

TRAUMA NOVA SCOTIA

Newsletter | Fall 2025 | Issue 7

Leadership Message

As we continue to build on the momentum of the past year, it's inspiring to see how collaboration, innovation, and commitment continue to define our work at Trauma Nova Scotia. Our teams are driving meaningful change in trauma education, quality improvement, and patient care.

This season, we're thrilled to highlight a new partnership with Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency, supporting trauma education and strengthening prehospital collaboration. We are also in the midst of a busy cycle of Provincial Trauma Courses in partnership with EHS, ensuring that trauma education remains accessible and responsive to learners in all zones. Our virtual education initiatives continue to expand, including innovative in-situ simulation opportunities that bring learning directly to teams across the province. These efforts reflect our commitment to adaptable, high-quality education that meets teams where they are.

At the same time, our focus on quality improvement remains strong. The Trauma Nova Scotia team proudly presented at all four provincial quality summits, sharing insights and advancing discussions that shape the future of trauma care.

The Trauma Consult Service continues to thrive, with a renewed emphasis on our virtual follow-up clinic—increasing accessibility for patients and reducing repeat emergency department presentations. This initiative underscores our dedication to patient-centered, equitable care across the province.

Together, these achievements showcase the collective effort, creativity, and passion that drive Trauma Nova Scotia forward. Thank you to every team member, partner, and collaborator for your continued commitment to improving trauma care for all Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,

Bree Gillis, Director
Dr. Robert Green, Senior Medical Director
Trauma Nova Scotia

TRAUMA TEAM ACTIVATION: 1-800-743-1334

Welcome



Trauma Nova Scotia is happy to announce the addition of Amber Humes to our team as Mass Casualty Consultant!

Amber is an Advanced Care Paramedic with a Master of Adult Education and a Bachelor of Arts. She brings 15 years of experience leading interdisciplinary teams in healthcare, with expertise in strategic planning, quality improvement, and system-level initiatives.

Amber is known for her collaborative approach, operational insight, and commitment to continuous improvement.

We're excited to see where Amber's passion leads our team in improving our mass casualty initiative!

We are also pleased to welcome Dr. Matt Mackin to the Trauma Consult Service as our newest Trauma Consult Physician!



Matt has extensive experience as a Resident Trauma Team Leader, an ATLS Instructor, and as a Trauma Anesthesia Fellow at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, University of Maryland.

He started doing TTL shifts over the Summer and will complete his first Trauma Consult rotation in November!

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to our newest staff members:

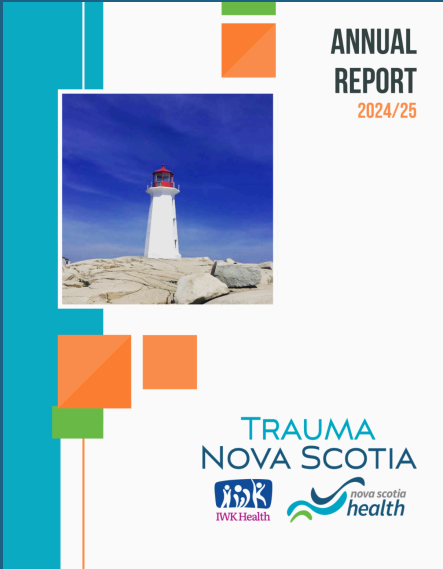
Miriam Daneff - Research Associate
Kayla Dort - Registered Nurse
Claire Durnin - Registered Nurse

We'd like to wish our outgoing staff members all the best:

Kim Joyce - Registered Nurse
Rachael Morton - Social Worker
Alex Smithers - Pharmacist
Hannah Sarty - Summer Student
Emily Tucker - TC Service Admin

2024/25 Annual Report

We recently released our 2024/25 Annual Report! You can read it (and past years) [here](#).



Trauma Education

Provincial Trauma Course

We kicked off our 2025 Provincial Trauma Course this Spring, with sessions hosted at Colchester East Hants Health Centre, Hants Community Hospital, and Fisherman's Memorial Hospital. This years focus continues to be on interdisciplinary teamwork-bringing providers together in small groups for hands-on skills practice, simulations, and collaborative care discussions.

Trauma Grand Rounds

Our 2024-2025 academic year wrapped up in May with a well-attended provincial session featuring Dr. Erika Leck, who presented on the management of traumatic head injuries. Fall rounds launched with a highly informative presentation by Dr. Danny French, who discussed the assessment and management of chest trauma, from pre-hospital to the trauma bay, and beyond.

Advanced Trauma Life Support

In July, as always, first-year residents (PGY1s) from surgical specialties, emergency medicine, and anesthesia participated in a 1.5-day hybrid Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) course during their surgical foundations residency orientation.

The 11th Edition of ATLS will roll out later this Fall, and we look forward to delivering the most up-to-date trauma care training and information to participants across the province.

Virtual Simulations

Our education team is placing a strong emphasis on expanding virtual learning opportunities over the coming months. In September, we hosted a virtual education session with staff from Colchester East Hants Health Centre focused on chest decompression. Physicians were able to drop in and participate from the Emergency Department, receiving real-time feedback and coaching from our education team.

TRAUMA-ING

A podcast where trauma docs James Gould and Rob Green dive deep into the intricate world of managing critically ill trauma patients. Join us for an exciting and educational journey, as we hear from expert guests and explore evidence-based practices, from essential procedures

to the latest journal article reviews. Whether you're a seasoned professional or new to trauma care, our mission is to equip you with the knowledge and tools you need to make a real difference in your practice. [Tune in](#) and elevate your understanding of trauma management!

Upcoming Education Opportunities



2025/2026 Course Dates

Advance Trauma Life Support (ATLS®) teaches participants the basic skills necessary for timely management of traumatic injury.

Winter Dates:

December 12-13, 2025 [FULL]
January 25-26, 2026 [FULL]

Spring Dates:

TBA

To register or add your name to the waitlist, please follow the link below:

[ATLS Registration](#)

Provincial Trauma Course

The Provincial Trauma Course is an accredited one-day interprofessional course that consists of hands-on skills stations, high-fidelity simulations, small group work, and more.

This course is offered across the province; if you are interested in hosting a course, please reach out to our Provincial Education Lead, [Jenna Faulkner](#).

2025 Trauma Rounds

Trauma Rounds are CME accredited presentations for multidisciplinary groups involved in the care of the trauma patient.

Dates:

November 25, 2025

Where:

Currently offered as a virtual webinar via Microsoft Teams.

To register, or view additional dates and topics, please visit the [Trauma Nova Scotia Website](#).

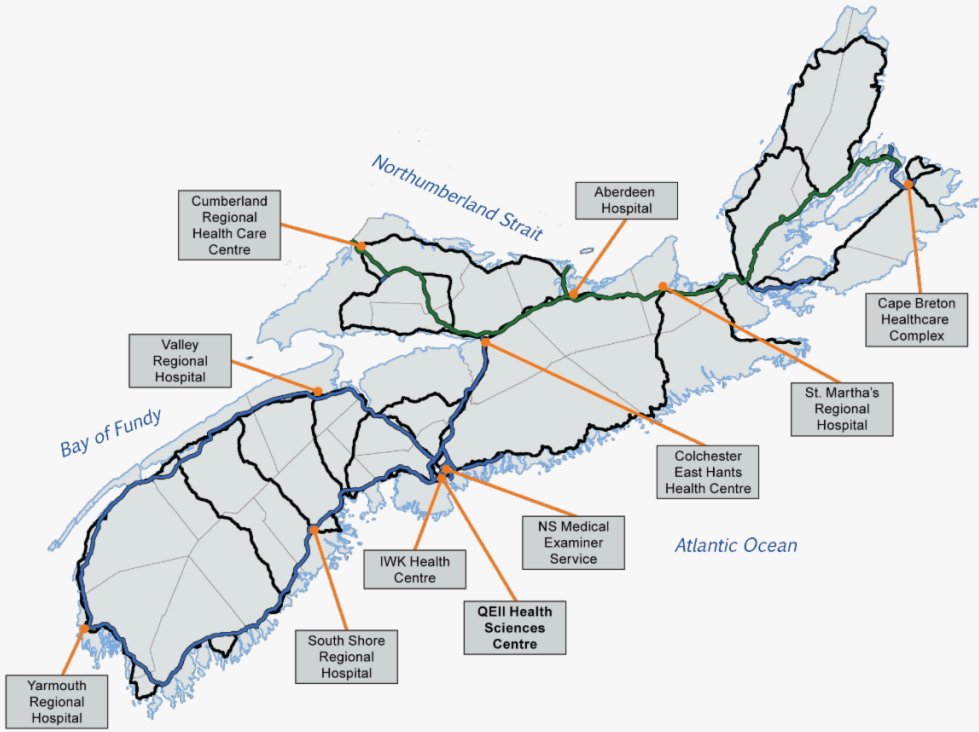
For any inquiries regarding trauma education, please contact Jenna Faulkner at: Jenna2.Faulkner@nshealth.ca

Nova Scotia Trauma Registry

The Nova Scotia Trauma Registry (NSTR) is an essential component of our trauma system as it allows for timely evaluation, research, and monitoring of trauma care, and can be used for outreach, planning and improvement.

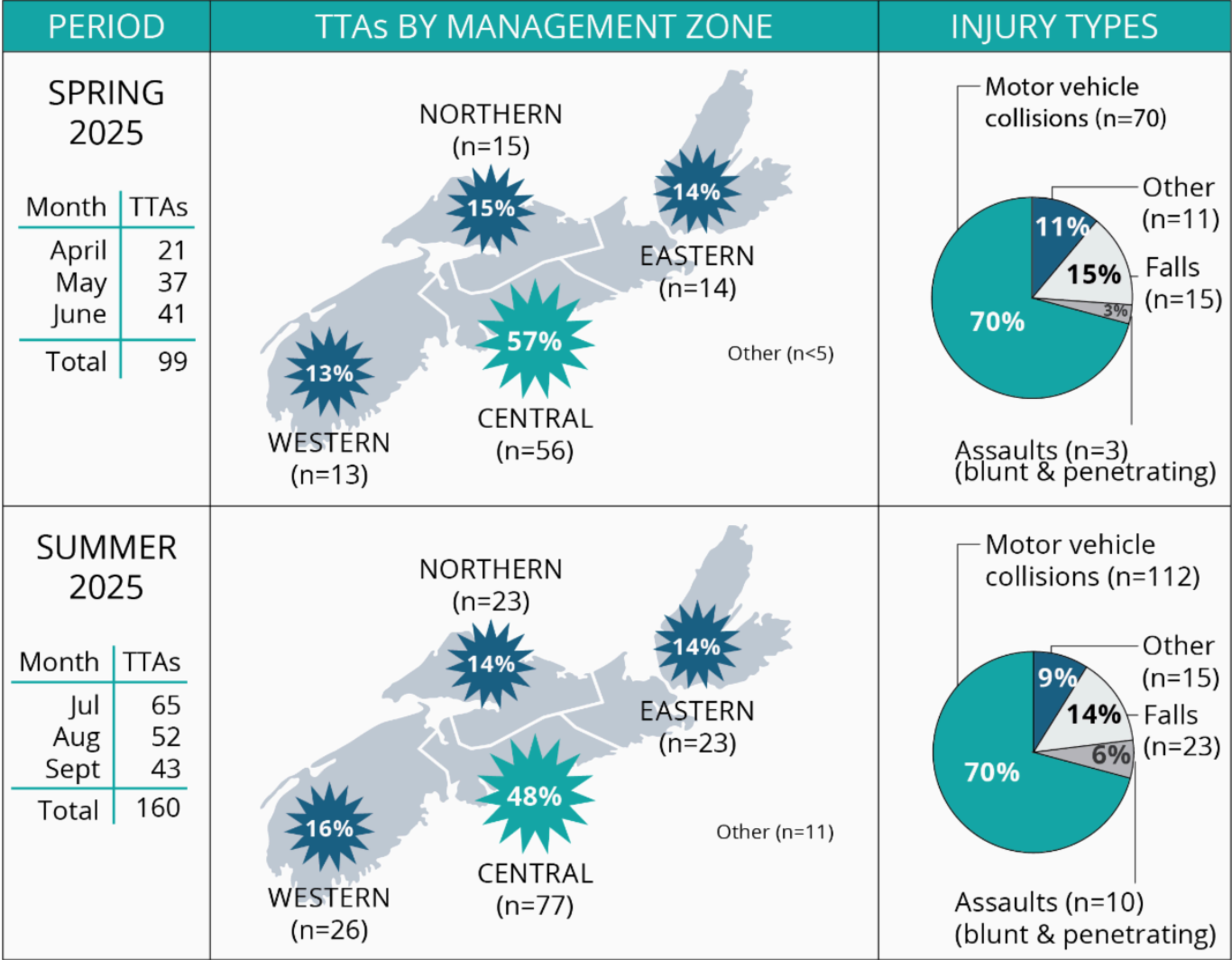
The NSTR captures data on all major traumas from hospitals across the province and from the NS Medical Examiner Service. The information gathered in the registry is used for surveillance, research, and to improve the quality of patient care.

For more information or to submit a data request, contact NSTR Coordinator Gina Boonstra at nstrauma@nshealth.ca.



Trauma Team Activations - Spring & Summer 2025

Criteria for Trauma Team Activation (TTA) include physiologic, anatomic, mechanistic, and logistic considerations. Patients who meet TTA criteria are managed by a multidisciplinary team led by either a Trauma Consultant (TC), or a Trauma Team Leader (TTL), and Resident TTL (rTTL). Separate trauma teams manage adult (age 17+) and pediatric trauma patients at the QEII HSC and the IWK Health Centre, respectively.



Trauma Team Activations by mechanism of injury
(April 2025 - September 2025)

Trauma Research

Ongoing Research Activities

Research continues to thrive at Trauma Nova Scotia! Our team has been busy evaluating the Trauma Consult (TC) Service at the QEII to better understand its impact on patient outcomes and key performance indicators. We've gathered feedback from trauma care providers and patients about their experiences with the TC Service and Virtual Follow-up Clinic. Additionally, we assessed burnout among Trauma Team Leaders and TC Service members to see whether levels have improved since the service launched. Our injury prevention work also remains ongoing, with projects focused on priority scores, falls, and a scoping review to inform prevention strategies.

Time to Definitive Care Research Program

Work is underway on our study exploring how time and access to care affect outcomes for major trauma patients. In partnership with Emergency Health Services and rehabilitation teams, the project is moving forward with data collection. We're also excited to welcome Miriam Daneff as our new Research Associate on this project!

Funding Announcement

Our team is proud to collaborate with Dalhousie Pharmacy Research, who recently received a \$100,000 Shoppers Drug Mart Grant. This funding will support research exploring how community-based pharmacists, physiotherapists, and occupational therapists can help address gaps in patient care.

Presentations

This summer, our team travelled across the province, sharing our work at the Nova Scotia Health Quality Summits in the Northern, Western, Central, and Eastern Zones. The team presented [posters](#) titled *Breaking Down Prevention Scores for Traumatic Injuries, How Our Reconfigured Provincial Trauma Course Boosted Clinician Comfort*, and *Using a FMEA Framework to Review Mass Casualty Response at YRH & ARH*. It was a fantastic opportunity to connect with colleagues and discuss quality improvement efforts happening across the province!

Publications

Through collaboration with local and national physicians and researchers, a province-wide study was published examining health professionals' knowledge and practices related to violence against women in Nova Scotia. This project was led by Dr. Alexa Yakubovich (Department of Community Health and Epidemiology, Dalhousie University), and published in [Preventive Medicine Reports](#).

Injury & Trauma Prevention

We've also shared online resources highlighting trends in our trauma cases and strategies for injury prevention. Most recently, for June 2025's Brain Injury Awareness Month, we explored the prevention detection, and recovery of brain injuries. Our work on traumatic falls continues as well, through both epidemiological research and prevention efforts in support of November's Falls Prevention Month.

Mass Casualty Program

2025 has been an eventful year so far, with Kenzie MacLean moving onto a new role with Trauma Nova Scotia, but we are excited to welcome Amber Humes as our new Mass Casualty Consultant! She's starting off strong with a review of the Code Orange plans that are available on The Compass.

We continue to deliver MCI education within the Provincial Trauma Course. We took part in 4 courses so far this year with another 8 courses scheduled in October and November. Discussion has been rich and thoughtful with participants very engaged in the content.

Two site visits have been scheduled with leadership teams; one at Cape Breton Regional Hospital on October 17th and another at Yarmouth Regional Hospital on November 17th.

Work has been planned with the RCMP to create an acronym dictionary to ensure better communication as well as a Venn diagram to document what TNS does in relation to first response agencies. Work is also expected to begin on a Terms of Reference Document for a relationship with the RCMP and other policing agencies in the province.

For any inquiries or suggestions, please reach out to MassCasualtyProgram@nshealth.ca.

Quality Improvement

Since Dr. Sean Hurley has stepped into our Quality Lead role, he's been busy working on a number of ongoing projects at Trauma Nova Scotia to improve the quality of care of major trauma patients in Nova Scotia.

M&M Rounds

The next M&M Trauma Rounds are taking place on Monday, December 1st at 1400h in the RBC Theatre at the Halifax Infirmary. Attendance is always encouraged in person, but if you want to attend virtually please contact Erica Spinney at erica.spinney@nshealth.ca.

If any TTLs or other providers have potential M&M or A&A cases, please discuss them with Sean.

Debriefs

Our team has been busy supporting sites across the province with debriefs for difficult trauma cases. We're continuing to work on ways to identify cases that need to be debriefed, but you can reach out to us at any time.

If you have something you'd like to discuss with our Quality Team, please reach out to Dr. Sean Hurley at Sean.Hurley@nshealth.ca.

Trauma Consult Service

Inpatient Care

From April through July 2025 our trauma team had continued to deliver timely, high quality care to injured patients across the province. Over this period, there were 164 trauma team activations (TTAs) at the QEII. Of these activations, 123 patients required hospital admission and were followed by the inpatient Trauma Consult Service, reflecting the significant complexity and severity of cases presenting to our team.

July marked our busiest month, with 65 TTAs alone—a clear reminder of the ongoing demand for coordinated trauma response during peak summer activity in Nova Scotia.

In addition to direct clinical care, our Trauma Consult Service staff provided ongoing support to QEII staff through both formal and information education opportunities focused on trauma assessment, procedures, and best practices. These collaborative learning opportunities continue to strengthen trauma care capacity across teams and promote consistent, evidence-informed approaches to patient management.

Virtual Follow-up Clinic

Consistent with the Trauma Consult Service, the Virtual Follow-up Clinic also saw an increase in service demands between April and July 2025. The clinic supported 55 trauma patient appointments, providing timely follow-up and addressing ongoing care needs after discharge. Building on the clinic's strong patient engagement and positive outcomes, we expanded the inclusion criteria in June. Previously limited to patients discharged directly from the Emergency Department, the VFC now serves all trauma patients discharged from both the ED and inpatient units at the QEII, enhancing continuity of care across the trauma pathway.

We are incredibly proud of the continued dedication, collaboration, and excellence demonstrated by all members of the trauma system. Thank you for your commitment to ensuring that patients receive the best possible care.

CONGRATULATIONS!

TRAUMA NOVA SCOTIA

2025 ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS

**"TRAUMA TEACHING TITAN" - TOP
TRAUMA EDUCATION SESSION**
DOUG DENIKE

TOP RESIDENT PROVIDER
DR. AC LAMPORT

**"RESUSCITATION ROCKSTAR" - ALLIED
HEALTH TRAUMA RESUSCITATION PROVIDER**
PETER HICO

**"THE PATIENT PARTNER" - INPATIENT
TRAUMA PROVIDER**
TARA MERCIER

**"IT TAKES A VILLAGE" - COMMUNITY
TRAUMA PHYSICIAN**
DR. SUSIE EGAR

MOST SUPPORTIVE PERSON
ERICA SPINNEY

**"PEDIATRIC PRACTITIONER" - IWK
ALLIED HEALTH TRAUMA PROVIDER**
KELSEY PLOUFFE

**THE DR. METE ERDOGAN TOP
RESEARCH AWARD**
DR. JUDAH GOLDSTEIN

**THE IWK HEALTH PEDIATRIC TRAUMA
PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR**
DR. KIRSTIN WEERDENBURG

**THE TRAUMA NOVA SCOTIA
PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR**
DR. SEAN HURLEY

TRAUMA
NOVA SCOTIA



Trauma Pet Spotlight - Meet Lucy!



Trauma Nova Scotia

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