided with current information about public health events, resources and programs through these venues.

Members also have access to an archive of PHANS board meeting minutes, By Laws and policies on a Members only log in section on the PHANS website www.phans.ca PHANS has also endorsed and continues to encourage members to participate in the on-line Skills Enhancement for Public Health Modules.

On September 23, 2009, PHANS provided a one day workshop for public health practitioners about the *Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada: Release 1.0 entitled, "Translating the Core Competencies for Public Health into Action"*. One hundred sixty-six (166) persons registered to attend the workshop. Most were from Public Health Services of Nova Scotia's District Health Authorities, the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, universities and First Nations organizations. Workshop participants were from many disciplines and organizations involved in public health and they were representative of all levels of the public health workforce in Nova Scotia. This heterogeneity created an environment within which a variety of view points and experiences were shared. As well, the speakers in the panel presentation were similarly representative of the diversity which exists in the public health workforce. Their presentations provided a unique opportunity for persons working in specific disciplines to hear about work being done in a wide range of areas of public health

A report describing the purpose of the workshop, who attended, how it was planned and delivered and the results achieved is posted on PHANS website. It includes an analysis of the processes utilized, and the lessons learned. It is anticipated that this model, developed by and for the public health community in Nova Scotia will be a prototype with application to other jurisdictions and settings across Canada to support the implementation of the *Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada: Release 1.0*.

BUILDING A STRONG AND VIBRANT PHANS

Board meetings

Twelve monthly board meetings were held, including two face to face sessions and ten by teleconference. We are grateful to First Nations and Inuit Health, Health Canada, the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection and the Public Health Agency of Canada, Atlantic Region for supporting the teleconferences.

Teleconferencing enabled board members from distant areas in Cape Breton and the South Shore to attend regularly. Four Board members are retiring at this AGM.

Samantha Cukier, Kathy Inkpen, Sharon Samland and Dr. Gaynor Watson- Creed have each contributed to our growth and our accomplishments. We thank them and wish them well in their future endeavours.

Increasing membership

PHANS membership remains steady at 100 members. Since January 2010 we have welcomed seven new and two returning members and lost nine members who moved away or chose not to renew. Ninety members have signed on to the list serve and fifty-four are registered on the members only page of PHANS website. Very few members access the members only site, even though they are reminded at least twice a year about what is there and how to access it. In the coming year we want to continue to find ways to involve members in PHANS activities and continue to grow our membership.

PHANS Strategic Plan 2010-2012

The Board approved a Strategic Plan at its September 2010 meeting, following several months of discussion and a face-to-face Board workshop in June. The face-to-face session also included a Board self evaluation and a review of members ideas voiced at PHANS 2009 Annual General meeting. Several of the ideas voiced influenced the plan including suggestions for another conference/workshop, the need to advocate for social justice, equity, mother/child health and Aboriginal health, citizen engagement, follow-up with the new government, promoting PHANS and seeking ways to better link the different public health disciplines. The Plan is posted on PHANS website. Three priority areas have been selected to be the main focus of PHANS' action and advocacy work.

- Early child development
- Reduction of health inequity and poverty
- Enhancing the capacity of the public health workforce

Short and long term action plans for each of the three priority areas are being developed by three working groups: Each working group has started off with a few directors from PHANS' Board and is (or will be soon) expanding its membership to include PHANS members and external members from the community.

In addition to the three working groups, the plan includes commitment to:

- Deliver a conference /workshop within the next two years
- Recruit, retain and engage members and new members
- Establish a Public Health Hero Award
- Meet with the NDP government and Liberal and Conservative party caucus early in 2011.

To conclude – this has been a busy and productive year. We have fulfilled our mandate to the best of our ability and we are ready to meet the challenges of the coming year. Indeed with the current fiscal climate, fraught with budget cuts and service reductions affecting the most vulnerable members of our society, it is more important than ever for PHANS to advocate for healthy public policy and to ensure that prevention is recognized as a key component of a strong and sustainable health care system.

2010-2011

(Quotes follow from the President's Report)

Accomplishing this mission as volunteers has been, is and always will be a challenge. Recognizing our strengths and limitations, selecting priorities and making evidence informed decisions are some of the guiding principles that have enabled us to sort through the multiplicity of needs, demands and expectations. This year we focused on advocacy, our raison d'être, and our ongoing work to build a strong and vibrant organization. Developing a strategic plan to guide PHANS' activities through to 2012 was a major accomplishment.

A team of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers came together to provide the expertise and energy that enabled PHANS to accomplish this work. I extend a most sincere thanks to all of you on behalf of the PHANS Board for a job well done. I also want to thank the Board of Directors for their steady and generous support this past year. It has been a good year.

ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC POLICIES THAT SUPPORT HEALTH

Speaking on your behalf and advocating for public policies and decisions that support a broad vision of health for Nova Scotians has drawn PHANS into a broad range of local, provincial and national initiatives. Supporting ways to strengthen the capacity of the public health workforce is part of this advocacy work. Nova Scotia's Minister of Health Promotion and Protection, Maureen MacDonald, as a frequent recipient of our letters to government recently responded "I do appreciate PHANS ongoing involvement in initiatives that support public health in Nova Scotia".

LOCAL/PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

Public Health Renewal - PHANS contributed to the review of public health in 2005 and maintains an active presence in the renewal process. This past June three Board members met with Dr Robert Strang and Janet Braunstein Moody of the NS Dept of Health Promotion and Protection regarding the actions underway to renew the public

health system in Nova Scotia. We were encouraged to hear about the ongoing accomplishments being made on the 21 renewal actions. However, there is more work to do to ensure that prevention is recognized as a key component of a strong and sustainable health care system and concern about the sustainability of the renewal process at this time of severe fiscal restraint.

Smoke Free Nova Scotia (SFNS) – PHANS is an associate member and supports SFNS activities. News, updates and minutes are posted for members on the PHANS list serve.

NATIONAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) Centennial Conference (June 2011 Montreal). It was a privilege to attend on behalf of PHANS and I thank you all very much for supporting me to be there. For a more descriptive coverage of the events I suggest you peruse “The Daily” (CPHA’s daily news coverage) on the CPHA website at www.cpha.ca Following are some key observations and activities at the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) Conference and the Canadian Network of Public Health Associations (CNPHA):

Sunday- June 19, 2011

CNPHA – 8:30-11:30 AM – meeting of provincial/territorial Presidents, CPHA Executive Director, Debra Lynkowski and selected staff.

- **Highlights:** CPHA policy activities (asbestos, tobacco, alcohol); Canadian Coalition for Public Health in the 21st Century (CCPH21) coordinating federal and provincial efforts in regard to the new negotiations for renewing the 2014 Health Accord; CPHA Knowledge Centre – a subscriber based website of resources and discussion topics. All members are encouraged to join!

Sunday – June 19 to Wednesday June 22, 2011 CPHA Annual Conference - Montreal

Theme for 2011 – “Public health in Canada: Innovative Partnerships for Action”.
First CPHA Conference held 100 years ago in Montreal.

Some of the highlights for me were:

- An abundance of plenaries, planned presentations, workshops, oral presentations and posters about exploring partnerships that allow us to do things differently and bridge the divides in public health. Advancing public health requires collaboration across many sectors and disciplines both inside and outside our sector. The social determinants of health, equity, violence, obesity, tobacco, gun controls, loss of the long Census form, research, practice, human and system level capacities were among the many topics covered.
- The opportunities to network; to meet fellow practitioners from across Canada; to renew friendships and make new ones. This included a breakfast meeting with the Presidents of the NL and NB/PEI Public Health Associations (Minnie Wasmeier and Cristin Muecke) and a resolve to be alert to finding opportunities to work together; and a dinner meeting with some members of the Public Health

Knowledge Translation Network (PHKTN) and staff of the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (NCCMT).

- The honour of being a recipient of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and CPHA Health Human Resources Award that recognizes innovation in public health practice – “translating research or knowledge into a new product, practice or strategy for public health workforce development or program delivery, including the preparation of individuals for practice.”

Some take home messages or thoughts ?

- “CPHA is more relevant and needed than ever as it enters its second century. More than ever Canada needs an independent voice for public health – to speak out on issues that are not always popular. We need to have a voice that is unrestricted and that is what CPHA is able to do” – says Debra Lynkowski. I think this also applies to PHANS and all the Provincial Territorial Associations. PHANS is the essential voice for public health in Nova Scotia .
- The new negotiations for renewing the 2014 Health Accord – PHANS must be alert to participate in opportunities to support and work with CPHA, CCPH21 and the Provincial/Territorial Associations – to build a stronger public health component into the health Accord. Ongoing participation in the CNPHA group will be key. “Discussions so far have focused on a sustainable health care system, not on sustainable health” says Dr.Lyn McIntyre.
- New technologies can accelerate progress on today’s complex health issues - Social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, blogs, U Tube, enable rapid communication and mobilization. CPHA enabled “Twittering” at this years Conference for the first time.
- The 25th Anniversary of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion has stood the test of time, But “its time has not come” according to Trevor Hancock. He challenges the incoming generation of workers to “do a better job than we have in realizing the goals of the Charter over the next 25 years.” There is more work to do!

PHANS Presidents

1973: E. Margaret Bentley (Peggy)

1974: Mr. C. Edward Tupper

1975: Miriam J. Hayman (Bunny)

1976: Mr. Gerry A. Reno

1977: Mr. Ralph E. J. Ricketts

1978: Mr. Ralph E. J. Ricketts

1979: Mr. Michael Mac Phee

1980: Mrs. M. Grantham

1981: Mr. Sandy Morrison

1982: Mr. Steven R. Kenny

1983: Mrs. Elizabeth Lambie

1984: Dr. David Mac Lean

1985: Dr. David Mac Lean
1986: Mr. Merv Ungurain
1987: Ms. Janet Braunstein
1988: Ms. Janet Braunstein
1989: Ms. Sharon MacIntosh
1990: Vacant
1991: Dr. Lynn McIntyre
1992: Dr. Lynn McIntyre
1993: Mike Marentette
1994: Mike Marentette
1995: Marjorie Willison
1996: Marjorie Willison
1997: Todd Leader
1998: Todd Leader
1999: Todd Leader
2000: Todd Leader
2001: Susan McBroom
2002: Susan McBroom
2003: Susan McBroom
2004: Florence Tarrant
2005: Andrea Hilchie-Pye
2006: Andrea Hilchie-Pye
2007: Marie McCully Collier
2008: Marie McCully Collier
2009: Marie McCully Collier
2010: Marie McCully Collier
2011: Marian MacLellan