

NSAMRT
TOWN HALL MEETING FAQs
November 7, 2015

How does NSAMRT benefit members?

The Act which governs NSAMRT sets the standard for practice and only those with the proper credential are able to perform the duties of a Medical Radiation Technologist (MRT).

This ensures that only MRT's are able to provide radiation diagnostic procedures and/or radiation therapeutic procedures to patients.

Although this protects the public it also protects MRT's. It ensures that the person working alongside you has the appropriate credential, which in the end keeps you safe!

Why were members only notified in September of the dues increases for 2016 & 2017?

February 27 – March 1, 2015- Strategic Planning Retreat- One of the strategic initiatives was determined to be the sustainability of the organization and a primary outcome was to hire an Executive Director for January 2016.

April 11- Discussion at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) regarding the strategic plan and the need to hire an Executive Director would necessitate a dues increase. Members were provided the opportunity to ask questions with the Treasurer informing the membership that the Executive Council would notify the membership of what the increase would be as soon as it was determined but that it would be substantial. It would have to be enough to cover a salary and additional expenses associated with having staff.

April 16- E-blast sent to membership notifying them of the intended dues increase for 2016 fees.

April 25 – Executive Council meeting to determine a selection committee for recruitment of ED. Discussion took place regarding the need for assistance with hiring a staff person as it was beyond the expertise of the executive council members. The President offered to investigate securing a consultant.

May 12-The HR consultant and the Executive Council had a teleconference to discuss compatibility and process for hiring an ED. The decision was made to obtain C. Thomas who had offered her services pro bono. (An honorarium will be paid at the completion of project)

May 14-The selection committee began the work advised by the HR consultant. See HR documents

August 26-HR consultant advised the selection committee of appropriate salary range.

September 1- Selection committee took recommendation to Executive Council for discussion and approval.

September 10- Finance committee deliberated on the total financial picture for NSAMRT including the compensation package for the Executive Director and to make a recommendation for what the dues needed to be for 2016.

September 16 -Executive council met to discuss and vote on the recommendation from the finance committee regarding the dues rate for 2016.

September 22 – Dues notice sent to members

Why do MRT's who are not directly involved with patient services need to pay NSAMRT dues?

PACS

Managers

Educators

Research

Although MRT's in these positions do not provide direct patient care they do support the services provided by MRTs and affect patient management therefore they are required to have a license to practice.

When an MRT is using their knowledge skills and judgment they are considered practicing the profession, which goes far beyond direct patient care. If the capacity or context of that work uses the knowledge or skill from an individual's MRT foundation then they are practicing the profession.

Also, active MRT registration is a requirement for most of these jobs. This ensures that individuals with the knowledge, skills, and judgment of an MRT performing these jobs, and in the future are doing the appropriate continued professional development related to these fields.

The purpose of personal liability insurance (PLI) is to protect those practicing the profession, so anyone providing direct patient care, PACS, Research, Managers who could have a complaint of incompetence or negligence against them have the coverage they need. A complaint of incompetence or negligence can be lodged against anyone practicing the profession even if they are not directly engaged in patient care.

What are the member categories?

Active Member

All practicing members fall into the category.

Have full voting privileges

Are able to sit on all committees of the Association as well as the Executive

Life Member

Members who have provided significant service to the Association & no longer practice

Elected by Executive Council

Have same privileges of Active members but don't pay dues

Currently 1 member (Dorothy Archibald)

Honorary Member

Distinguished associates of radiation science and its application

Can attend meetings but no voting privileges

Student Member

Persons enrolled in CMA accredited programs for MRTs

No voting privileges

Associate Member

Not active in the practice but are engaged in the commercial activity related to MRTs

No voting privileges

What provisions are being made for:

Retirees

Parental leave

Casual

NSAMRT currently allows members to resign in good standing in one year and reinstate in another with pro-rated dues applying to the year of reinstatement. However, the Executive Council discussed and agreed in principle to a change in policy whereby pro-rated dues are also applied in the year of resignation, which includes parental leave and retirees. This policy approval is on the agenda for the November 16th executive meeting. ***NOTE (following the executive meeting it was determined that**

beginning January 1st, 2016, NSAMRT will prorate dues for parental leave and retirees. The documentation and process required for these are being established, and will be available in January, 2016)

MRTs working in casual positions will be required to pay the full dues fee as it is impossible to monitor the number of hours worked and they may in fact be working as much as a full time MRT.

Additionally, the cost and resources required for administering and auditing a part-time and casual work and license would likely result in an increase in fees for everyone else in order to support such an initiative.

Why do I have to pay fees to both NSAMRT & CAMRT?

The Act states that:

No person shall practice medical radiation technology unless they are a member in good standing with NSAMRT. This provides the license to practice. Members are also required to have PLI which NSAMRT is not able to provide and it is one of the benefits of being a member with CAMRT.

How does becoming a College affect members?

Bill 70 is the legislation that will come into effect upon proclamation and is more up to date than the current legislation, which was initially passed into law in 1967.

- The process for dealing with complaints is clearly defined.
- It protects the public by providing a mechanism to be heard with respect to their care by an MRT
- It outlines a fair process for the MRT to be heard on matters brought to the College.
- The scope of practice for each discipline is broader, allowing for more seamless care with other health professionals.
- Viewed as professionals who contribute to the team and not just identified by the equipment/technology being used.

What's the difference between our current Act (legislation) & Bill 70?

- Current Act does not include magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or sonography
- The current disciplinary process dictates that the Executive Council comprise the panel that will make decisions on proceedings, whereas Bill 70 has a clearly defined process from investigation of a complaint to who sits on a panel that makes decisions regarding disciplinary action. An avenue for an appeal is also clearly outlined should the member disagree with the decision.
- Bill 70 will require CPD so that MRTs will be required to maintain currency with their practice.

Can the Atlantic Provinces amalgamate and form a combined College?

Health is a provincial mandate, with separate provincial governments; it is not possible to amalgamate the four Atlantic Provinces.

The Atlantic provincial associations have formed a group that meets annually to discuss common issues and look for ways to share resources when possible. The group formed 3 years ago and one item that has been shared is the cost of investigation training. The possibility of having a combined AGC with in person and online education in the future has also been discussed

Why does NSAMRT need an Executive Director?

It is no longer possible to sustain NSAMRT solely as a volunteer organization. NSAMRT needs to be represented in discussions and decisions that affect the practice and profession of MRT's.

The workings of the Association has become much more complex in recent years as Medical Radiation Technologists form part of the collaborative provision of health services to Nova Scotians, and as the public expects more accountability from all health professionals. We simply cannot continue to operate as a volunteer organization. The hiring of a half-time Executive Director is a necessary step to ensure the future of our profession. We hope you will review this information about our finances and the need for an Executive Director and better understand Council's reasons for moving in this direction. At the same time we hope you will see that Council has taken your views into account by the changes we are proposing.

An ED will take over some of the functions that Pathfinder Group currently perform such as receiving member questions and comments. The ED will be the single voice that will respond to members which will happen in a more-timely manner than is currently possible.

Currently the Executive Council shares the responsibilities and jobs that are required to run the organization. Having an ED will allow for one person to consistently lead and champion this work.

The ED will be the voice for NSAMRT at all committees nationally and provincially. The President will attend some meetings with the ED such as CAMRT National Council meetings.

The majority of the committee work occurs during the day & it is difficult for Executive Council members to be able to leave work to take care of NSAMRT business. Often participating in these meetings means travel, typically to Ottawa and Toronto but it is not restricted to these cities.

What is the ED going to cost the NSAMRT?

Currently, we are not in a position to discuss the exact salary of the ED because the job offer has not been made, and that is part of our negotiations. The salary range for the ED will be between \$44,000 - \$66,000 depending on skills and experience. We have budgeted what the ED is going to cost the organization which is estimated to be \$96, 000. This includes the following:

ED salary + adjustment in lieu of benefits
Office expenses
Travel for conferences to represent NSAMRT
Incidental costs that arise when having staff

Where is the additional \$251 in dues going?

Since 2012/13, the operational demands of the NSAMRT have exceeded the dues income. With the increased work in preparation for proclamation, and the additional required committees, the NSAMRT is working with a deficit. This work is expected to continue, and therefore, we project 2016 expenses to be comparable to the 2015 expenses. To correct this short-fall, and support an ED, the additional 2016 dues will be used for :

ED costs (\$96,000 as detailed above)
Current deficit from 2015(~\$30,000)
Projected deficit for 2016 (~\$30,000)

What is a contingency fund?

A contingency fund is the money required should there be an emergency in the organization, items that arise after the operating budget has been approved. It is the money required for:

Legal advice and costs
The investigation, hearing and decisions regarding complaints
Should administrative staff need to be hired or space required
Projects that arise that couldn't have been forecast with the budget

We performed an environmental scan to determine the amount of contingency funds held by comparable organizations in Nova Scotia and found the range to be between \$250,000 to \$600,000.

Will there be future dues increases once proclaimed?

Another increase cannot be predicted until all the information is available when budgets are developed. Once the funding level is able to meet the operational requirements of the organization, there should not need to be any more substantial increases. If that occurs prior to proclamation then only small regular adjustments may be made after proclamation.

What is the added value of the dues increase?

ED (salary, travel expenses, professional memberships, incidentals, office expenses)

Video/telecommunications platform

Contingency fund

Education for all volunteers (leadership & collaboration)

Continuing Professional Development platform

New website

Support committee work

Elimination of the deficit

Why aren't NSSDMS dues being increased?

NSSDMS is a society and their dues are not mandatory. There is no requirement under law for sonographers to have graduated from an accredited program, to have a credential or a license to practice. When Bill 70 is proclaimed this will change and the standard will be the same for all medical imagers.

NSSDMS & NSAMRT executive councils have been working together to prepare for this new legislation having said this, the budgets and financial needs of the organizations are separate.

The dues increase is for NSAMRT members and the ED is an NSAMRT employee.

Is it possible to request a referendum?

At the Town Hall, our legal counsel reviewed the effect of the Petition. Section 10 of the By-Laws established under our current Act gives Council the authority to fix the annual fees to be paid by the members of the Association. Accordingly, the authority for setting the fees rests with the Council, and not the general membership through referendum or vote. Under our current Act, there is no process to call a referendum.

What is the process for members when they disagree with a decision of the Executive Council?

The legal options open to members to challenge actions of Council in setting the fees are:

1. To seek an amendment to the by-laws requiring a different mechanism for setting fees that would include membership involvement, by providing 30 days notice prior to the annual general meeting of a motion to amend; (such a motion would apply to future setting of fees, and not the decision for 2015-16 fees that has already been made)
2. To call a special meeting of the Association where this issue could be discussed. In order for a special meeting to be called, at least one-quarter of the members of the Association must request it.

When members disagree with a decision of the Executive Council the Act states that a Special meeting can be called upon written request of at least one-quarter of the members. The Executive Council then has 30 day to schedule the meeting. The written request must state the purpose of the meeting and the names of the members making the request.

The 2016 AGM is scheduled for Sunday June 12th (meeting time to be posted).

While these are the legal options, we also note that Council has to recognize the number of individuals who have signed the petition, and we advise that Council is very much taking the views of these members into account in its decision-making process.

We have worked long and hard to obtain new legislation that will set Medical Radiation Technologists on the same legislative footing as other regulated health professionals in this province.

We need legislation that will protect the designations we have worked for from being used by others who do not have our credentials.

We need legislation that provides current and fair processes for registration and complaints if we are to gain the confidence of the public and our members in our ability to be a self-regulated profession.

We need legislation that includes our MRI and Ultrasound colleagues who are currently without governing legislation.

We need legislation that will give us flexibility in our scopes of practice in coming years.

Will the 2017 dues rate (fees) be reconsidered?

The 2017 dues increase is being reconsidered as well as the impact of changing the dues might have on NSAMRT and its members. This information will be sent to members and hospitals as soon as possible to adjust payroll deduction.

What effect does the dues change have on payroll deduction?

Employer's payroll offices require notification.

Questions? Comments?

If you have any questions please direct them to info@nsamrt.ca