



ADVANCING NURSES AND NURSING STUDENTS ACROSS CANADA

Celebrating Your Impact

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Canadian
Nurses
Foundation



Fondation des
infirmières et
infirmiers du Canada

Cnf-fiic.ca

Building a stronger Canadian healthcare system together.

We acknowledge that Canadian Nurses Foundation is on the traditional un-ceded and un-surrendered Algonquin Anishinaabe territory.

OUR VISION
Excellence in nursing care.

OUR MISSION
To advance nursing knowledge and improve health care by providing scholarships, awards, research grants, to nurses and nursing students in Canada.

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as of June 2024

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A Message from Dr. Claire Betker, Board Chair, Canadian Nurses Foundation

As we reflect on 2024, the Board of Directors of Canadian Nurses Foundation (CNF) extends our deepest gratitude to the nurses, donors, partners, and communities who have continued to support the mission of CNF throughout the year.

This year has been marked by both significant challenges and inspiring progress in the health-care landscape across Canada. National surveys have shown that nurses continue to face immense pressures — from chronic understaffing and overcapacity to rising levels of burnout and fatigue. In 2024, nearly nine in ten nurses reported some degree of burnout, and almost half indicated plans to leave their job or retire within the next year. Yet, despite these challenges, nurses have continued to show extraordinary commitment, leadership, and compassion in every corner of our country. At CNF, we are honoured to stand beside them by investing in education, research, and professional development that strengthens nursing capacity and advances health equity for all.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, CNF supported 137 scholarships, bursaries and awards in 2024, helping nursing students and nurses at every stage of their careers. We also expanded our support for Indigenous nursing students and launched new initiatives focused on mental health, leadership, and innovation in nurse led research. These investments are not only building a stronger profession, but also healthier communities nationwide.

As a Board, we are inspired daily by the commitment and dedication of Canada's nurses. We know that the future of health care depends on their voices, skills, and leadership — and we remain committed to ensuring they have the resources and recognition they deserve.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for believing in the power of nurses. We are proud to be part of this journey with you.

With sincere appreciation,



**CLAIRE BETKER,
RN, PHD, CCHN(C), FCAN (SHE/HER)**

**Board Chair, Canadian Nurses Foundation;
Scientific Director, National Collaborating
Centre for Determinants of Health**

Thank You to Our Partners and Donors

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our partners, donors, and supporters for their unwavering commitment to nurses and nursing students across Canada. Your generous investments through Canadian Nurses Foundation (CNF) has allowed us to provide scholarships, bursaries, and essential wraparound supports in mental health and mentorship. Together, we are advancing nursing education, leadership, and research at every level, strengthening the future of healthcare in Canada.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

In 2024, Canadian Nurses Foundation (CNF) was proud to invest more than **\$700,000** in nurses' and nursing students' education, research, and programming. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, **CNF supported more than 25,000 nurses across the country**, helping to strengthen Canada's nursing profession and improve health outcomes nationwide.

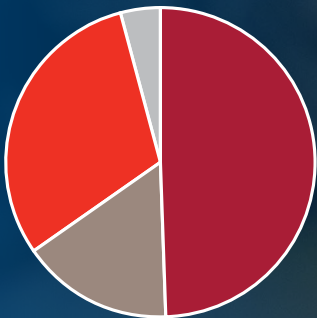
Of the total investment:

- **50%** supported **scholarships and awards**, empowering nursing students and professionals to advance their education and leadership skills.
- **16%** was dedicated to **nursing research**, driving innovation, evidence-based practice, and improved patient care.
- **31%** funded **mental health initiatives**, ensuring nurses have access to the support and resources they need to thrive personally and professionally.
- **4%** went toward **mentorship programs**, fostering the next generation of nursing leaders through guidance, connection, and shared experience.

Together, these investments reflect CNF's ongoing commitment to building a stronger, more resilient nursing workforce across Canada.

FUNDS INVESTED IN 2024

In 2024, CNF was proud to invest more than **\$700,000** in education, research and programming. Thanks to CNF and its donors **positively impacted more than 2,500 nurses and nursing students from across Canada.**



- Scholarships & Awards - 50%
- Research - 16%
- Mental Health - 31%
- Mentorship - 4%

HEALING HEALTHCARE IS BUILT ON FOUR KEY OUTCOMES:

- 1 ADVANCING NURSING EDUCATION**
 By increasing scholarships and bursaries, we aim to support nursing students at all levels of education, ensuring equitable access for underrepresented populations in nursing.
- 2 PROMOTING HEALTHY MINDS, HEALTHY NURSES, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**
 Partnering with leading organizations, we fund programs prioritizing mental health and well-being among nurses, providing support services, training, and resources to cope with the pressures of their profession.
- 3 SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NURSING**
 Through mentorship and collaboration, we empower nurses in their professional growth and development, while also addressing systemic barriers in nursing practice.
- 4 SUPPORTING HEALTH RESEARCH**
 Investing in nurse-led research initiatives to drive innovation, improve patient care, and address key healthcare challenges.

HEALING HEALTHCARE The Power of Partnerships

1 ADVANCING NURSE EDUCATION

New Endowed Award Established in 2024: the Sawyer Sisters Fund

In 2024, the Sawyer Sisters Fund was created thanks to a generous donor who wanted to support internationally educated nurses who are advancing their careers and making meaningful contributions to Canadian health care. The inaugural recipient of this fund was awarded to Opeyemi Adeyi.

With deep roots in Nigeria and a passion that began in childhood, she completed her undergraduate nursing degree at Ladoke Akintola University before immigrating to Canada. Since then, her journey has been nothing short of extraordinary. She has completed a postgraduate diploma in Palliative Care Nursing, a Master's in Gerontology at Mount Saint Vincent University, and is now pursuing a PhD in Nursing at Dalhousie University.

Her professional experience spans the long-term care sector, where she has served as a Clinical Nurse Lead, Manager, and Director of Care. Her leadership extends beyond the workplace: she has also volunteered as

a board member with the Society of Internationally Educated Nurses in America, the Dalhousie Graduate Nursing Society, and other community-focused organizations.



But her path was set much earlier. "My grandmother, who had arthritis, used to say I was so gentle with her legs that if I ever became a nurse, she would let me be her nurse," she recalls. "That moment lit a fire in me — I knew I wanted to help people for the rest of my life."

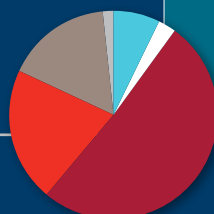
The Sawyer Sisters Fund supports internationally educated nurses who embody dedication, compassion, and leadership in their communities, empowering the next generation of nursing professionals across Canada.

This award is more than a scholarship. It is a tribute and a promise: that we will continue to stand behind the nurses who bring compassion, courage, and commitment to health care in Canada — and beyond.

TOTAL 120 2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS BY PROVINCE & LEVEL OF STUDY

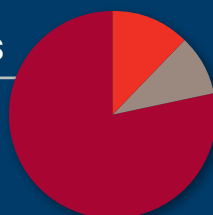
BREAKDOWN OF EDI APPLICANTS

- First Nations, Métis, Inuit
- Refugees
- Individuals who identify as members of ethno-cultural Black, and other racialized population
- 2SLGBTQIA+ people
- Individuals with Disabilities
- Individuals experiencing homelessness



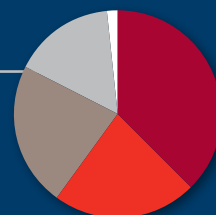
BREAKDOWN OF AWARDS

- Certifications: 17 awards
- Bursaries: 13 awards
- Scholarships: 107 awards



AREA OF STUDY

- Bach - 45%
- Accelerated Bach - 27%
- Masters - 27%
- Doctoral - 19%
- Practical Nurse Diploma - 2%



2 PROMOTING HEALTHY MINDS, HEALTHY NURSES, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Thanks to the generous support from our donors and partners, CNF has been able to invest in initiatives specifically designed to reduce stigma surrounding mental health for nurses and nursing students. These programs not only challenge stereotypes but also foster a culture of acceptance and support within healthcare organizations and have helped to create ripple effects within entire healthcare systems.

In 2024 CNF extended mental health training programs to aspiring nurses and practicing nurses ensuring that future generations of healthcare professionals are prepared to champion well-being in their communities. By addressing mental health, life skills, and access to support services, together we are building healthier, more inclusive, and more accommodating healthcare environments across Canada.

In 2024 CNF-funded programs reached over 25,000 nurses and nursing students, producing measurable improvements in awareness, attitudes, and access to mental health support within the nursing community.

Through partnerships with leading healthcare organizations nationwide, we have implemented programs that place mental health and well-being at the forefront of nursing practice.

One flagship initiative, The Working Mind: Healthcare (TWM)—developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada—is an evidence-based training program designed to transform how nurses and nursing leaders think, act, and respond to mental health challenges in healthcare and long-term care settings.

NATIONAL REACH Supporting Mental Health Programming in 11 Institutions Across 6 Provinces

1. University Health Network (ON)
2. Public Services Health & Safety Association (ON)
3. Nurses & Nurse Practitioners of BC (BC)
4. Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Québec (QC)
5. University of Calgary (AB)
6. London Health Sciences Centre (ON)
7. Niagara Health (ON)
8. Alberta Health Services (AB)
9. Nova Scotia Health (NS)
10. Scarborough Health Network (ON)
11. New Brunswick Nurses' Union (NB)



TRAINING IMPACT

Each trainer multiplies impact by educating their peers, fostering a culture of mental wellness in healthcare.



34 Trainers

Each trained to deliver workshops within their organizations — reaching hundreds of nurses and healthcare professionals.



8 Employee Sessions



26,000+ Touchpoints of Education

Delivered through Healing Minds workshops across Canada.



8 Manager Sessions

Focused on psychological health, resilience, and workplace well-being.

Healing Minds is transforming how Canadian nurses and healthcare teams support mental health — one workshop, one conversation, and one institution at a time.

3 SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NURSING

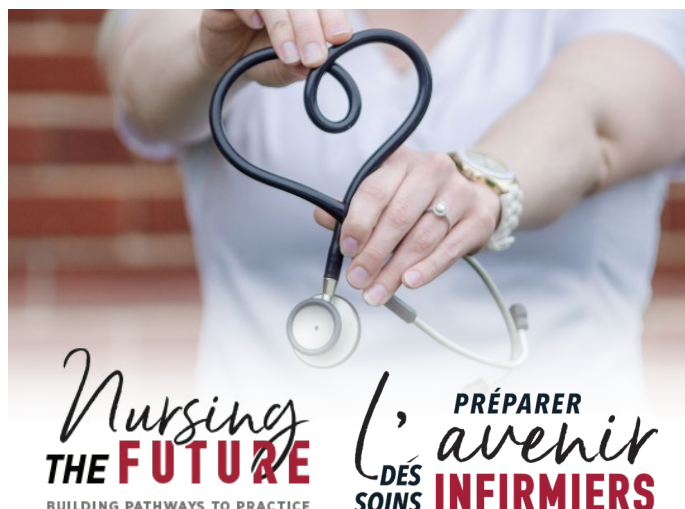
The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically exacerbated the challenges faced by new nurses, making the transition into professional practice more complex than ever before. Reduced face-to-face clinical practicums and limited preceptor availability have left many graduates entering the workforce with less hands-on experience — making the first four months post-orientation particularly daunting.

Healthcare organizations across Canada are struggling to provide the enhanced support these new professionals need. Studies show that reduced undergraduate clinical exposure and the prevalence of virtual education have left many new nurses feeling overwhelmed, contributing to high turnover rates within the first two years of practice.

Nursing the Future (NTF) has been pivotal in addressing these challenges by providing mentorship, resources, and robust support systems to ease this critical transition. NTF is one of the few national organizations dedicated exclusively to supporting newly graduated nurses. The program not only helps retain nurses in the profession but also equips them to navigate the demands of modern healthcare environments with confidence and competence.

We were proud, together with our generous donors to support:

- **National mentorship and peer-support programs for new graduates**
- **Transition-to-practice tools and resources tailored to real-world needs**



- **Leadership, resilience, and professional growth opportunities for early-career nurses**
- **Expansion of outreach efforts to rural and remote regions, and to internationally educated nurses**

The impact of NTF extends beyond individual nurses. By supporting Nursing the Future, you are investing in the strength and sustainability of the Canadian nursing workforce.

NTF's initiatives are recognized nationally for promoting innovation, evidence-informed strategies, and collaboration across healthcare settings. Looking ahead, NTF is committed to expanding its reach to serve populations most affected by healthcare shortages — including rural practice areas, mental health services, and internationally educated nurses.



CORPORATE PARTNER SPOTLIGHT SAMANTHA WIESENFELD 2025 TYLENOL® CANADA BURSARY RECIPIENT

My name is Samantha Wiesenfeld, and I am honored to receive the 2024 Tylenol® Fund to Advance Diversity in Nursing and Health Equity Research Scholarship. Though I have only been a nurse for two years, I proudly work in a level 1 trauma center emergency department in Montreal while completing research and pursuing McGill University's Advanced Practice Nursing Master's program.

As a third-generation nurse, inspired by my grandmother, a surgical floor nurse, and my mother, an Advanced Practice Nurse with a PhD, I have always aimed to be a nurse leader. From an early age, I was passionate about how nurses can influence social determinants of health through research and advocacy. My research spans wound

care and psycho-social oncology, focusing on improving support services for cancer patients and caregivers while advocating for holistic well-being and better healthcare accessibility. I am a strong advocate for both my patients and fellow nurses, believing that the holistic well-being of patients and caregivers is intertwined with physical care. My advocacy efforts include initiatives to improve patient care and healthcare resource accessibility, emphasizing the importance of nurses reclaiming their voices and advancing the profession through collective advocacy and solidarity.

I am deeply grateful to Canadian Nurses Foundation for supporting my Master's research through the Tylenol® Fund to Advance Diversity in Nursing and Health Equity Research Scholarship.

TYLENOL®



4 ADVANCING NURSE-LED RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT ON CNF SCHOLARS

Nurse-led research is central to advancing healthcare practice, policy, and patient outcomes. Drawing on their frontline experience, nurses are uniquely positioned to identify pressing challenges in healthcare and develop evidence-based solutions that directly impact patients, families, and communities. Their research addresses key issues such as patient safety, health equity, quality of care, and the well-being of healthcare professionals.

CNF recognizes that strong, evidence-informed nursing leadership begins with research. By investing in graduate students and their research, CNF is helping to inspire the next generation of nurse scientists, educators, and leaders who will shape the future of healthcare in Canada. These emerging researchers bring innovative perspectives and practical insights that strengthen the entire health system.

Through funding, mentorship, and national visibility, CNF's support for graduate-level nurse-led research ensures that nursing voices continue to drive discovery along with, influencing and improving the health of Canadians.



DAMILOLA, 2024 ASTRAZENECA AWARD

Advancing Health Equity in Diabetes Care

The Socio-structural Determinants of Health Shaping the Experiences of Black Canadians with Type 2 Diabetes

Damilola's research tackles one of Canada's most pressing health equity issues—the disproportionate impact of Type 2 diabetes on Black Canadians. Using an intersectional mixed-methods approach, the study explores how factors such as income, immigration status, education, and systemic racism influence the experiences and health outcomes of Black individuals living with diabetes. By combining statistical analysis with lived experience,

Damilola's work provides a richer understanding of how social structures shape chronic disease. The findings aim to inform nursing practice, public health policy, and culturally responsive care models that better reflect the needs of diverse communities. This important research contributes to national efforts to close health equity gaps and strengthen nursing's role in advocating for systemic change.

AstraZeneca 



KRISTINE, DR. ANN C. BECKINGHAM AWARD

Understanding Spousal Separation in Long-Term Care

The Experience of Being Separated From One's Partner During the Transition into Long-Term Care

Kristine's study examines a deeply human issue: what it means for older adults to be separated from their spouse when one partner transitions into a long-term care (LTC) facility. As Canada's aging population grows, many couples face this emotional and logistical upheaval—often due to admission policies that separate partners based on individual care needs. Through rich, narrative-driven inquiry, Kristine's research

captures the emotional landscape of separation, loss, and adaptation in later life. Her findings aim to inform Manitoba policymakers and advocate for LTC admission models that honor relational continuity and shared decision-making, similar to reforms already enacted in Nova Scotia. This work underscores the role of nursing in shaping compassionate, individual- and family-centered elder care policy.

CEO'S MESSAGE

As I step into the role of CEO, after years championing Canadian Nurses Foundation's mission as Vice President, I do so with a deep sense of purpose and a pressing awareness of the challenges nurses and nursing students face.

Every day, nurses and nursing students show up. They show up in hospitals, in communities, in homes, and in crisis zones. They lead, advocate, comfort, heal — and they do so with unwavering commitment. At Canadian Nurses Foundation, we have been proud to support nurses on their educational journeys for more than 60 years. But today, financial support for education alone is no longer enough. We must also invest in helping nurses stay in the profession, support their well-being, and inspire them to continue to lead research and create solutions to improve healthcare in Canada.

Nurses are experiencing growing pressures — from burnout and heavy workloads to staffing shortages and unequal working conditions. What they need goes beyond funding alone — they deserve meaningful investment in their leadership, mental health, research, and ability to create lasting change. It's time to build systems that truly value their expertise, support their well-being, and empower them to reach their full potential.

Since 1962, CNF has supported nursing students and nurses through scholarships and awards, which will always remain essential. In 2024 alone, we awarded 150 awards across 12 provinces and territories, helping to grow nursing talent. But supporting access to education is only the start. The scale of today's challenges demands that CNF evolve — to invest in mentorship, leadership, mental health and wellbeing, and research leading to systematic change.

That is why CNF has expanded our reach, our vision and our impact thanks to our generous donors:

- **Deepening support for Indigenous nursing students, to strengthen reconciliation and equity**
- **Investing in mental wellness initiatives and supports**
- **Championing nurse-led research and leadership development**
- **Building partnerships to shine a light on the needs of nurses and nursing students across the country**

Our calling, our passion, and our responsibility as a driving force in nursing have never been stronger. The path ahead is clear: we must stand with nurses — as they have always stood with us — with urgency, compassion, and courage. In this defining moment, they need our unwavering support more than ever.

To our donors, partners, and supporters — your commitment makes all the difference. Thank you for walking alongside us. Together, we're empowering nurses and nursing students to shape a stronger, healthier future for Canadians.

With gratitude,



Chris McGarvey
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Nurses Foundation

You Can Support Nurses and Nursing Students Through Healing Healthcare

DONATE

Your contributions fund scholarships, research, and programs that strengthen nursing education and practice.

SPREAD THE WORD

Share the Healing Healthcare campaign and help highlight CNF's support for nurses across Canada.

PARTNER WITH US

Collaborate with CNF on initiatives that meet nursing needs and drive positive change in healthcare.

VOLUNTEER

Lend your time and expertise on our Board of Directors or Merit Review Panel (PhD and MA level nursing required) to support nurses nationwide.

Your support is crucial in ensuring the success of the "Healing Healthcare" campaign and the well-being of our nursing community. Together, let's build a healthier and stronger future for all Canadians.



For more information on how to get involved please reach out to either **Chris McGarvey, CEO** or **Claire Lewis, Director of Philanthropy and Engagement** at Canadian Nurses Foundation.

Invest in nurses. See the difference in healthcare.

Canadian Nurses Foundation



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