

  
**NOVA SCOTIA**  
Office of Service Efficiency

# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT



REDUCING RED TAPE TO IMPROVE GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

**Nova Scotians deserve the most efficient and effective government services and regulatory environment. This means easy and fast access to care, housing that is available and affordable and an economy that works for all. These are priorities for every Nova Scotian – and they are ours.**

Slow-moving, inflexible, outdated policies, practices, legislation and rules stand as barriers to making progress in these critical areas.

To advance these priorities effectively requires agile and modern services and a regulatory environment that is nimble. The role of the Office of Service Efficiency (the Office) is to provide leadership, guidance, and practical solutions to ensure our regulations and services do what they need to do to protect and support Nova Scotians in the easiest, most practical and cost-effective way.

To that end, we work closely with colleagues across government to make processes more current, rules more flexible, services more responsive, and remove regulatory burden that gets in the way of effective and impactful government.

This work requires a willingness across government to rethink “how it’s always been done,” and a commitment to make it better. If a service, rule, process or regulatory framework is not doing what it’s supposed to, it’s our job to support and advocate for a different approach. And to measure the impact.

Our 2024 Annual Report highlights our achievements over the past year and demonstrates how, in collaboration with many partners, the Office has reduced red tape, measured impact, and, most importantly, supported the government’s efforts to improve services and make life better for Nova Scotians.

**Read on to learn about our results from 2024 and our plans for 2025.**



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## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Since 2021, our government has focused on unlocking our province's tremendous potential, work that we are privileged to continue and advance the transformation we started.

I am both honoured and eager to contribute to this imperative as the Minister of the Office of Service Efficiency, formerly the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness.

In my time in government, I have learned that enabling this transformation demands that we constantly challenge how things have been done by asking a simple, but powerful, question: why?

I have also learned that the answer often lies in a government rule, requirement, or service that is outdated, a process that hasn't kept pace with technology, a policy that may make sense on paper, but simply doesn't work in the real world, or one where the costs far outweigh the benefits. These barriers are a drain on the economy, stand in the way of Nova Scotians receiving the exceptional service they deserve, and erode the efficient operation of government, as well as its effectiveness.

The role of Service Efficiency is to identify and remove these barriers, and ensure government is providing both the services and the environment that our province needs to thrive. We do so by working with partners inside and outside of government to identify the roadblocks, find solutions and take the next, critical step: measuring the impact of the change on Nova Scotians.

And I am joining a team that has delivered. Their focus, with many partners, on removing red tape for doctors means they now spend less time –

more 400,000 hours annually – on paperwork and doing work that other health professionals can do.

This all-hands-on-deck effort is giving Nova Scotians faster access to the care and services they need, improves the work environment for doctors and makes our healthcare system more efficient and effective.

Of course, reducing red tape for doctors is only one aspect of the Office's important work. The work also includes running an award-winning service that helps new businesses get up and running faster by navigating the regulatory environment for them – rather than having new business owners do that work themselves. The Office also assess and measure the impact of every regulatory proposal for impact, ensuring that government is serving Nova Scotians as we should. Finally, it also represents Nova Scotia on the national table to align regulatory approaches across the country to bring down the barriers for Nova Scotian businesses that want to grow by accessing other markets.

Nova Scotia is held up as a leader in regulatory and service efficiency and effectiveness because of its results. The ability to deliver meaningful action and to understand – in real terms – the impact of this work underscores the role it can play to support the transformation that's underway.

We've come a long way in four years. But there's more to be done to make government work better for you and unlock the full potential of our beautiful province. Together, we can make that happen.

**Hon. Timothy Halman**  
*Minister of Service Efficiency*

# 2024 RESULTS BY THE NUMBERS

## ASSESSING AND MEASURING REGULATORY AND SERVICE EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS, AND IMPACT



**\$683,850** annual savings (net) to business from regulatory changes in 2024

**60** regulatory initiatives impacting business reviewed

**40** regulatory assessments provided to decision makers

## REDUCING RED TAPE BY IMPROVING SERVICE EFFICIENCY



**17,000+** clients served by the Business Navigators

**263** inspectors and supervisors received customer service training

**100%** response rate within two days to Red Tape Reporting Tool

**2,500** visits by business and employees to the Remembrance Day tool for guidance on rules for that day

## REDUCING RED TAPE FOR DOCTORS AND IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARE



**424,640** hours saved through reducing red tape for doctors

**162,780** saved by healthcare providers working to their full potential

**131,230** saved by reducing paperwork

**103,617** saved by embracing technology

**27,780** saved through legislation and by-law changes and process improvements

**45+** actions fully implemented and measured


**293,000** Nova Scotian have accessed care as a result of changes

# ASSESSING AND MEASURING SERVICE EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

Effective regulation safeguards citizens, consumers, the environment, and workers while creating a competitive, nimble and cost-effective environment for businesses and efficient, effective service for citizens.

Finding that balance requires that solutions are proportionate to the issues they aim to address. If a regulation is too heavy-handed or a service is ineffective, business and citizens can be constrained, impacting the effective functioning of communities and the economy.

Part of finding the balance means knowing the cost – or savings – of proposals. To this end, we work with departments across government to apply a Business Impact Assessment (BIA) to proposed legislative, regulatory, policy and process change affecting business. Our office also examines some proposals that impact citizens and non-profits.



In 2024, 60 regulatory proposals with business impact were reviewed by our Office. In addition to a review, we provided an independent assessment, including the cost or savings to business, to decision makers. Based on these assessments, we estimate a net savings of \$683,850 is from regulatory changes in 2024.

For the full 2024 Burden Reduction Report, see Appendix A.

## What is the BIA?

The BIA supports policymakers by evaluating regulatory proposals, estimating their costs or savings for businesses.

At the core of the BIA is the Standard Cost Model, an internationally recognized method for quantifying the administrative burden of regulation. In measuring impact, it considers factors like industry wage rates and less tangible elements, like time spent, to come up with an estimate of costs or savings. A version of the BIA is also used to measure impact of proposals (hours saved or hours added) for non-profits and citizens.



The Office counts the total number of regulatory requirements across government as another means of understanding how our regulatory environment is changing. This year's count finds a total of **181,014** requirements, an increase of 0.4% from 2023.

## What's Next?

We will:

- Assess and measure the impact of government proposals as an important lens in the decision-making process, and
- Work with policy staff across government on assessing and measuring the impact of regulatory and service solutions on citizens and businesses, with a focus on efficiency and effectiveness.

# REDUCING RED TAPE BY IMPROVING SERVICE EFFICIENCY

Our team of experienced Business Navigators serve business by taking the guess work out of start-up and expansion. The team navigates what can be a complex regulatory environment by providing information about government licenses, permits and inspection requirements specific to each client, tailored specifically to them after a thorough review of their business and needs. This award-winning service has been replicated across all of Atlantic Canada.



**17,000** business owners have been served since 2017.

## Serving New Canadians

Throughout 2024, we are proud to have served more and more new Canadians than ever before, helping to navigate what – in many cases – is a regulatory environment that is much different than what they had left behind. New Canadian entrepreneurs make up about 45% of our clientele.

## Welcoming Clients Back

Over the years, many clients who have successfully launched their businesses reconnect with us when they consider expanding, changing their business, or starting a second, or even third, business. Our repeat clients reflect the value of the service and the relationships fostered by the Navigators with their clients, demonstrating trust, loyalty and expertise.

## New Resources for Businesses

This year, the Navigation team produced new resources for soon-to-be business owners. A new pamphlet outlining the team's services is available at Access Nova Scotia centres, while a new [Food Establishment Starter Guide](#) and the [General Guide to Starting a Business in Nova Scotia](#)—expand our online resources to help small businesses navigate local regulations.




“As an immigrant to Canada, I really appreciate having an agency like Business Navigators to guide all the people who want to have a business.”

- Julius Gercio, Owner, Isla Kusina Bar & Grill in Sydney

**WHAT  
CLIENTS  
ARE  
SAYING**





“Words cannot fully express my gratitude towards the Navigation team. They guided me through every step of the process, from registering my business and pointing me to the right directions when it came to incorporating a business and connecting me with liaison officers who answered my questions about tax obligations for small business like mine.”

- Hassan Ghanim, Novafix Handyman Ltd.

## What's Next?

- The Business Navigation service will continue to work closely with internal departments to support their business interactions and provide service where applicable,
- Our office will tap into the rich data we've collected over the years to continue to evolve and improve the service we provide, and
- We will reconnect with business associations, entrepreneurship organizations, community colleges and other key stakeholders to determine how we can best serve their networks.

## Delivering Service Training

More provincial inspectors and their supervisors have been equipped with the skills they need to support and serve business through the inspection process when opening a business.

Since 2020, 245 provincial inspectors and supervisors have been trained in a customer service program that was developed by our office to help inspectors build relationships with small businesses by adopting a helpful and service-oriented approach to help them comply with rules intended to protect their customers and employees.

In 2024, 18 managers from the Department of Environment and Climate Change completed a new leadership course to further support their teams.



# REDUCING RED TAPE FOR DOCTORS AND IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARE

Having doctors do work other professionals have been trained and licensed to do or spending endless hours – often after the clinic is closed – on paperwork or unnecessary tasks takes precious time away from what our they do best: care for us. It also impacts doctors' work-life balance, their work environment, and makes it more difficult to attract and retain the doctors we need.

That's why we, with many partners in and outside of government, turned our focus to measuring how much time doctors spend on unnecessary work or red tape, identifying specific ways to reduce it, and set Canada's first target to reduce it by 400,000 hours annually.



**425,000** hours of red tape have been eliminated for doctors in annually, exceeding the 400,000 hours-saved target.

## Setting a Target and Building a Team

In a survey, doctors said they collectively spend more than 500,000 hours a year, the equivalent of 1.5 million patient visits, on unnecessary work. This includes work that could be done by another health professional, cumbersome paperwork, or work that doesn't need to be done at all.

To tackle this, our team met with doctors and brought together key partners, including the Department of Health and Wellness, Nova Scotia Health, Doctors Nova Scotia, the IWK, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, and the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia to identify ways to reduce red tape for doctors.



## Red Tape Removed

More than 45 actions have been implemented, ranging from embracing technology to updating out-of-date policies and legislation. Each action is measured for hours saved and estimates are then validated by doctors themselves.

Here's an overview of the five areas we've been working in, a few examples of what's been done under each, and the impact.



For a full list of actions and their associated hours saved, see Appendix B.

## Healthcare professionals working to their full potential

**162,780** hours saved

Physician time is being saved by redirecting work they have historically done to other trained and licensed healthcare professionals whose scope of practice includes these tasks.

- Across the province, 46 pharmacist-led clinics are providing an extended suite of primary care services to Nova Scotians and saving doctors tens of thousands of hours a year in avoided appointments.
- Physician assistants are augmenting care teams and supporting doctors by taking on such work as conducting exams and prescribing medication or treatments. And more are on their way. These physician assistants will save 56,390 hours of time, allowing our doctors to spend more time on work only they can do.

# Reducing Paperwork

**131,230** hours saved

No doctor trains or wants to be a specialist in form completion. That's why we've eliminated some forms and made the most frequent forms doctors complete easier and faster to complete.

- To avoid unnecessary appointments, limitations have been placed on when employers can request sick notes from employees, saving over 67,000 hours of physician time.
- Several frequently completed forms have been made easier and faster to complete by being electronically fillable, introducing auto-population, and shortening where possible, saving doctors 35,370 hours of time. This also includes standardizing insurance forms for short-term and long-term disability, completed over 7,500 times a year, reducing the number of available forms from 56 to just two.



## Embracing Technology

**103,617** hours saved

We're taking steps to adopt tech in smart, innovative and strategic ways so that it simplifies and better coordinates care for patients.

- Proximity cards and single sign-on functionality in emergency rooms and urgent care centres are saving doctors 30,900 hours annually.
- YourHealthNS gives Nova Scotian's access to their health records, helping patients avoid unnecessary appointments and making appointments more efficient, saving 16,000 hours a year for physicians. The app also helps patients navigate options for care, including over 14,000 hours of virtual nurse practitioner visits to address primary health care concerns.

## Improving Legislation & By-laws

**17,190** hours saved

Common-sense changes have been made to make it easier for doctors to work in Nova Scotia, allowing healthcare professionals to work at their full scope of practice or to expand into new, meaningful areas, ensuring doctors are doing work only they can do.

- Improvements by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, including enabling virtual meetings and streamlining the evaluation of internationally trained physicians, save doctors over 12,000 hours a year in administrative time.

In February 2024, CFIB recognized Premier Houston and his Atlantic counterparts with their Golden Scissors Award for the creation of the Atlantic Physician Registry, which makes it easier and faster for doctors licensed in one Atlantic province to work in another.

## Updating Processes

**10,590** hours saved

We're making several changes to improve processes and give physicians back time.

- Centralized cancer screening programs leverage program managers and nurses to lift the administrative burden from physicians related to ordering diagnostic tests, referrals and communicating results to patients. The new lung cancer screening program saves over 1,500 hours a year, with more to come as the program expands.



## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

“Doctors don’t go into medicine for the exhaustive paperwork. They do so to care for their patients. Unnecessary paperwork can be relentless, frustrating, time consuming and it affects doctor’s work environment and work-life balance. Nova Scotia was the first jurisdiction to recognize this burden and to implement a plan to address it. And that plan is working. We want this work to continue so that it eventually results in a culture change that sees the end of the duplication, overreach, and complexity of administrative tasks to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the health-care system for all.”

– Nancy MacCready-Williams, Chief Executive Officer,  
Doctors Nova Scotia





“Nova Scotia has been a leader in Canada in reducing administrative burden affecting physicians in the province. The CMA applauds Nova Scotia for its dedication in this critical area and continually points to its approach as one that can be adopted across the country to ensure all doctors can stay focused on what they do best: caring for patients.”

– Dr. Joss Reimer, President,  
Canadian Medical Association

## What's Next?

### We will:

- Identify additional red tape impacting doctors, work with others to remove it, and measure the impact on patients, the healthcare system, and physicians, and
- Work closely with partners to explore expanding our work to other healthcare professionals.



## ALIGNING RULES ACROSS JURISDICTIONS FOR EASE OF BUSINESS

The Office represents Nova Scotia on the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT), created by the Canada Free Trade Agreement to align rules across the country to reduce the differences across jurisdictions to improve internal trade.

Since the creation of the RCT in 2017, close to 20 areas for alignment have been agreed to, with many fully implemented. These cover areas including construction codes, energy standards and safety requirements. They remove barriers for business that work in different parts of the country and are estimated to save these businesses over \$1 billion.

Additionally, in 2024, the Canadian Commission on Building and Fires Codes' Standing Committee on Energy Efficiency completed a regulatory cooperation framework and an action plan to align work related to Energy Using and Saving Products, such as lighting, HVAC equipment, thermostats, and windows.

## Aligning Occupational Health and Safety Work

Nova Scotia is a leader in aligning rules across the country in the area of occupational health and safety (OHS). To date, we've led the charge to align areas such as eye, head, foot, and hearing protection. In 2024, we proposed three new areas: fall protection training requirements, building anchors for fall protection safety systems, and high-visibility safety clothing. Continuing to remove differences across the country will make it easier and less costly for Nova Scotia businesses to expand their operations.

## Serving Business by Finding Solutions

Nestled between pine trees on the outskirts of Hubbards, Black Harbour Distillers turned an aging community centre and former school into a bona fide community hub.

In the summer of 2024, a municipal inspection identified a question over whether the building code was being upheld based on the description of Black Harbour as a distiller. At issue was a definition of 'distilling' in the national codes which has not kept pace with more recent trends in the Canadian marketplace where companies such as Black Harbour are blending pre-distilled products with unique flavours. This process is much lower risk than the traditional form of distilling currently outlined in the national codes.

Our Office worked with the Municipality of the District of Chester and Black Harbour distilling to find a solution. The municipality arranged for a risk-based analysis to be conducted by an independent fire inspection consultant which determined that the business was in full compliance with the regulations, and they were not required to pause or retrofit their operations. A great example of regulatory problem-solving.



Service Efficiency stepped up and provided invaluable support, helping me navigate to a successful resolution. I truly appreciate their efforts, which went above and beyond my expectations.

– Jaime Landry, Founder & Owner,  
Black Harbour Distillers

# Red Tape Reporting Tool

In 2022, the Office launched an online tool for Nova Scotians to report red tape, its impact, and ideas to reduce it. The Office works with departmental colleagues to find solutions, where ever possible.

In 2024, 30 submissions were received through the red tape reporting tool:

- On average, submissions were responded to within two business days
- The most frequent submissions involved areas related to healthcare and municipal rules.

We are always looking for opportunities to rid government of red tape. If you have an idea to reduce red tape, [let us know](#).

## What's Next?

We will:

- Be a leader and team player to make it easier to do business across the country by aligning rules,
- Work with the construction industry to navigate and problem solve to support building to net zero, and
- Find, fix and respond to ideas to remove red tape impacting businesses and citizens.

# APPENDIX A

## 2024 Burden Reduction Report

The following are the 2024 regulatory measures\* that the Office has fully evaluated and measured, and have an impact on Nova Scotian businesses and citizens.

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	SAVINGS OR (COSTS)
<b>Citizen Hours</b>		
Service Nova Scotia	Increase of useage of the Property Tax Rebate for Seniors through municipal tax verification	2,200
<b>Business Savings</b>		
Service Nova Scotia	Suite of improvements to the Residential Tenancies Act to help tenants and landlords address the challenges in today's housing market	\$1,000,000
	Reduce frequent criminal records checks and introduce licence reciprocity for Associate Mortgage Brokers	\$2,150
	Introduce mandatory responsible beverage service training for servers	(\$100,000)
	Amendments to Residential Tenancies Act Regulations to improve the security deposit claim process	\$7,700
	Updating condominium registration fees	\$94,000
Agriculture	Farm Registration Regulations amendments to increase gross income categories used to determine annual farm registration fees for some categories	(\$62,000)
Labour Skills and Immigration	Modernization of the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) regulations and application of related training and safety data maintenance requirements to self-employed individuals	(\$231,000)
Environment and Climate Change	Establishing output-based pricing system reporting and compliance regulations	(\$27,000)
<b>Total Burden Reduction Savings for Business</b>		<b>\$683,850</b>

\*Additional regulatory measures have been committed to and require further evaluation in order to be measured and counted.

# APPENDIX B

## PHYSICIAN RED TAPE REDUCTION ACTIONS

### 424,640 hours saved annually

The following are the actions taken to reduce red tape for physicians in Nova Scotia, exceeding the 400,000 hours-saved target.

Actions fall into five categories: letting healthcare professionals work to their full potential, reducing paperwork, embracing technology, improving legislation and bylaws, and updating processes. By removing unnecessary work, time is being freed up so that it can be better spent doing the work physicians do best: **care for us**.

## Healthcare Professionals Working to Their Full Potential

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	HOURS SAVED ANNUALLY
Scope of Practice for Pharmacists Expanded	Forty-six pharmacy locations around the province now provide some primary care to Nova Scotians, including treating patients for common illnesses.	86,620
Use of Physician Assistants Increased	Physician assistants are augmenting various care teams and expand physician capacity by taking on tasks such as conducting exams and prescribing medication or treatments.	56,390
Primary Care Professionals Operating Within Their Full Scopes of Practice	Healthcare professionals throughout the system, including long-term care, are increasingly being empowered to work to their full scopes of practice and taking on work that previously would have been completed by a physician as well as do work that they have been trained to do but were previously not permitted to do. Spaces are also being created for healthcare professionals to collaborate under one roof, including the introduction of Dalhousie University's multi-disciplinary clinics and the expansion of collaborative care teams to 107 centres across the province.	15,020
Registered Nurses Onboarding Patients	Registered Nurses at collaborative care practices, instead of physicians, are onboarding unattached patients to primary care providers.	4,750
<b>TOTAL HOURS SAVED</b>		<b>162,780</b>



## Reducing Paperwork

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	HOURS SAVED ANNUALLY
Reducing Use of Sick Notes	The new Medical Certificates for Employee Absence Act limits when employers can request a sick note of employees. Nova Scotia Health (NSH) has also reduced when sick notes for staff can be requested.	67,760
System Improvements to the Electronic Medical Records (EMR)	The EMRs are being reviewed to improve their useability, including updating policies and procedures, standardizing naming conventions, and improving communication to healthcare professionals when changes are made.	23,100
Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) and other Department of Community Services Forms Improved	The ESIA medical assessment form has been shortened, made clearer, and the form has been added to the EMR with auto-population and direct submission functionality to reduce completion time. Several additional DCS forms have also been improved while others have been eliminated entirely.	19,755
Pharmacare Exception Status Drug Forms and Processes Changed	Commonly used forms for diabetes and lung disease have been improved for easier completion. Additionally, a number of drugs, including some that prevent blood clots, no longer require Pharmacare approvals. Specialized criteria codes have also been added for specialists prescribing inhalers. Finally, pharmacists can now submit forms when they have the required information.	11,630
Short-Term and Long-Term Disability Insurance Forms Reduced and Standardized	Standardized Short-Term and Long-Term Disability Insurance Forms have been developed, reducing 56 different forms to two - both of which are available in the EMR systems.	6,000
Continuing Care Form and Physician Order Form Combined	NSH has combined their Referral and Order forms for Continuing Care clients and/or those being referred to Continuing Care. The form is shorter, only requires relevant sections to be completed, and is available in the EMRs with auto-fill functionality.	1,200
Fully Digitize the Medical Certificate of Death	The Medical Certificate of Death is being digitized to allow physicians to complete and submit it electronically from anywhere, replacing the current fax-based system.	980
Worker's Compensation Board (WCB) Form 8/10 and Submission Process Improved	The Primary and Emergency Care Report (formerly, Form 8/10) now has fewer fields, uses checkmarks, can be completed electronically, and is available in the EMRs. The submission process has also been improved.	700
The Use of the Medical Status Report Form Modified	The Medical Status Report is no longer required for individuals transitioning from hospital to long-term care but is still required to transition from community to long-term care. It may be completed prior to admission and is no longer a requirement to be waitlisted.	100
Adult Protection Medical Observation Form Improved	This form has been updated to remove sections that do not impact the overall quality of the assessment and is electronically fillable through the EMRs.	5
<b>TOTAL HOURS SAVED</b>		<b>131,230</b>

## Embracing Technology

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	HOURS SAVED ANNUALLY
Computer Access Improved	Proximity cards and single sign-on functionality has been rolled out to emergency rooms and urgent care centres across the province reducing login time. NSH is also adopting a lifetime passphrase policy for IT systems access, eliminating the need for new passwords every three months.	30,900
Single-Entry Surgical Intake Model Introduced	A centralized intake model and digital tool has been introduced to more effectively and efficiently manage referrals to NS Health and IWK surgeons. This creates structure and organization in a space where it has been historically absent. It is anticipated that this model will be expanded to include most diagnostic imaging tests.	21,000
Introduction of YourHealthNS app	YourHealthNS gives Nova Scotians access to their personal health records, removing the administrative burden from physicians and their offices to locate records to support their patients needs.	16,323
VirtualCareNS Introduced	Since the introduction of virtual care, Nurse Practitioners have provided care to Nova Scotians over 50,000 times, appointments that previously would have been completed by physicians. This improves access to care and provides more time for physicians to focus on more complex, urgent needs where they are better suited.	14,300
Care Coordination Centres (C3) Increasing Effective Floor Management	NSH's 46 C3s across the province facilitate improved patient movement and care by providing a real-time view of system resources to support nurses, physicians, and decision-making at all levels. Patient flow, bed management and discharge planning, and staff scheduling have all improved as a result.	12,000
Automatic reminders for upcoming specialist appointments	Identified through the Province's Healthcare Improvement Challenge, a new text-based appointment reminder system is reducing missed appointments for a variety of specialists.	3,920
NSH Testing and Screening Improvements with Technology Investments	NSH is investing in technology that supports more efficient screening and testing. This includes Atlantic Canada's first take-home Sexually Transmitted Infections testing kit, a new screening program for lung cancer that includes computerized scans coordinated by nurses, and investing in two new nuclear medicine StarGuide scanners that are 50% more efficient than the previous technology, requiring less physician time.	2,914
Virtual Hallway Introduced to Streamline Specialist Consultation	Primary care and emergency physicians are now using Virtual Hallway to consult with specialists via telephone instead of through a form-based process.	1,930
SHARE (Secure Access Health Record) User Access Request Process Streamlined	Improvements significantly reduce completion times for user access requests, which are required for providers on-boarding to the SHARE platform, reducing considerable delays in accessing the system.	330
<b>TOTAL HOURS SAVED</b>		<b>103,617</b>

## Improving Legislation & By-laws

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	HOURS SAVED ANNUALLY
Accelerate the Evaluation of Internationally-Trained Physicians	The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia (CPSNS) as streamlined the licensing process for international medical graduates, reducing the average time required to obtain a license from two years to six months.	4,440
Enable Opt-In for Restricted Physician Licenses	The CPSNS has transitioned a cohort of physicians in the province on time-limited defined licensure to long-term independent licensure, eliminating the need for physician supervision during the licensing process.	4,000
Enable Virtual Meetings at the CPSNS	The CPSNS changed its meeting rules so that half of their 100 physician meetings can be virtual instead of in-person.	3,980
NSH Hiring and Intake Process Simplified and Privileging and Credentialing Streamlined	NSH by-laws governing privileging and credential processes have been adopted to streamline and digitize the application and renewal processes. Additionally, vulnerable sector checks for incoming NSH physicians are eliminated as background checks are already required.	2,370
Atlantic Physician Registry Introduced	The creation of the Atlantic Physician Registry allows Atlantic Canadian physicians to opt-in to practice in another Atlantic province and reduces red tape associated with licensing requirements and processes for physicians looking to practice in Nova Scotia.	970
Nurses Able to Sign Off on Vaccination Records	NSH by-laws have been amended to remove the need for physicians to sign off on vaccination records, a task that can be completed by nurses.	910
Hospital Co-Signing Directions Removed	Physicians caring for hospitalized patients (known as hospitalists) no longer must co-sign directions from hospitalists in other health zones.	520
<b>TOTAL HOURS SAVED</b>		<b>17,190</b>

## Updating Processes

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	HOURS SAVED ANNUALLY
Transition to Longitudinal Funding Plans for Family Physicians	The move from Alternative Payment Plans to Longitudinal Funding Plans for family physicians has eliminated the need to complete some documentation such as the Leave of Absence Summary, and Annual Activity Reports.	4,250
Mobile Primary Care Clinics Launched	NSH has launched mobile primary healthcare clinics, staffed by nurse practitioners and other primary care providers, to improve access to care and reduce demands on provincial emergency departments.	2,000
Streamline the CPSNS's Complaints Investigation Process	The CPSNS' complaints investigation process has been updated to reduce burden for both provider and patient to accelerate investigations with an objective of increasing early and informal resolutions. These changes also reduce the time required for physicians to be present for complaint interviews.	1,180
Simplify IWK Credentialing	The IWK moved from a paper-based credentialing application process to an easy-to-access and entirely online system.	780
Improve Access-A-Bus Administrative Processes Within the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)	The HRM has amended the Access-A-Bus program application and renewal process to reduce repetitive and unnecessary physician engagement.	680
Peer Review Process at CPSNS Streamlined	The CPSNS has streamlined its peer review program to improve process efficiency; peer reviews are now more targeted and focus on a smaller number of participants based on a risk assessment. Peer reviews for family medicine, have also been paused.	630
Reduce Barriers to Gender-Affirming Surgery	Patients seeking gender affirming care no longer require two physician specialist referral letters, as they are considered duplicative and created long wait times for patients.	300
<b>TOTAL HOURS SAVED</b>		<b>9,820</b>

*Hours saved are estimates based on initiatives and impact assessments that review time spent before and after the change. These numbers, in many cases, are then validated by physicians to ensure the hours reported are as accurate as can be.*



**NOVA SCOTIA**

Office of Service Efficiency