

NUPGE Annual Report



2020 in Review

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) is a family of 11 Component and 3 affiliate unions. Taken together, we are one of the largest unions in Canada. Most of our 390,000 members work to deliver public services of every kind to the citizens of their home provinces. We also have a large and growing number of members who work for private businesses.

Larry Brown, President

Bert Blundon, Secretary-Treasurer

Dear Friends,

First, I want to say thank you. Thank you for your hard work, your energy, and your commitment.

We've been through some rough years before, but I don't think we've seen anything like 2020! Exhausting, anxiety-riddled, and game changing for so many of us. We've witnessed great loss: of friends and family to this terrible disease, of livelihoods and economic stability, of hopes and dreams of what this year could have been.

But at the same time, it was heartwarming, caring, rewarding, and filled with solidarity. Despite the isolation that many of us felt at the beginning of the pandemic, we saw the overwhelming support for front-line workers as the days and weeks wore on.

People are seeing many workers in a new light. Those people frequently obscured by the limelight that is afforded to higher-profile professions have been brought out into the open to be applauded and appreciated for their valuable contributions to keeping society healthy and safe. Those forgotten, underpaid, and undervalued workers who continuously put themselves in the way of risk and danger, found themselves front-page news.

It's nothing new to us—but it sure has been a wake-up call for the rest of society! We know workers are the backbone of our economy, contributors to our communities, and saviours to those in need. COVID-19 unmasked the cracks in our systems—such as in health and social services—that left vulnerable people even more exposed to danger.

But COVID has done something else: shown people what working together for the public good really means. Front-line workers, in various ways, are caring for the public. People reaching out to their neighbours to make sure they have what they need. Workers putting their hard-earned wages into the community by supporting local businesses to help them survive this economic crisis. People helping out those who have lost their jobs and are struggling.

The goodness of each and every one of us has been on display these last 9 months, and I am so very grateful for how you all have contributed to bettering the world in which we live.

To be sure, times have not always been easy. Across the country, we are witnessing attacks on labour and on public services like never before. Just when people need support and security more than ever, Conservative governments are taking advantage of the confusion and chaos to roll back wages, to cut valuable services, and to take away workers' rights. Some governments have taken a page out of the American right-to-work playbook and have passed legislation to silence us from opposing their actions.

In the face of these fights, our 390,000 members have not relented. On the battleground of Alberta, Health Sciences Association of Alberta has mounted a groundbreaking member-to-member campaign, reaching out to the 27,000 members as a way to not only make them aware of the threats on the doorstep but to show them that their union has their back. Components have shown their solidarity by working together to push back this fundamental attack on union and workers' rights.

All of the impressive body of work reported on here is done with a relatively small staff—small in number but huge in heart and commitment. Led by the effective leadership of Managing Director Len Bush and National Coordinator Brenda Hildahl, our staff adjusted quickly to the new COVID work rules, working from home but staying plugged in to all of the challenges, old and new. They all have different roles and assignments, but they share a common dedication to the members of the National Union. The Officers thank them for the hard work done this year in service to the hundreds of thousands of public sector and health care workers and to all the many other areas in which our members work.

I could go on about the important work our union has been doing over this year, but I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge how this pandemic has highlighted the important role that many *other* workers have played. They ensured people could get groceries or have food delivered. They made sure buildings were clean and safe. They made sure goods got to where they were needed to keep shelves stocked. And while they went to work every day, we all know that many of them did not have a choice, and unfortunately, many still don't: it's either show up or don't get paid.

That's one of the reasons it has always been so important that the National Union advocates for all workers throughout this difficult time. We continue to recognize our privilege and are determined to ensure equality and respect are offered to everyone.

If anything, COVID-19 has revealed true solidarity in action. It's one of the important lessons learned from this difficult period. We can accomplish great things when we stick together!

While there may be much uncertainty about the days ahead, the one thing I know for certain is that the strength of our union will see us through.

In solidarity,



Larry Brown
President

NUPGE Executive Officers

President Larry Brown

Secretary-Treasurer Bert Blundon

NUPGE Staff

Managing Director

Len Bush

National Coordinator

Brenda Hildahl

Executive Assistant to the Officers

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Keith Noseworthy

Michael Temelini

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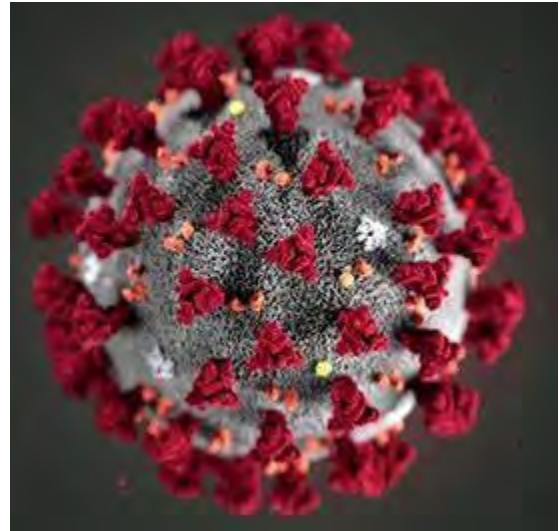
Diane Fowles

Sandra Lea Megeney

Sasha Saint-Aubin

Overview

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak in Canada, the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) and its Components have been working diligently to protect and promote the interests of our over 390,000 members. This publication records the ways in which we connected with our leadership, our members, and the public on issues that include health and safety, wages and benefits, workload, child care, and equality rights, to name just a few.



From videoconferences and telephone meetings, to written updates on the status of public services, especially public health, to the development of resources to help strengthen our union, the National Union ensured that our leaders had as much support and information they needed to perform at their highest level. The way in which we connected with members, Component leaders, government representatives, and senior members of the civil service to share experiences from across the country made each Component a little stronger.

At the federal level, we advocated for increased support for workers and sectors feeling the brunt of the pandemic. We campaigned for greater protection of our seniors. We joined forces with our allies to bring attention to those people who were being forgotten in the rollout of support measures—financial or otherwise. As we lobbied for improvements, we pushed the government further to recognize existing problems, such as how ineffective the Employment Insurance program is for helping people in need.

As were many of you, the National Office was on high alert to help react to the ever-changing world of this virus. Working with our National Executive Board, our Component union leadership, staff and members, we took on every challenge presented and responded in ways that would inform and help us navigate these uncharted waters. These last several months are a testament to our diligence, commitment and dedication to serving every member to the best of our abilities.

Meetings

Videoconferences (Big Tent)

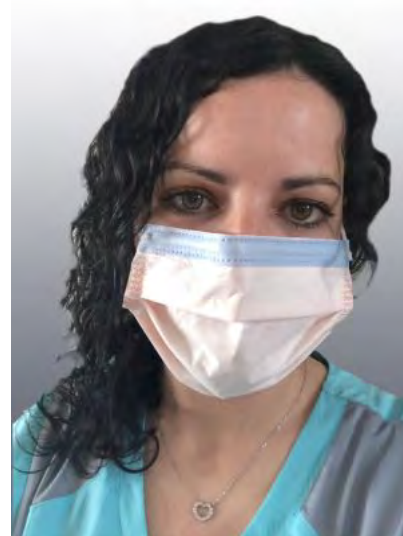
Since the start of the pandemic, a total of 13 Big Tent calls or videoconferences were held during 2020 to bring together Component leadership to discuss the most salient issues related to COVID-19 responses.

The meetings, initially conference calls, transitioned to Zoom to allow better interaction among participants. The meetings were held weekly in March and April, then every 2 weeks in May and June. The meetings were put on hold at the end of June to allow for the summer break. The meetings restarted in September, and it was decided to continue to hold the meetings monthly. Regularly, 20–30 labour leaders and staff participated.

In addition to NUPGE Components, leaders from unions affiliated with NUPGE through the Canadian Health Professionals Secretariat were in attendance.

The range of topics was considerable and reflected the most pressing topics at the time of the meetings: the focus of the discussion shifted as the crisis shifted. For instance, early meetings talked of adequate supply and sourcing PPE and lockdowns, while later discussions were on safe reopenings of offices and support for front-line workers as the economy began reopening when infection rates were reduced.

Components reported on the key issues in their province. Sharing this information proved useful for others, as either a way forward, or as a warning. The work of Components in BC, for instance, informed others going forward, since BC has a more progressive government that was willing to consult with workers. On the other end, provinces like Alberta and Manitoba provided a cautionary tale, as legislation and policies were enacted to undermine workers' rights and cut funding to public services.



The second wave of the pandemic became a topic of concern in the fall, with rising rates throughout the country, outside of the Atlantic Bubble where the spread was under control. Alberta and Manitoba were again top of mind as these were the provinces hardest hit relative to their populations. These were also provinces where the premiers were very reluctant to implement strong provincial mandates to control the virus.

Brother Brown and Brother Blundon reported regularly on what was happening at the federal and international levels in response to the pandemic. For instance, NUPGE participated in work done by organizations such as Public Services International and was able to report on this work to the group. Nationally, NUPGE regularly monitors the work of the Public Health Agency of Canada and shared relevant documents regarding infection prevention and control. Other reports were also shared, including an important study by Dr. John Murphy on respiratory protection for health care workers that was commissioned by Health Sciences Association of BC (HSABC/NUPGE) working with the National Union.

There were also discussions of what was happening in specific sectors, such as in long-term care, where the group was informed of NUPGE's work to bring long-term care under the *Canada Health Act*. There were also discussions of the meetings that were organized by NUPGE, according to sector. These meetings were coordinated to allow Components to share more specific information pertinent to a given sector. This involved at least 16 different groups that were brought together to discuss COVID responses in their sector, or within their area of expertise.

Corrections and Youth Facility Workers

To address the crisis of COVID in Canada's correctional facilities, NUPGE published a statement and web stories and convened a series of conference calls and videoconferences of Corrections Officers and Youth Facility Workers.

10 meetings were held, some initially by phone, and then the rest by videoconference.

Joining the various meetings with the National Union were participants representing adult and youth corrections from up to 9 Components.

Participants raised a host of issues concerning the impact of COVID-19 on working conditions in adult and youth correctional facilities, such as compensation, child care, sick days, and the implementation of health and safety protocols (regular testing, screening at front door, isolating those testing positive, enhanced cleaning, plexiglass, and PPE).

Following each meeting, notes and relevant materials were uploaded to a dedicated [Corrections and Youth Facility Workers—COVID-19](#) web page on the NUPGE website. The page was regularly updated as new information became available. The page contains notes from the conference calls and materials from the national office, Components, and international unions.

On March 10, 2020, NUPGE Secretary-Treasurer Bert Blundon and NUPGE National Representative Michael Temelini met with the Hon. Filomena Tassi, Minister of Labour, Government of Canada, at the Minister's office on Parliament Hill. Temelini and Blundon were invited to discuss the details of the NUPGE research report entitled *Report: Mental Injury among Justice Workers*. During the meeting, Blundon and Temelini asked the Minister and her government to enact legislation to protect workers suffering from mental injury.

Advisory Committee on Young Workers' Issues

The Advisory Committee on Young Workers' Issues (ACYWI) met for its inaugural videoconference on March 5. Representatives under the age of 35 from 8 Components met with the goals of furthering their Components' work on young workers' issues and providing recommendations to the National Executive Board on problems and concerns confronting young workers.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, the plan for this committee was to have a standard in-person meeting of a day and a half in the fall. Instead, the ACYWI met on June 26 for a videoconference of an hour and a half to discuss the impact COVID-19 was having on their Components' young worker activities. The group also reassessed what topics were of interest for a longer videoconference in the fall.

Priorities for the committee remained largely unchanged between meetings. The top requests were for research pertaining to

- education and debt;
- the rising cost of living;
- education on unions and labour history;
- mental health;
- lack of meaningful employment, including underemployment, the gig economy and job insecurity.

Those 5 remained the top priorities, but committee members also cited anti-racism efforts and occupational health and safety as vital topics.

The ACYWI met for the third time in 2020 via Zoom on November 10. Representatives gave updates on their Component's young worker activities that had occurred after the June 26 meeting.

Representatives received information about NUPGE's work on topics they'd previously flagged as top priorities. This included anti-racism, working from home and occupational health and safety, the cost of COVID-19 for Ontario's young workers, and Component education. Representatives were also given details about NUPGE's involvement in PSI's Regional Young Workers' Committee. There will be opportunities for NUPGE's ACYWI to work on projects related to PSI's Regional Young Workers' Committee in the future.

Canadian Health Professionals Secretariate

The Canadian Health Professionals Secretariat (CHPS) had 2 videoconferences to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic. In total, over 50 participants were present through the two meetings with 10 Components and 3 CHPS allied constituent unions represented, along with NUPGE national staff.

Through the course of these meetings, it was clear that COVID-19 is having a severe impact on CHPS organizations and the workers they represent. Many CHPS members are on the front lines of health care, and this pandemic is taking a great toll on health care workers. The effects of the pandemic will linger well beyond the acute phase of the crisis. Issues related to mental health, burnout, and stress all need to be explored going forward. Health human resources issues are certain to be exacerbated by this pandemic.



It was also clear from the meeting that COVID has placed a great deal of stress on an already overstretched health care system, and the capacity of workers to take on more in this context is limited. There will need to be a broader assessment of the system's response to COVID and how best to improve the functioning to deal with the failures.

To try and provide some context for these issues, CHPS invited guest speakers to present on 2 key issues. First, there was a discussion on health human resources, specifically as it pertained to the Lab Technicians. The pandemic has hit many sectors within health care, but the crisis in medical labs was ongoing and has become acute due to COVID-19 and the unprecedented spike in testing. A second speaker discussed the impact on mental health for health care workers, and as related to the level of personal protective equipment they were provided. Both presentations and discussions were well received.

There were also discussions of the ongoing health care issues that had been discussed at past CHPS meetings, including pharmacare, the long-term care crisis, the ongoing fight against paid plasma, and the victory in the Cambie Charter challenge.

The bulk of both meetings focused on Component updates. There was some discussion looking at what success Components felt they had during the pandemic and what needed to be improved.

Occupational Health and Safety Officers

Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) issues have been at the forefront of Component COVID-19 responses. NUPGE convened 8 OH&S Officers' conference calls during 2020, primarily focused on issues related to the pandemic. These calls provided a platform for Component OH&S officers to share information regarding the impacts of the pandemic on their work and on the evolving nature of government responses to the outbreak.

The range of issues discussed was extensive and included looking at PPE concerns, general infection prevention and control, reopening of workplaces, and COVID pay. There were also discussions on engagement with governments, on how workers were being treated should they contract COVID-19, etc.

There were regularly about 10 NUPGE Component and CHPS constituent unions on the calls. The format moved from a simple check-in, to being focused on identifying challenges and presenting possible solutions. Each province has been different in terms of rate of infection and response. The format of focusing on emerging issues, and solutions, allowed for participants to share their experience with issues that others would inevitably be faced with. Presumption in relation to COVID infection, and how Workers' Compensation has responded to claims, are examples of issues that would eventually need to be addressed by all Components.

The challenge with the pandemic is that the regular work of OH&S officers continued, even while COVID added a whole new and complex layer of work. These calls provided an opportunity for officers to share and learn from each other, and to feel less isolated as they tried to navigate the broad range of shifting challenges presented by the pandemic.

Component Liquor Board Representatives

The decision of provincial governments to make liquor and cannabis stores essential services put liquor stores workers on the front line during the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the focus of the April videoconference of Component liquor board reps was on health and safety measures required due to the pandemic.

Participants shared information on what safety measures were being put in place and where they were having problems getting management to take the necessary action. In some provinces, management temporarily agreed to return to counter stores, where customers pick up their order instead of accessing stock on the shelves. In other provinces, even getting PPE equipment and measures to encourage social distancing was a struggle. Other issues discussed were empty container returns and implementing physical distancing in warehouses, which can affect several hundred workers. In several provinces, there was the threat of privatization, and the danger that, if public liquor stores shut down for safety reasons, it would be used as an opportunity to privatize all liquor sales.



Fighting privatization of liquor stores is more important than ever. Preventing further privatization of liquor and cannabis sales and, ideally, reversing the privatization that has taken place will help provinces rebuild after the pandemic. Governments are going to be strapped for cash because of the pandemic. For that reason, both the revenue loss and increases in health care costs that come with liquor privatization will be even less affordable.

Privatization threats and how to best oppose them were discussed during both video conferences.

Emergency Medical Services

The National Union hosted 2 calls for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Workers, one on April 17, and one on May 4, 2020. The first meeting had 25 participants from 9 NUPGE Components and CHPS constituent unions. The second had 20 participants from 8 NUPGE Components and CHPS constituent unions. Both meetings featured Mike Parker, President of Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA/NUPGE), providing an opening overview of the key issues arising from the pandemic that were affecting EMS workers.

This was early in the pandemic and before there was any consensus on the modes of transmission and the required PPE. The situation for workers was also complicated by widespread shortages of PPE, particularly N95 respirator masks. There were a variety of standards being adopted. Various guidance was in force from federal and provincial governments to hospitals, which caused much confusion across the sector.

Other issues included ensuring proper screening protocols were in place before EMS workers reached the door. There were clearly many concerns related to safety, as well as to the impacts of higher workloads, greater stress, and overall anxiety caused by being on the front lines of a pandemic. The vast experience of EMS workers working on the front lines was extremely helpful, since they were used to dealing with highly stressful and changing environments, so were highly adaptable and able to function well in these environments. Nevertheless, workers expressed a clear need for management to do more to alleviate the long-term workload and stress on workers. The constant donning and doffing of PPE, and the time and the energy this required, was not being met with an increase in numbers of workers to assist with the added workloads.

Some of the discussions were related to sharing new ways to mitigate risk, such as substituting high-risk procedures for lower-risk ones, as well as comparing the different ways provinces were dealing with reuse and potential disinfection of disposable equipment. We are still grappling with these since the problems with the PPE supply have not been fully resolved.

Long-Term Care Representatives

NUPGE assembled a videoconference with representatives from 9 Components who work in long-term care to discuss the impact of COVID-19 in the sector. 20 members provided updates on what measures were being implemented to care for residents. They reported on the working conditions and restrictions that were being placed on NUPGE members working in these residences.

The biggest concern raised was the lack of PPE available to workers and the lack of consistency around enforcing rules and regulations. Each province was providing workers with different instructions on how to proceed. Several provincial governments, but not all, issued single-site orders to restrict the spread of the virus. This decision meant that some workers received an increased wage as a way of replacing lost income from their other employment. In other provinces, income enhancement was less consistent.

Among the challenges long-term care workers faced was the lack of appropriate space to isolate residents who were infected. This is especially true for those working in older long-term care homes that have not been updated.

Community Service Workers' COVID-19 Conference Call

On April 24, Community Service Workers (CSW) from 6 Components and the Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals (MAHCP) met to discuss how COVID-19 had impacted their work, particularly the work done with people experiencing homelessness.

Having access to PPE was listed as a top concern, both for workers and for the community members, particularly because physical distancing was not an option in most workplaces. Many shelters use shared eating spaces, bathrooms, and living quarters (including bunk beds).

Education was also brought up as a concern because people experiencing homelessness had no way to have regular access to information, leading to people being upset and confused when asked to physically distance, wash their hands, or wear a mask. This issue intensified with people experiencing homelessness who also experience mental illness.

Overall, most CSWs reported feeling like they were at the bottom of their government's priority list. Proper risk assessments were not being completed. Increased cleaning procedures were either not in place or impossible for workers to complete. The mental health of both the workers and people experiencing homelessness was described as being under serious strain.

Thanks to the participation in this meeting, NUPGE was able to write a [letter](#) to the Prime Minister, the provincial and territorial Premiers, and leaders of the opposition, laying out the workers' concerns. NUPGE laid out a series of short-term asks to provide immediate support to CSWs and people experiencing homeless, as well as a series of long-term asks to combat homelessness in Canada.

Group Home Representatives

NUPGE convened a videoconference of group-home representatives after learning that group-home workers across the country were being largely neglected in many provinces' initial pandemic responses. Participants from 7 Components joined the videoconference to share their experiences and needs.

Participants shared experiences from the front lines, revealing that levels of COVID-19 preparedness continued to be inconsistent across provinces. The reports also revealed many common challenges across the country, including lack of direction, or inconsistent direction, from governments and employers, insufficient access to PPE, the impossibility of, or challenge of, physical distancing, and the impacts of isolation on mental health.

Representatives did share some *wins*, such as collaborative working relationships with governments or management and securing worker protections and accommodations.

In discussing a national strategy to address issues in the sector, participants emphasized the need for greater visibility of group homes, their residents, and their workers. After the meeting, NUPGE released a [web story](#) highlighting the value of group-home workers, which was shared widely.

Probation Officers

NUPGE convened 3 videoconferences, one on May 26, one on June 23, and one on November 4, of Probation Officers' Representatives. Joining the meetings were members from up to 6 Components and the National Union.

During the meetings, participants raised the following issues concerning the impact of COVID-19 on working conditions

- interim service delivery and staffing-level modifications in response to COVID-19;
- masking or face-covering policies and other PPE usage for staff and clients;
- organizational responses and mitigation efforts for COVID-19 contamination in the workplace;
- signage for physical distancing, plexiglass for probation officers and support areas;
- sick leave, and attendance-management programs.

The discussions also focused on how the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to impact the return to work. Topics included office retrofitting, mitigation strategies as they start to resume regular operations, itinerant offices vs. permanent offices, and the timing of moving to the next phase.

Advisory Committee on Women's Issues

A videoconference for the Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (ACWI) was held on June 3, 2020. The purpose of the videoconference was to provide the members with an opportunity to discuss how the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted women and has resulted in a drastic increase in domestic violence. Committee members had the opportunity to provide an update on what had happened within their province and union throughout the pandemic.

During the discussion it was noted that there were many common challenges across Canada for women during the pandemic. A key issue was the lack of child care due to the shutdown of many workplaces and the economy. Child care was mainly available to essential workers, particularly in the health sector. Workers in other sectors struggled to find child care solutions even when they were deemed essential workers.



Members also identified another issue: the difficulty in maintaining work/life balance, as many women worked remotely during the shutdown. With child care unavailable, many women struggled to maintain their workload, look after the children, and provide assistance for children learning online. The result was many women worked longer hours per day to balance their careers, home responsibilities, and their children's needs. This strain resulted in women reporting higher rates of stress and exhaustion.

The issue of domestic violence during the shutdown was deeply concerning. In some areas of Canada, shelters and crisis lines were overwhelmed. But in other areas there was a major decrease in shelters and crisis lines receiving calls, raising concerns that women were not able to reach out for help, as the perpetrator was always in the home due to the shutdown. President Brown asked the committee members to work with NUPGE to provide a concrete policy solution to litigate domestic violence. The committee responded with numerous suggestions, including lobbying the federal government for a national strategy to end violence against women and for more education regarding domestic violence.

The committee discussed the issue that the most affected sectors for job loss during the pandemic were female dominated. Women also hold more precarious positions that are easily eliminated during times of crisis. It was stressed that it is imperative that governments' economic recovery plans must have a gender-based analysis and women must be included in all levels of consultation and decision-making. It is essential that services such as child care must be available and affordable.

The ACWI met again on October 19 to 20, 2020, via videoconference. Among items on the agenda were an update on NUPGE's continuing work on child care and an update on the work being done on domestic violence at work.

The committee was advised that the 65th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women will be held over a 2-week period in March 2021, in New York. It is not clear whether the session will take place in person, or digitally (or as a combination of these). The priority theme for UNCSW65 is "Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls."

The CLC, in partnership with the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children at Western University, and the University of Toronto, has launched a survey on workers' experiences of harassment and violence at work. This survey is intended to shed light on, and develop mechanisms for, workers exposed to harassment and violence at work. The survey is directed to unionized and non-unionized workers, 18 years or older, of every gender, whether or not they have experienced or witnessed workplace violence or harassment. It will be open for approximately 6 months.

The committee was provided an update via a video on the situation in the Rohingya camps by Razia Sultana, founder of the Rohingya Women Welfare Society (RWWS). The RWWS has been working tirelessly in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, to help Rohingya girls and women who have been victimized by violence in Myanmar. Sultana thanked NUPGE for its financial support, which is a commitment made as part of a resolution passed at the NUPGE 2019 Convention regarding the crisis of the Rohingya. She stressed that the COVID-19 pandemic has made the situation in the refugee camps much worse. Food supplies are very limited, and there has been an increase in domestic violence as well as gender-based violence. Razia noted that Canada, with its feminist foreign policy, needs to play a role in ensuring that victims of sexual and gender-based violence receive the justice they deserve. Canada has to find ways to support local organizations that dare to speak to power, as it is these women's movements that are at the forefront of the Myanmar human rights and democracy movement.

Post-secondary Education Representatives

On June 8, 2020, NUPGE convened a videoconference of representatives in the post-secondary education sector with participants from 8 Components and the National Union.

The discussion focused on how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected post-secondary institutions to date, and how it is expected to impact the coming school year. It was generally agreed that most institutions will likely adopt a hybrid approach, using both online learning and in-class, or hands-on, learning, with modifications.

Participants shared numerous concerns related to both the current and the anticipated working conditions, and on the impact of COVID-19 on the future of post-secondary education. Education workers' concerns related to the impacts on workload, professional development and training, health and safety, earnings, layoffs, and intellectual property. Participants also emphasized their concerns about the effects on students, including academic outcomes, mental health, and finances, with unique concerns facing vulnerable students and international students.

NUPGE held a second videoconference on October 15, 2020, with participants from 8 Components and the National Union staff. Numerous issues remain in the sector—both those arising in the pandemic context and those that preexisted it. Core issues include workload, challenges related to working from home, health and safety, and impacts on students.

Several Components observed that their provincial governments are using the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to pursue a preexisting agenda to expand online learning and privatization. Despite the immense challenges of the pandemic, several Components reported on an increase in member engagement and organizing opportunities resulting from the general rise in popularity of unions during the pandemic.

Advisory Committee on the Environment

The Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE) held its inaugural meeting by videoconference on March 3, 2020. It was an opportunity for committee members to meet, review the Terms of Reference, share Component reports, and discuss priorities.

On June 15, 2020, committee members from 10 Components participated in a videoconference. The committee primarily discussed COVID-19 and the environment. It also provided updates on environmental policies, initiatives, and advocacy across the country.

Many provincial governments have neglected environmental protection and climate action during the pandemic, or have undone policies and initiatives, particularly in Ontario and Alberta. In many cases, this represents a continuation of the pre-pandemic failure to prioritize environmental sustainability. It also highlights the need to maintain pressure on governments regarding environmental and climate issues.

Notably, Component reports also revealed some positive developments and opportunities for advancing environmental protection and climate justice, such as initiatives in PEI and BC. Also, the pandemic context alongside worsening climate change underlines the need to highlight the link between health and the environment.

ACE met again by videoconference on September 28–29, 2020, with participants from 8 Components. The themes of COVID-19 and the environment and insufficient government action on climate change were once again prominent. The committee also received a presentation on Just Recovery, by Climate Action Network (CAN-Rac).

A discussion about ACE priorities, activities, and issues identified by members included education and raising awareness, coalition building, Just Recovery, and Just Transition.

Since the meeting, NUPGE has worked to amplify the Principles for a Just Recovery and share environment-related events and resources with ACE. NUPGE continues to participate in coalitions like CAN-Rac and Trade Unions for Energy Democracy.

Following the release of Bill C-12, the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act, President Larry Brown wrote a letter to Minister Wilkinson, urging the government to go further on climate action and Just Transition. NUPGE also prepared a background on climate targets and climate accountability for use by Components and ACE.

Anti-privatization

At the beginning of the year, the National Union released a new publication providing an [overview of privatization](#). The publication provides people with information on the many forms privatization can take, the strategies used to overcome opposition to privatization, and the problems privatization causes.

The National Union was represented on the CLC Task Force on New Forms of Privatization, and the final report of the task force was helped by work we have done. We also continued to speak out against proposed use of the federal government's Social Finance Fund to subsidize social impact bonds and other new forms of privatization.

Privatization has continued to be a threat during the COVID-19 pandemic. While some plans to privatize public services were put on the backburner as a result of the pandemic, new proposals have emerged.

To help Components respond to emerging privatization threats, NUPGE has held 2 Zoom videoconference meetings of researchers, communications staff and campaigners working to fight privatization. These meetings have been a chance for people to share information on threats they are facing and on work being done to oppose privatization.

Many of the emerging privatization threats are to the health care system. Instead of making long overdue improvements to the public system to respond to the increased need for things like testing, governments are being encouraged by the privatization industry to outsource the work. While this is often sold as a temporary measure, the fear is that once the privatization industry gets a toehold it will push for more work to be contracted out.

There was also discussion of the privatization of liquor and cannabis distribution and retailing, and the possibility that the federal government's Social Finance Fund will be used as a subsidy for privatization schemes like social impact bonds. The continued use of P3s and the failure of a number of provincial governments to recognize the danger posed by private, for-profit long-term care are also priorities.

During the discussion, Components were able to share information on campaigns and tools being used to fight back. These included member to member campaigns, campaigns to build public support and an app developed by SGEU to enable people to compare the cost of products in private stores with those in public stores.

Communications Officers

Component Communication Officers met by videoconference on September 25. Participants received updates on the Canadian Labour Congress' campaign, Moving Forward. They were provided with sample of graphics that Components can use to mark specific 'commemorative days' on social media or websites. There was a summary of the Throne Speech as it pertained to NUPGE's areas of focus.

The main goal of the meeting was to discuss the challenges of communicating with members during a pandemic. Each representative reported on the campaigns and communications that were, or are, taking place.

Component Educator Representatives

On October 27, NUPGE convened a videoconference of Component Educator representatives to discuss how COVID-19 had impacted their ability to run educational sessions. Most Components ran very few online learning sessions prior to the pandemic. The majority of all in-person classes were canceled during the pandemic, though some Components have been able to do a few in-person classes by reducing class size and following physical-distancing regulations.

Most Components have launched, or are in the process of launching, online learning. Some in-person courses have been adapted to be taught online, and some Components have also created new online courses. Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Adobe Connect, and Thinkific were listed as platforms the Components are using to facilitate online learning.

The participants cited technological literacy and access to technology as the biggest challenges in switching to online learning. Members need to learn how to use the system and have the correct device and access to reliable internet before they can access any kind of webinar or self-directed learning modules. Trying to replicate conversational face-to-face learning, trying to meet member needs, and building solidarity online were also discussed as major challenges.

In order to better assist the Components, NUPGE will be updating the Component Courses Inventory. NUPGE President Larry Brown also invited representatives to think about what role there is for NUPGE to play in senior-level education that Components can't do themselves.

Legal Strategies Component Coordinating Committee

NUPGE's Legal Strategies Component Coordinating Committee met by videoconference on July 10, 2020, to discuss Bill 32, Restoring Balance in Alberta's Workplaces Act. Between in-house representatives and external counsel, 9 Components were represented along with the National Union office and counsel. Participants heard an overview of the legislation and initial thoughts on a possible legal challenge, followed by questions and an open discussion.

Following the meeting, NUPGE shared with the committee a legal opinion on Bill 32 prepared by RavenLaw, NUPGE's legal counsel. NUPGE also prepared backgrounders on 2 other key developments this fall: proposed amendments to Manitoba's *Labour Relations Act* and the Supreme Court decision in *Fraser v Canada (Attorney General)*.

The committee met by videoconference on November 3, 2020. Between in-house representatives and external counsel, 9 Components were represented along with the National Union office and counsel. The Committee received updates on the aforementioned Supreme Court case and legislation in Alberta and Manitoba, as well as on *AC and JF v Alberta*. Component reports highlighted a number of common challenges, including wage-restraint legislation, health and safety, collective bargaining, and the threat of austerity. However, Components also reported on wins, including in the Cambie case and the successful challenge to Manitoba's wage-restraint legislation.

Wildland Firefighters

In 2020, there were 3 meetings convened of NUPGE Wildland Firefighters Representatives. One meeting was held in person from February 26 to 27 in Toronto, on the eve of the pandemic emergency in Canada. Topics of discussion included mental injury, presumptive coverage for cancer, the Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire, pension accrual rates, and the WFX-FIT test. Another meeting was held by videoconference on June 25, 2020. The primary focus of discussion was to develop a common strategy for a meeting with the Canadian Inter-agency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) A third meeting was held on December 10, with Kim Connors, Executive Director of the CIFFC. This meeting was devoted to the question of the WFX-FIT test. During the meeting, NUPGE firefighters submitted a brief to the CIFFC explaining the firefighters' concerns about the test in light of recent arbitration and court rulings that found aspects of the test discriminatory against women and older men.

Major Issues

Responding to Austerity Post-COVID

If government policies were based on evidence, the COVID-19 pandemic should have ended the use of austerity policies once and for all. Many of the deaths that occurred were a direct consequence of years of underfunding public services, attacks on labour rights, and privatization.

Unfortunately, for those who support austerity, ideology trumps common sense. The moment most provinces started to reopen, the usual voices were heard calling for cuts to public spending.

If governments start to make spending cuts, the consequences will be devastating. The economic downturn caused by the pandemic will worsen. There will not be the funding for measures needed to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Low- and middle-income families who are already struggling because of the pandemic will fall further behind.

In early September, NUPGE released a new publication, [*The Provincial Role in Canada's Post-COVID Economic Recovery*](#). The paper illustrates how provincial governments have an essential role to play in Canada's post-COVID economic recovery and in ensuring that it does not reproduce the long-standing gaps and inequities that were exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic. NUPGE argues for

- Implementing fair taxation
- Ensuring fair wages and working conditions for all workers
- Revitalizing our health care and long-term care systems
- Tackling income and wealth inequality
- Advancing gender equality
- Meeting the climate crisis head-on.

What is happening with education provides a clear illustration of how cuts to government spending will do irreparable damage to low- and middle-income families, while having little impact on the very wealthy. Lack of funding means low- and middle-income students in the public system will be going back to classes that are the same size as they were before the pandemic. In contrast, wealthy families who can afford private school fees that are as much as \$66,000 per child are able to avoid the consequences of the government's failure to fund the public education system—a system so underfunded it cannot meet the recommendations of public health experts.

To provide Components and activists with the tools they need to respond, the National Union is working with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) on a report on the impact austerity has on provincial economies. The report will look at what has happened when provincial governments have implemented austerity policies in the past.

A key point that has already emerged is that it is not just the public sector that suffers when provincial governments cut public services. The economy as a whole suffers. At a time when the recovery from the pandemic is still very fragile, Canada cannot afford the damage those cuts will do.

The CERB and EI

For years, the labour movement has been warning the federal government that repeated cuts to Employment Insurance (EI) meant that too many Canadians were slipping through the cracks. With the onset of COVID-19, the failure of successive federal governments to fix EI came home to roost.

The massive layoffs, and that millions of people were unable to work because of the need to look after family members, or to self-isolate, meant millions of people were unable to work and ineligible for EI.

To its credit, the federal government was quick to recognize action was needed. However, the original version of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) would have left hundreds of thousands of Canadians with no income.

NUPGE and the rest of the labour movement pushed the federal government to improve the CERB so people had more of the support they required. We also pushed the federal government to extend the program beyond the original 16 weeks when it was clear that many people would be off work for longer than that.

Other issues with the CERB were related to how benefits negotiated in the collective bargaining process would be treated. The labour movement was successful in ensuring that people who were still covered by health and similar benefit packages after being laid off would not be disqualified from receiving the CERB. Unfortunately, we had less success in getting the federal government to exclude income from Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB) plans from the CERB calculations.

The CERB has been replaced with an expanded version of EI and the Canada Recovery Benefit, but both measures are temporary. If no action is taken before these measures expire next fall, we will go back to the pre-pandemic EI rules, which were shown to be woefully inadequate. For that reason, NUPGE is working with others in the labour movement to push for permanent improvement to EI.



Domestic Violence

In January, NUPGE released a backgrounder entitled [Domestic Violence, Workers, and Workplaces](#). It provided an overview of the prevalence of domestic violence, its impact on workers and workplaces in Canada, and supports for those affected.

NUPGE sounded the alarm on the issue of domestic violence in the early days of the pandemic. The disproportionate impact of the pandemic on vulnerable and marginalized populations remained a theme throughout NUPGE's response.

In a March [web story](#), NUPGE raised the concern that the impacts of the pandemic—particularly the lockdowns, stress and uncertainty, and economic insecurity—might contribute to higher levels of domestic violence and impose barriers to accessing supports. This was later shown to be accurate. NUPGE called on employers to ensure the proper supports and accommodations are in place and for governments to provide the necessary funds for community-based resources to support victims and survivors of domestic violence.

NUPGE also had the opportunity to work with a summer law student who completed a research paper comparing workplace protections, with a focus on job-protected leave, for victims of domestic violence around the world. The paper highlights best practices and provides critical analysis to identify potential gaps or issues and to inform advocacy. Based on the 2 papers, NUPGE developed a set of recommendations for governments. They include legislating paid domestic violence leave and other workplace protections, funding community-based supports, supporting prevention, and ratifying ILO Convention 190 and implementing its recommendations. NUPGE has sent these recommendations, and the international comparison paper, to the Premiers and to federal government officials. NUPGE has received responses from 6 provinces and 1 territory, with 3 provinces agreeing to have ministers meet with representatives from the National Union.

Global Trade Agreements and COVID

The COVID-19 pandemic affected global trade, trade agreements, and trade negotiations. The pandemic caused a profound shock to the global economy, of which trade is a key component. There is no consensus about what kind of global economic recovery might emerge—or even whether there will be one, or when. The extent to which COVID-19 will continue to have a negative impact is also unknown.

As the pandemic brought the global economy to an effective standstill, global trade plummeted, with little evidence that the downturn would end soon.

The most significant impact the pandemic had on global trade was that it compromised the global supply chain in manufactured goods for 3 reasons:

1. it disrupted production (assembly and manufacturing operations);
2. it slowed delivery (supply lead times);
3. it restricted exports (or measures like licensing requirements), mainly on pharmaceuticals and medical supplies.

The latter was in response to COVID-19: governments adopted policies restricting exports to guarantee the priority of domestic need.

The pandemic exposed flaws in the operation of existing trade and investment agreements. Concerns were raised about the threats of lawsuits under the various investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanisms, and about the failure to protect workers' health and safety, especially precarious workers, migrant farm workers, and meat packers.

The pandemic stalled some ongoing trade negotiations, for example, MERCOSUR, and the full implementation of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

A key concern for unions representing public sector workers is that COVID revealed how neoliberal trade and investment agreements create unemployment and compromise access to essential public services like medical supplies and equipment. They do this by making it easier and cheaper for companies to pursue anti-union job-killing strategies of offshoring and outsourcing to assembly and manufacturing facilities outside Canada. By undermining local supply chains, the trade agreements leave Canada vulnerable to the temporary closures of offshore assembly and manufacturing facilities caused by the pandemic.

The pandemic exposed Canada's import dependency and the limits of its poor industrial capacity. It makes clear the need for a long-overdue Canadian industrial policy that replaces 3 decades of failed laissez-faire ideology of blind trust in unregulated markets, and the ruthless cost-cutting and outsourcing model of just-in-time, cheap-as-possible supply chains.

To share research on the impact of global trade and investment agreements on our economy and democratic institutions, and to promote collective action, the National Union works in solidarity with labour and civil society allies in regular meetings with 2 coalitions: the Trade and Investment Research Project (TIRP), and the Trade Justice Network (TJN).

Bringing Long-Term Care under the Canada Health Act

The National Union recognized early on the toll the pandemic was taking on seniors and the elderly in long-term care (LTC) homes across the country.

In March, President Brown sent a letter to the Prime Minister, urging him to take steps to expand coverage of the *Canada Health Act* (CHA) to long-term care services. NUPGE has long argued that the retirement and long-term care sector required more financial resources to better care for their residents. We have also argued that the privatization of long-term care facilities has diminished the well-being of our seniors in lieu of raising the profits of owners and shareholders.

During this pandemic, the hardest hit communities were those living in long-term facilities. Many of these residences were unable to properly care for residents under COVID health and safety protocols due to the lack of staff, the inability to quarantine residents who contracted the virus, and the overall lack of PPE for those working with infected residents. In June, it was recorded that nearly 6,000 people in LTC died due to the virus. This number does not include those living in retirement homes or who are receiving home care.

86% of Canadians support bringing long-term care under the Canada Health Act.

— Abacus Data May 2020

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Underfunding of long-term care and seniors' care in Canada is well known. Thus, it surprised very few that more deaths took place in for-profit homes than in non-profit ones. The pandemic made it clear that many for-profit homes were unable, or unwilling, to take the steps needed to maintain the health of residents and workers.

NUPGE launched a campaign to educate and inform our audiences of the perils of privatization, while at the same time addressing the shortfalls in our health care and seniors' care across the country. By moving long-term care under the CHA, these services would no longer be open to private ownership and revenue would be directed back into the homes and services they provide. The National Union produced website stories and used social media to reach our members and the public to encourage them to support this positive alternative to the current system.

The National Union commissioned a poll through Abacus Data that showed the Canadian public overwhelmingly supports the idea to bring long-term care under the public health care system. People also showed support for increased provincial government funding to repair the cuts in health care and Canada's social programs.

The National Union promoted these findings with a national press release and targeted contact with journalists reporting on COVID and health issues. Those efforts garnered 2 stories in the *Toronto Star*. An opinion piece on the issue was published on Tyee.ca. We developed and shared social media graphics with specific provincial poll results for Components. We promoted the national findings on Facebook and Twitter through organic sharing and paid advertising. These posts have been some of the most successful ones we have had in terms of a conversation and reach.

The summer issue of *Our Times* magazine featured an article written by a NUPGE staff person about bringing long-term care under the CHA.

Pensions

The COVID-19 pandemic showed yet another illustration of why the National Union sees defined benefit pension plans as the best way to provide workers with secure retirements. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the value of many investments dropped dramatically. While all types of pension plans and individual retirement savings were affected, people in defined benefit pension plans were less affected by the crisis. That is because the structure and lower costs of defined benefit plans allow them to take a long-term approach.

However, the downturn in the economy in March was severe enough that there were concerns that a small number of pension plans might need some support, so they didn't have to sell assets at fire-sale prices to meet short-term needs. For that reason, NUPGE called on the federal government to provide interest-free loans to pension plans to cover up to 12 months of pension payments. It was suggested that these loans be available to both federally and provincially registered plans.

Fortunately, many pension plans have seen the value of their investments recover relatively quickly. However, NUPGE is continuing to monitor the situation.

The National Union has continued to monitor developments at the federal level that could affect our members' pension plans. To help improve support for pension plan trustees, a caucus of NUPGE pension activists was held at the SHARE Investor Summit in February. The meeting provided valuable feedback.

International Solidarity

In addition to its work at the provincial and national levels, NUPGE engages in international solidarity efforts. NUPGE has renewed its support of the Colombian lawyers' collective known as CCAJAR. NUPGE has spoken out against the violence and repression faced by trade unionists in Colombia, as well as in Guatemala.

This year, NUPGE pressured the Canadian government to act regarding the human rights abuses and culture of impunity in the Philippines, including the killing of activists and the new anti-terrorism law. President Brown also wrote to Foreign Affairs Minister Champagne regarding the unjust detention of Canadian, Cihan Erdal, in Turkey.

NUPGE stood in solidarity with Bolivian mineworkers after they were suddenly, and unlawfully, fired at the beginning of the pandemic, in what is believed to be an attack on the union. President Brown sent a letter to the Canadian parent company. After NUPGE contributed to funds towards the union to support the mineworkers, which was coordinated by MiningWatch Canada, we were given the opportunity to participate in a videoconference with the membership, which was extremely meaningful and inspiring.

NUPGE and its Components contributed to humanitarian assistance efforts in response to the bushfires in Australia in February, the Beirut explosion in August, and the hurricanes in Central America in November.

NUPGE also continues to speak out for migrant and refugee rights in Canada. NUPGE endorsed the open letter to the Prime Minister calling for Full Immigration Status for All and helped to amplify it online. President Brown wrote the federal Immigration Minister calling on Canada to suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement, and withdraw its appeal of the federal court ruling that found the agreement unconstitutional.

HSAA Member-to-Member Campaign

In May 2018, the United Conservative Party (UCP), led by Jason Kenney, was elected to government in Alberta. In 2020, the government passed Bill 30, which has opened the door for more privatization, such as allowing for private surgical procedures. This year, they also passed Bill 32 that makes it mandatory for union members to now opt-in for the portion of their dues that gets used for what the government deems as “political and social issues.” This bill is a direct attack on the autonomy of unions, and the democratic decision-making of union members. While Bill 32 regulations have not been announced yet (so it is unknown what are considered political and social issues), labour is fighting back!

Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA/NUPGE) has launched an impressive member-to-member outreach campaign to reach all of its 27,000 members. The goal of the campaign is 2-fold: to inform members about how the government is trying to rip apart the public health care system, and silence its opposition; and to connect members to let them know the value of their union and what it can do for them! And members are loving the contact!! The has been overwhelmingly positive, with members thanking callers for reaching out and protecting, not just their rights, but the right to accessible public health care for everyone.

As part of coping with COVID restrictions, this M2M campaign is being done completely online. While we know the best conversations happen in person, we are still having very meaningful discussions with members and getting great feedback. HSAA/NUPGE members are being joined by almost 30 volunteers from across NUPGE Components to support the fight in Alberta! We know that governments are watching what happens in Alberta, so they can try to launch similar attacks against workers. Together we will prove that workers will not be divided or defeated.

Special Committees

Child Care Videoconference

During the pandemic, child care was an issue that emerged immediately amongst members, and it is poised to be a continued concern, with a second wave of infections and a deepening recession. This situation moved NUPGE to renew efforts to advocate for a national child care strategy.



Participants from 8 Components joined the first videoconference on July 9, 2020. After providing updates on both the situation in child care settings during the pandemic, and the experience of working parents in need of child care, participants discussed possible national advocacy efforts. There was consensus around what we are fighting for: a national child care system that is

- universally accessible,
- publicly funded,
- not-for-profit,
- high quality,
- fairly compensates its workers, and
- unionized.

There was a shared sense that we are in a unique political moment to push for this vision, and that there is value in national efforts to pressure the federal government.

Following the videoconference, President Brown sent a [letter](#) to Ahmed Hussen, the federal Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, articulating this position. Brown called on the federal government to increase funding transfers to the provinces

and territories for a universally accessible, publicly funded, not-for-profit, and high quality child care system that fairly compensates a unionized workforce. The letter was shared in a NUPGE [web story](#) and on social media. Templates were also prepared for Components to send letters to Minister Hussen and their respective Premiers.

On October 13, 2020, the Special Committee on Child Care met by videoconference, with participants from 7 Components. Following Component updates, the Special Committee discussed next steps for national coordination on child care advocacy.

Given the commitment to a Canada-wide early learning and child care program made in the Speech from the Throne, President Brown followed up with a letter to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland, reiterating the call for a national child care program that is aligned with NUPGE's vision and that of its allies.

Throughout October, NUPGE members participated in a virtual MP lobby organized by Child Care Now, of which NUPGE is a member.

NUPGE commissioned a [child care poll](#) by Abacus Data in November, the results of which were shared with the NEB, the Special Committee, and allies. The poll aimed to gauge public opinion on child care issues in Canada, both generally and in the pandemic context, and to gauge public support for a national, universal public child care system. A public release was posted on the NUPGE website, boosted on social media, and shared with Component communication officers. NUPGE continues to explore additional ways to make use of the poll results.

Anti-racism Committee

In the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis police and the worldwide protests for Black Lives Matter, NUPGE convened a Special Anti-racism Committee. The committee, comprised of representatives from 7 Components, met twice (July 20 and August 24) to share what efforts their Components were making to be actively anti-racist, and to advise on how NUPGE can be more actively anti-racist.

The consensus was that while an anti-racism campaign would have obvious value and be an effective tool to broadcast the message to a large group of people, consistently integrating anti-racism work into NUPGE's everyday work would be more beneficial in the long run.

A concern flagged by the committee was that an anti-racism campaign that tried to lump all forms of racism together would not be appreciated. Despite having some common elements, the experience of Black people with anti-Black racism is different than the experience of Indigenous people with anti-Indigenous racism, and so on. Each racial group experiences different forms of racism, and NUPGE's material needs to address that.

Some of the recommendations endorsed by the committee were as follows:

- Facilitating a survey on racism in the workplace based on the good work already done by HSABC.
- Continuing to build on the anti-racism work done by all Components and share these resources and methodologies among Components.
- Developing educational material for staff members of Components on the question of how to assist members dealing with racism at work.
- Canvassing all Components to determine what provisions are in Components' collective agreements around human rights and discrimination.
- Preparing informational material (pamphlets, videos, leaflets) aimed at raising members' consciousness of racism and outlining ways to deal with racism at work.
- Making a specific effort in educational materials to explain the concept of privilege, what it means and how it influences actions.
- Developing and/or strengthening connections and alliances with human rights and anti-racism organizations (this applies to both the National Union and the provincial Components).

MacLean, Brown, and Blundon raised those suggestions at the October National Executive Board meeting.

PSI Committees and Working Groups

PSI Regional Young Workers' Committee

The transition to online meetings has enabled NUPGE to participate in 3 PSI committees: the Young Workers' Committee, the Committee to Combat Racism and Xenophobia, and the LGBT+ Committee. The first PSI Regional Young Workers' Committee meeting attended by NUPGE took place on October 29. Several new participants were in the videoconference, so the majority of the meeting was spent bringing the new participants up to speed regarding the DGB project: a joint project with Germany that will be running for another 3 years. The committee has approved the following proposals relating to the DGB project:

- Commit to feeding the new site with materials from all of our subregions.
- Publish content on the PSI site from rank-and-file young workers on what has changed since the pandemic, the future of work, etc. This could be done in video or written format.

The committee also agreed to 2 proposals related to ILO Convention 190:

- Organize an educational seminar about young workers and C-190.
- Organize a strategy meeting for young workers on how to get C-190 approved (with the goal of getting it passed in your own country).

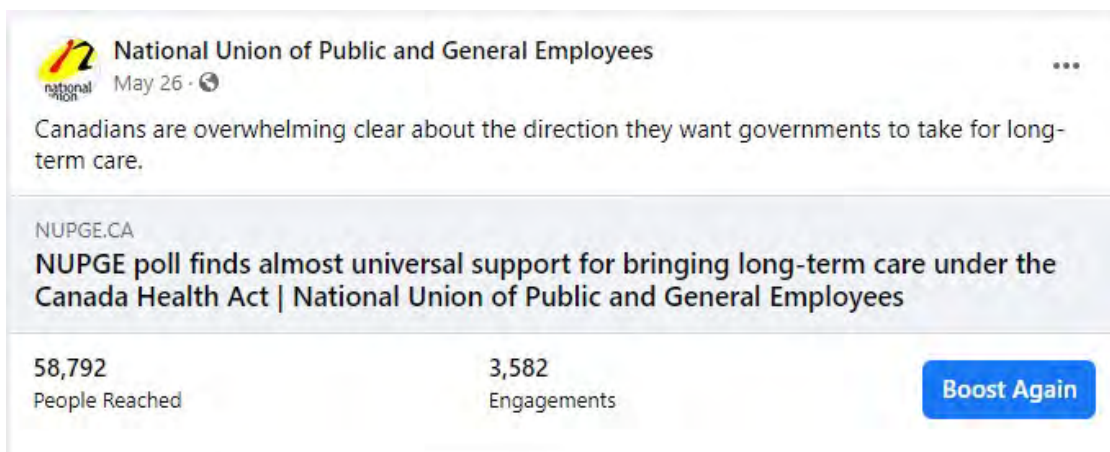
Other PSI Working Groups

Due to the success of their other committees, PSI created 3 new working groups: Indigenous Peoples, Workers with disabilities, and Trans workers. NUPGE asked Components to submit the names of representatives who would be interested in attending. The inaugural meetings for the 3 working groups occurred on November 17, 18, and 19.

The first meetings mainly served to introduce representatives to each other and to share some of the struggles faced by each group in their countries. The working groups plan to meet again within the next 2 to 6 months to discuss action items and possible campaign ideas.

Social Media

The stories on our website, www.nupge.ca, have gained incredible traction this year. As you will see below, the traffic to our website was driven by the broad range of important and timely issues we addressed.



National Union of Public and General Employees
May 26 · 🌐

Canadians are overwhelming clear about the direction they want governments to take for long-term care.

NUPGE.CA
NUPGE poll finds almost universal support for bringing long-term care under the Canada Health Act | National Union of Public and General Employees

58,792
People Reached

3,582
Engagements

[Boost Again](#)



National Union of Public and General Employees

June 23 · 🌐



81% of Canadians support government investing whatever money and resources to rebuild health care and other public services that have been cut.

— Abacus Data May 2020

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34,261
People Reached

4,381
Engagements

[Boost Again](#)

NUPGE.CA

NUPGE warns federal government: crisis brewing in shelter system | National Union of Public and General Employees

48,318
People Reached

2,594
Engagements

[Boost Again](#)

Boosted on May 19
By Deb Duffy

Completed

People Reached **48K**

Link Clicks **630**

[View Results](#)



National Union of Public and General Employees

Published by Jeryn Van Alstine · October 23 ·



The Canadian Labour Congress, in partnership with the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children at Western University and the University of Toronto, has launched a survey on violence and harassment in the workplace.

NUPGE is encouraging its members and Canadians to complete the survey and to encourage others to participate.

<https://nupge.ca/.../national-survey-harassment-and...>



2,454
People Reached

101
Engagements

Boost Post



National Union of Public and General Employees

Published by Deb Duffy · October 8 ·

On behalf of NUPGE members across the country, I add my voice to those condemning the arbitrary detention of Cihan Erdal and demanding his immediate release. I implore you to take urgent action to secure Erdal's immediate release and safe return to Canada. -- Larry Brown, NUPGE President #FreeCihanErdal
<https://nupge.ca/content/free-cthan-erdal-nupge>

NUPGE.CA

Free Cihan Erdal, NUPGE urges Canadian govt. | National Union of Public and General Employees

8,624

People Reached

444

Engagements

Boost Again



nupge @NUPGE

The pandemic has shown the critical importance of protecting and strengthening labour rights. This #LabourDay we must reflect and recommit to protect workers and public services. #LabourDay2020

nupge.ca/content/labour...

9:00 AM · Sep 7, 2020 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

2 Likes





National Union of Public and General Employees

Published by Deb Duffy · November 27 at 1:45 PM ·



"With public opinion echoing what we've long heard from experts, advocates, and the child care sector on the undeniable benefits of a national child care system, it begs the question: What is the federal government waiting for?" - Larry Brown, NUPGE President

NUPGE.CA

Overwhelming support for child care: NUPGE poll | National Union of Public and General Employees

12,651

People Reached

685

Engagements

Boost Again



National Union of Public and General Employees

Published by Deb Duffy · September 29 ·



"Our union remains hopeful that a federal budget will outline exactly how the government intends to reach their goals. Until we see those numbers, we're not holding our breath." - Bert Blundon, NUPGE Secretary-Treasurer

NUPGE.CA

Budget will determine if Throne Speech promises become reality | National Union of Public and General Employees

10,408

People Reached

756

Engagements

Boost Again



nupge @NUPGE · Dec 8
Stop blocking the proposal to make #COVID19 tools more accessible and affordable and join the movement for #NoCovidMonopolies!

@CanadaGeneve @CanadaGeneva @GAC_Corporate @Mary_N 🇨🇦



Web Stories

Sharing stories www.nupge.ca



NUPGE news update

December 2020

[OPSEU urges Ford government to abandon destructive college-funding plan](#)

"Just like Walmart decimated the main streets of so many Ontario communities and the livelihoods of so many workers, this plan will destroy Ontario's beloved college system."
— Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Women's Shelters Canada releases Shelter Voices survey focusing on COVID-19 impacts](#)

"The demands on shelters—in terms of capacity and in dealing with more severe cases of abuse—have only increased as the pandemic continues." – Lise Martin, Executive Director of Women's Shelters Canada

[Manitoba announces Caregiver Wage Support Program](#)

"We've been pushing for additional recognition for health care workers for months now. I'm very pleased that this has finally come through." — Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[NUPGE joins call for waiver of intellectual property rights on COVID-19 medical products](#)

The National Union of Public and General Employees is joining with Public Services International in supporting calls for a waiver of intellectual property rights on COVID-19 medical products.

[National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women 2020](#)

"Canadian governments, employers, and unions all have a role to play in eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work, and to ensure the proper supports are in place for those who are affected. In fact, I believe we have a shared responsibility to do so." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President.

[Darryl Flasch, BCGEU disability rights activist, wins 2020 Carol MacGregor Award](#)

Every year, in honour of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) recognizes a union member for their disability rights activism. The 2020 recipient is BCGEU/NUPGE member Darryl Flasch.

[PSI campaigning to end Amazon's tax dodging and mistreatment of workers](#)

The campaign, Make Amazon Pay, is demanding changes to both Amazon's company policies and government legislation.

[World AIDS Day - NUPGE joins the call for Pharmacare](#)

This ongoing pandemic is exposing some fundamental gaps in our health care system. This World AIDS Day, NUPGE is calling on federal and provincial governments to finally take action on universal Pharmacare, so that all Canadians can access the medicines they need. — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Encouraging comments but limited action in Fall Economic Statement](#)

As with the Speech from the Throne, there were a few encouraging commitments, but they were somewhat lacking in substance. Canadians expected that this fiscal update would deliver more detail on the progressive-sounding vision outlined in the Throne Speech.

[Go further on climate accountability, action: NUPGE to environment minister](#)

"In making these commitments to lower emissions, it is imperative to consider and mitigate the impact on workers and communities." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Time to tax extreme wealth as Canada's billionaires grow \\$53B richer in pandemic](#)

New report recommends progressive tax measures the federal government could use to address worsening wealth inequality in Canada and raise revenues to help pay for the COVID-19 crisis.

November 2020

[Initial victory in youth-led climate case](#)

The Applicants in the case, 7 young people, are arguing that the Ford government's climate policy, which weakened Ontario's climate targets in 2018, violates their Charter-protected rights to life, liberty, and security of the person.

[NUPGE Scholarship winners for 2020](#)

"Congratulations to all the winners of our 2020 scholarships. We were very impressed with all the entries we received and wish the winners and all the entrants the very best in the pursuit of their education and future careers." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Health care privatization linked to severity of COVID outbreak in Italy](#)

Private companies focused on specialized services that generated higher profits so primary care and preventative health care services were both starved of resources.

[Overwhelming support for child care: NUPGE poll](#)

86% of Canadians said it is important to them that all Canadian families have access to quality child care regardless of income. 84% of Canadians also said that access to affordable child care is essential for Canada's economic prosperity.

[Kenney failing his responsibility to protect and care for Albertans during COVID-19](#)

Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA) President, Mike Parker, reacts to new measures to stop the surge of COVID-19 cases.

[New report: A Canada-wide child care system would pay for itself](#)

A Canada-wide child care program would also create greater equality, boost regional and rural economic development, and bring long-term health and well-being benefits for future generations.

[Saskatchewan government needs to do more than just consider a work-from-home policy](#)

"Premier Moe needs to do more than just consider a work-from-home plan. The government needs to practice what they preach." — Barry Nowoselsky, SGEU PS/GE Chairperson

[Solidarity with Colombian education union leaders](#)

Education International has started [a campaign via LabourStart](#). Individuals can add their voices to those condemning the death threats and the broader trend of violence, intimidation, and repression.

[International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women: Governments must act on domestic violence](#)

"We are witnessing a pandemic within a pandemic. Physical and social isolation, economic stress, and the overall uncertainty resulting from COVID-19 have created a perfect storm for the increased risk of domestic violence. What's worse, the lockdowns may make it harder for people experiencing violence to seek help." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Tax dodging by corporations and the wealthy costs over \\$560 billion a year](#)

If the money lost to tax abuse had been available to hire more staff and ensure health care workers were properly protected, many of the people who died during the pandemic would still be alive.

[Transgender Day of Remembrance 2020](#)

"We must continue to show that we stand in solidarity with the transgender community and make sure that these murders do not go unnoticed. We grieve for every person lost." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Parliament passes up an opportunity to make tax system fairer](#)

For anyone who believes in reducing income inequality, asking the very wealthy to pay a bit more in tax to help fund programs that will help people who are struggling should be a “no brainer.”

[MGEU President reacts to weekend anti-mask rally and harassment of MGEU members](#)

"At the rally, there were several reports of attendees verbally harassing and trying to intimidate the officers who were there to enforce public health orders. This is completely unacceptable. If you disagree with the rules put in place, there are other ways to show your views, but you cannot harass and endanger those who are doing their jobs by enforcing the rules." — Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[National child care system must be universal, public](#)

"We hope you agree that now is the time to make a universal public child care system a reality in Canada." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[HSAA joins major health care unions, more than 400 doctors calling for a 'circuit breaker' lockdown](#)

"I encourage you to share this letter with your colleagues, friends and loved ones. It's up to us to keep the pressure on the Kenney government to do the right thing and join us in protecting Albertans during this pandemic." — Mike Parker, HSAA President

[NUPGE renews call for government action in long-term care homes](#)

"Governments are failing to protect our most vulnerable citizens. People living in residential care facilities continue to suffer and die because of the lack of decisive action." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[OPSEU/SEFPO calls for OPP investigation into deaths at private long-term care homes](#)

"Enough is enough. Perhaps the Premier isn't being told the truth about why all these deaths are happening, and what has to be done to stop them. The truth needs to come out. Someone has to be held to account." — Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Private company running Ottawa P3 asks for a bailout](#)

In 2010 it was claimed that the private company running the P3 would “assume the construction risk during the redevelopment period and the operations risk on revenues and expense once the site reopens.” Now that company is asking for a bailout.

[Lest We Forget – Remembrance Day](#)



[Ontario budget acknowledges public services are the great equalizer](#)

"It's clear that during the pandemic, this government has come to recognize the true value of strong public services. Front-line workers are indeed heroes." — Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Celebrate Community Service Workers' Appreciation Day](#)

"This pandemic has changed the way people look at those who work on the front-lines. Community service workers are now getting some of the recognition and respect they should have been receiving all along. And we should appreciate the work they do every day. But on top of that, what is really needed, what will really change lives is adequate, stable, and targeted funding for these services." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[MGEU's Healthy Minds at Work Campaign kicks off](#)

"We need to start taking workplace mental health as seriously as we take traditional, physical health and safety issues." — Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[Canadians for Tax Fairness seeks tax fairness measures in federal government fiscal update](#)

Different tax policies that the government should use to reduce inequality include closing tax loopholes, introducing an annual wealth tax, and an excess profits tax on large corporations that have profited from the pandemic.

[National Union Statement on CLC Endorsement](#)

Below is a statement by Larry Brown, NUPGE President, on the recent endorsement of Bill Morneau's candidacy for the position of Secretary-Treasurer of the OECD.

October 2020

[Practicing anti-racism as a health science professional](#)

By Easter Tocol, HSABC/NUPGE member

This article was originally published in the October 2020 issue of *The Report* magazine and subsequently posted by [HSABC/NUPGE](#).

[Suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement: NUPGE to Canadian government](#)

"The appeal signals a willingness to ignore the horrors that refugees face in the U.S. Furthermore, it is an affront to those individuals who bravely shared their stories during the court case. It is especially disappointing from a government that has committed to welcoming newcomers." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Parliament must respond to human rights situation in the Philippines](#)

The petition seeks to ensure that Canadian companies abroad are held accountable for their role in human rights violations and that the Canadian government is held accountable for its political and financial support to both Canadian companies in the Philippines and the Duterte government.

[New Brunswick Auditor General critical of privatized ambulance service](#)

According to the report, it is likely that service has suffered because the private company managing the ambulance service is able to increase its profits by leaving paramedic positions vacant.

[NUPGE statement on action by Alberta health care workers](#)

"Health care workers have been forced to walk off the job because they have no other way to respond to the United Conservative Party (UCP) government's attempts to gut Alberta's front line health care system" — Larry Brown, President of NUPGE

[Pallister govt. bill aims to undermine unions, workers' rights](#)

"The Pallister government is once again coming after Manitoba's workers and their unions. Bill 16 is particularly offensive in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as front-line workers are risking their lives to provide crucial public services to Manitobans." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[HSAA supports AUPE workers standing up against Kenney's health-care cuts](#)

"Health-care workers have been working tirelessly to keep Albertans safe and they have been rewarded with threats to their jobs by a government that is hell-bent on ripping apart our public health-care system." — Mike Parker, HSAA President

[Global Day of Action for Care - October 29](#)

The Day of Action for Care will highlight the urgent need for adequate investment in equitable, quality public health and care systems.

[NUPGE stands in solidarity with Bolivian mineworkers](#)

"This signals a blatant attack on the union and, in turn, the workers' collective bargaining rights" — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[National Survey on Harassment and Violence at Work in Canada](#)

The National Union is encouraging its members and Canadians to complete the survey and to encourage others to participate.

[NUPGE celebrates Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day](#)

October 22, 2020 is the 20th anniversary of this day that recognizes the commitment, hard work, and qualifications of early childhood educators (ECEs) and all staff who work with children.

[MGEU calls on government to immediately hire more staff at Cadham Lab](#)

"When the pandemic hit, Cadham Lab employees stepped up to the challenge, processing thousands of samples, working tremendous amounts of overtime, at a pace they have never seen before. I'm told that right now they are working at about 300% of their normal capacity." — Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[OPSEU calls the Kenora Jail situation a powder keg](#)

"The Kenora Jail is the most overcrowded institution in the province, with the lowest officer-to-inmate ratio. The ministry's announcement gives no timeline for deployment of new staff to Kenora. With so few officers watching over so many inmates, the jail has become a human powder keg. Immediate measures must be taken." — Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Wealth of the super-rich reaches record levels](#)

When billionaires are wealthier than ever before, making cuts to public services that will penalize low- and middle-income people to pay for the costs of the COVID-19 pandemic is obscene.

[Recognizing the link between social justice and environmental justice](#)

The theme for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty recognizes that it is not possible to have social justice without economic justice.

[Unions help communities during pandemic](#)

"If our donation helps support those fleeing violence and abuse and those in need of greater food security, then we have stayed true to our core values of respect, dignity and equality." — Bert Blundon, NUPGE Secretary-Treasure

[Layoffs are about privatizing Alberta's public health system during a pandemic](#)

"This government has decided to tear apart its best line of defence against the ongoing pandemic. To be clear, this is about privatizing health care. Money isn't being saved; it's being transferred to private pockets instead of being used for patient care." — Mike Parker, HSAA President

[More cuts, privatization and blame in Manitoba's Throne Speech](#)

"The MGEU/NUPGE and its members will continue to hold the government's feet to the fire when it comes to decisions and actions that affect Manitoba families. Now is not the time to weaken and cut services. It's time to support public services and the people who provide them." — Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[World Mental Health Day - October 10](#)

This ongoing pandemic is deepening the mental health crisis. Action is needed now to provide support to people in need. This World Mental Health Day we are raising the alarm and calling for governments to immediately invest in mental health supports — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Free Cihan Erdal, NUPGE urges Canadian govt.](#)

"On behalf of NUPGE members across the country, I add my voice to those condemning the arbitrary detention of Cihan Erdal and demanding his immediate release. I implore you to take urgent action to secure Erdal's immediate release and safe return to Canada." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[World Day for Decent Work: an inclusive and sustainable recovery is needed](#)

This demand recognizes that if we are going to avoid a repeat of the pandemic and respond to the other challenges facing our planet, "going back to normal" isn't good enough.

[Listen to environment inspectors and withdraw Bill 132: OPSEU](#)

"More than unnecessary, Bill 132 is dangerous. Front-line inspectors are worried about being handcuffed. Things could end badly down the road if the government does not listen to our members." — Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Working from Home: Workers' health and safety protections](#)

The increased prevalence of WFH, and the length of time workers are doing it, raises questions about workers' legal protections for occupational health and safety (OHS). The intersection of WFH and OHS protection is an underexplored topic that will likely present new legal challenges for workers and unions.

[OPSEU applauds the Ford government's \\$461 M support for Ontario's PSWs and DSWs](#)

"These workers have been overlooked, overworked, and underpaid for decades, despite our pleas to successive governments. I'm glad to see those issues are finally being addressed." — Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Support needed for second stage shelters in Canada says study by Women's Shelters Canada](#)

The study found that, similar to women's shelters, a lack of comprehensive and sustainable funding is a major challenge. Many of the shelters have to fundraise to cover the cost of operations and salaries.

[Women's History Month: Celebrating heroes — then and now](#)

"Women's History Month celebrates the difference that women have made to society and to their communities — every day and in times of struggle. Now, as we face a historical global challenge in the COVID-19 pandemic, women are once again the heroes on the front lines." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Care of seniors has never been more important: International Day of Older Persons](#)

"We can honour and celebrate our seniors by providing the resources to ensure they receive the best care. We must learn from this lesson, once and for all." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[HSAA President calls on Minister of Health to abandon plans to privatize health care](#)

“The Minister is such a hypocrite. He’s praising public health workers while continuing with the plan to tear apart the system like Kenney tears up signed pledges.” — Mike Parker, HSAA President

[Orange Shirt Day 2020](#)

NUPGE encourages all of its members to wear an orange shirt on September 30 to honour the lives of the former students and to recognize the inter-generational impacts of the residential school system on Indigenous people and communities.

[The pandemic is not over: NAPE helping people in need](#)

While we work towards policies that address the root causes of food insecurity and end inequality once and for all, NUPGE is happy to support the work CFSA does to support the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

[Sisters in Spirit vigil, October 4, 2020: Honouring the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women](#)

Communities across Canada will honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people at the Sisters in Spirit vigil.

[Budget will determine if Throne Speech promises become reality](#)

"We have been pushing for the government to accept that there is no turning back to the ways things were. This Build Back Better Throne Speech is a signal that they've heard that message. We'll be spending our time before the federal budget to pressure the Liberals to stand by their words and put its money where its mouth is." – Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Global Day of Climate Action 2020](#)

“This youth-led movement serves as another reminder that we must not forget about the climate crisis amidst the COVID-19 crisis. In fact, the pandemic has illustrated the unequal impacts of a crisis, which we are already seeing with the impacts of climate change, as well as the ambitious, course-changing response that’s possible when the political will is there. We know that Canadians’ will is with climate action. Will the Trudeau government’s be as well?” — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Banks help criminals and terrorists move money](#)

Adequate funding for services like health care or enabling tax dodging and money laundering — it shouldn’t be a tough choice.

[NUPGE releases international comparison of workplace protections for victims of domestic violence](#)

The report highlights existing gaps, as well as best practices that may provide lessons for the Canadian context.

[2020 Canadian Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Service](#)

This year's ceremony will be a virtual ceremony live streamed from Parliament Hill on Sunday, September 27.

[Ontario cuts to classes show problems with two-tier services](#)

While families with children in public schools have to hope for the best, wealthy families who are sending their children to private schools will be able to avoid the effect of the Progressive Conservatives decision to cut the number of classes.

[NAPE reports dangerously low staffing levels in long-term care homes in Newfoundland](#)

"These workers are worried about themselves, they're worried about each other, but most of all, they are worried about those in their care." — Jerry Earle, NAPE President

[Gender Equality Week 2020](#)

As economist Armine Yalnizyan has said, "No recovery without she-covery. No she-covery without child care."

[For-profit long-term care home chain calls for rules to be relaxed as death toll rises](#)

Even though it seems outrageous to anyone whose priority is keeping residents safe, as far as for-profit long-term care companies are concerned, calling for rules to protect people from COVID-19 to be eased when residents these homes are still getting infected and dying is good for business.

[International Equal Pay Day — September 18, 2020](#)

The day is intended to promote further action towards the achievement of equal pay for work of equal value.

September 2020

[Full Immigration Status for All](#)

Recovery from COVID-19 calls for a rethinking of the ways in which our communities and our economy are organized. Prime Minister Trudeau: Full Immigration Status for All is just, fair, necessary and urgent. The time is now.

[Care about the future of long-term care in Canada? Join the Town Hall!](#)

Join us and the Ottawa Health Coalition on September 17 at 7 p.m. in a live town hall to talk about how we can make for-profit long-term care public! [Register](#) here!

[Key to suicide prevention is public, affordable mental health services](#)

"We are proud to take part in World Suicide Prevention Day to promote well-being and positive mental health. Today provides us with an opportunity to bring mental health issues out of the shadows so people can find the support they need."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Court delivers major blow to for-profit health care](#)

This is one of Canada's most momentous legal victories as it has preserved our cherished public health care system against this attack. Governments must now act to directly address the unchecked proliferation of extra-billing and queue-jumping in for-profit clinics that undermine our public system. This fight is not over. You can be sure those who seek profit from health care will try to take this all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. We must be ready to continue the fight. —Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Provinces have a key role in Canada's post-COVID economic recovery](#)

"Provinces must play their part in inflating the economy, not contribute to the further deflating of our economy."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Labour Day 2020: Moving forward for strong public services and workers' rights](#)

"The pandemic has shown the critical importance of protecting and strengthening labour rights." —Larry Brown, NUPGE President

August 2020

[OPSEU hails latest measures to fix crisis in corrections](#)

"It's imperative that front-line workers, through their union, are consulted every step of the way during the design and build. The eyes of corrections staff are everywhere. We know what keeps communities safe. Developers are only looking at their bottom line."—Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Temporary EI changes good news, but EI problems still not fixed](#)

To tide unemployed people over until new income support measures are in place, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) is being extended for another four weeks.

[Statistics Canada seeks survey responses from people who have faced discrimination](#)

The questionnaire asks if you have experienced discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, ethnicity, religion, age, disability or language, and whether this has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[International Youth Day 2020](#)

The message that institutions should be broadcasting on International Youth Day is that young people are already here. They've showed up. They're doing the work. They've *been* doing the work for years.

[Albertans urged to send message as Kenney muzzles health professionals](#)

"This proves Kenney and the rest of his UCP cohorts knew they had to hide the process from Albertans and, to be blunt, this is the most shameful decision I have seen in my 43 years working in health care in Alberta."—Trudy Thomson, Vice-President of HSAA

[COVID-19 outbreaks more serious in for-profit long-term care homes](#)

The death rate for private, for-profit long-term care homes with COVID-19 outbreaks was over 4 times the rate for publicly owned homes.

July 2020

[NSGEU releases report Neglecting Northwood](#)

“Hiding mistakes means we can't learn from them. Stephen McNeil must show leadership and give the staff, residents and families what they deserve—a full public inquiry.”—Jason MacLean, NSGEU President

[NSGEU declines invitation to participate in Northwood review](#)

Due to its secretive nature NSGEU President Jason MacLean will not take part in the process.

[National child care system needed more than ever](#)

“Now is the time for a universally accessible, publicly funded, not-for-profit, and high quality child care system that fairly compensates workers in a unionized workforce.”—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Alberta's bill to privatize health care could affect rest of Canada](#)

“If passed, this legislation has the potential to affect health care across Canada, particularly where provisions of the *Canada Health Act* that prohibit extra billing and user charges are undermined.”—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Federal deficit will require progressive taxes to help pay for COVID-19 costs](#)

An excess profits tax, which we had during both world wars, would raise revenues and prevent pandemic profiteering.

[NUPGE calls on Guatemalan president to end repression of trade unionists](#)

“Repression and violence against workers and their unions must end.”—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Premier of Alberta abandons any pretense he's “protecting” health care](#)

“Alberta can't afford Kenney's plan for health care. In the end, patient care suffers as desperately-needed funds are sent out of the province.”—Mike Parker, HSAA President

[Working from home: considerations for unions](#)

The NUPGE paper released today identifies some of the key considerations that workers and their unions should be thinking about when it comes to WFH—as both a temporary and possibly-permanent arrangement.

[Bill 32 a direct attack on workers' rights](#)

"While Albertans have been struggling through isolation, illness, and job loss, and the fear and anxiety of the pandemic, the Kenney government has been busy arranging its attack on working people and their unions."

[Ban the use of facial recognition surveillance](#)

"This technology, which is unregulated in Canada, threatens people's fundamental rights and freedoms."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Nova Scotia government plans for long-term care inadequate](#)

"Fifty-three people died at this facility, and their families deserve to know what really happened."—Jason MacLean, NSGEU President

June 2020

[Supreme Court ruling a major victory for gig-economy workers](#)

It paves a way for granting these workers the employment benefits and the respect they deserve.

[Statistics Canada seeks survey responses from people with disabilities and long-term conditions](#)

Results will be used by government organizations such as the Public Health Agency of Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada, and other types of organizations, to evaluate the delivery of health and social services and economic support, and to ensure best practices are adopted when reopening workplaces and public spaces.

[Improved public services needed, not more privatization](#)

The report is particularly timely, given how the COVID-19 pandemic has shown both the benefits of quality public services, and the huge price we pay when services are privatized.

[NSGEU calls for mandatory masking policy at hospitals](#)

"We are calling on the government and NSHA to ensure a mandatory masking policy for visitors is in place at all hospitals in our province. It is the safe and responsible thing to do."—Jason MacLean, NSGEU President

[Jason Kenney betrays Albertans with plan to privatize lab services](#)

"Their decision to move forward with privatizing lab services in Alberta is asinine and will lead to worse outcomes for future outbreaks." — Mike Parker, HSAA President

[HSABC: Bold thinking, investment in health care workers needed as BC looks ahead](#)
HSABC/NUPGE encouraged the government to be bold in its action, and make the investment needed to maintain and grow a robust and sustainable public health care system.

[OPSEU: New hires in Corrections a big step in the right direction](#)

500 new full-time Correctional staff and new capital projects for Kenora and Thunder Bay will turn the tide on the crisis.

[Poll finds fixing long-term care a priority for Ontarians, OPSEU says the time for action is now](#)

“The pandemic is showing us that the cost-cutting and understaffing that go hand-in-hand with privatization can also be deadly.”—Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[Inequality in work-from-home arrangements](#)

If work-from-home (WFH) arrangements become more prevalent in the post-COVID world, they must be a tool to improve equity, not a hindrance.

[Child care survey reveals pandemic impacts, what's needed for reopening](#)

Providers underlined the need for appropriate financial and staffing resources in order to reopen facilities safely.

[Raising awareness of elder abuse](#)

“We have a system that looks at care in silos rather than a coherent system that is concerned about health from birth to death. This needs to change.”—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[‘Close to unanimous’—vast majority want health care and long-term care improved](#)

“I’ve been watching politics and polling for a long time, and I’ve never seen numbers like these.”—Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[People out of work due to COVID-19 can’t be abandoned](#)

“The fact that your government felt it necessary to create the CERB is a damning statement on the damage done by the restrictions that have been introduced over the years on EI coverage and benefits.” — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Work standards must change as economy re-opens in wake of COVID-19](#)

“The economy is gradually re-opening now, but it will take years to rebuild the quantity of work back up to a level that fully occupies Canadian workers. And at the same time, we need to repair some obvious and damaging flaws in the quality of work, if we want that reopening to last and succeed.”—Jim Stanford, labour economist

[Public services are the foundation to Ontario's economic recovery](#)

"Many people have said that we can't go back to the old normal after we've got COVID-19 under control. This poll shows how true that really is."—Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida, OPSEU First Vice-President/Treasurer

[NUPGE calls on federal government to provide stability for pension plans](#)

"While the vast majority of pension plans have the resources needed to withstand the impact of COVID-19 on their investments, if a plan is forced to sell assets at fire-sale prices to meet its obligations, it will have a devastating effect. Pension plans that are forced to take this step will likely be left with substantial pension deficits that will be very difficult to eliminate." Bert Blundon, NUPGE Secretary-Treasurer

[NUPGE celebrates Pride Month 2020](#)

"We must all stand up against hate, discrimination and injustice—during Pride Month and every day. To our LGBTQI2S members, friends, allies, and community members: we celebrate you and we stand with you."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Canadian Environment Week: Taking action on climate change and biodiversity loss](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the urgency of these crises and their unequal impacts across regions and communities. The pandemic has also shown us that we can tackle crises when there is political will and social solidarity.

May 2020

[Economist sees child care support as critical for economic recovery](#)

"The issue of child care is this generation's Medicare story, and we've got to get it done."—Armine Yalnizyan

[NUPGE urges provinces to make temporary emergency orders in long-term care permanent](#)

"We need to act now and bring long-term care under the *Canada Health Act* or we will continue to fail our seniors and see more of them die preventable deaths."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[COVID-19 response - NUPGE joins call for urgent implementation of pharmacare](#)

"This pandemic has shown very clearly where we need to improve our health care system. Implementing pharmacare would help millions of Canadians and lower costs dramatically. Losing your job due to COVID, or for any reason, should not leave you without access to medication."—Larry Brown, President

[NUPGE poll finds almost universal support for bringing long-term care under the Canada Health Act](#)

86% of Canadians support bringing long-term care under the *Canada Health Act*, only 2% oppose this action.

[Wage rollbacks will harm the economy](#)

The reason cutting public sector wages hurts the economy so badly is that, like almost all low- and middle-income earners, public sector workers spend what they earn in their communities. The bulk of what public sector workers earn goes to businesses providing items like groceries or housing. When you take that money out of the community, everyone feels the pain.

[SGEU says workers should not be penalized for self-isolation](#)

“What is needed is a province-wide standard that ensures employees are not being penalized for doing the right thing and staying home.”—Bob Bymo, SGEU President.

[Group home workers provide support to some of society’s most vulnerable](#)

“Although the care they provide is crucial, these workers are often under-recognized or outright forgotten. They deserve to be seen.”—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia 2020](#)

“It’s wonderful to see celebrations taking place virtually,” said Larry Brown, NUPGE President. “We need events like IDAHOTB to bring a little joy to our lives in these difficult times. It’s a great way to bring communities together.”

[OPSEU continues to push Ford government to protect health and safety inspectors](#)

“The bottom line is supply issues are governing the day, not worker health and safety. The government knows that if it were up to inspectors, the precautionary principle would be a foundation in any workplace inspection. But plain and simple, inspectors are not being allowed to do their important jobs.”—Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida, OPSEU First Vice-President/Treasurer

[MGEU challenges justification of Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation layoffs](#)

“It makes no sense to reduce work days for staff who are very busy delivering important public services. It is even more absurd to impose layoffs or work reductions on permanent employees with mortgages to pay, and families to support while hiring summer students.”—Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[NUPGE warns federal government: crisis brewing in shelter system](#)

“If stronger measures aren’t taken now, we’re likely to see a crisis in our shelter system like the one we saw in long-term care.”—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[HSABC urges Premier to consider health professionals in plan to restart elective surgeries](#)

“It is our expectation that there will be an openness among all parties to identify and implement strategies so that BC can be successful in meeting the health care needs of British Columbians.”—Jeanne Meyers, HSABC Executive Director (Legal Services and Labour Relations)

[Extending income tax deadline will prevent low-income Canadians from losing benefits](#)

People need to file their tax and benefit forms by the deadline every year to receive benefits and supports from dozens of programs including the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors and the Canada child benefit.

[NDP leader says Canada must put an end to privately owned long-term care homes](#)

"Profit should not be the motive when it comes to how we care for our seniors."—
Jagmeet Singh, NDP Leader

[New analysis shows COVID-19 death rates significantly higher in for-profit long-term care homes](#)

The evidence has never been clearer that for-profit homes are a risk to the lives of the residents.

[OPSEU demands LCBO bosses prioritize recognition and safety for workers, not profits](#)

"The safety of front-line workers and the safety of our communities should be our top priority," stated Thomas. "Ignoring expert medical advice by expanding hours ahead of the long weekend increases the risk of community spread, for what reason?"—Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU President

[New Brunswick Premier's comments on workers lack context](#)

The assertion that workers are lazy or don't want to do their jobs flies directly in the face of the tremendous work we've seen done during this pandemic.

[International Workers' Day solidarity](#)

May Day has long been a day to rally and march for a better world. This May Day we cannot march, but we can rally ourselves around that better world and commit ourselves to action. We must ensure that the lessons of today lead to change tomorrow.

April 2020

[April 28, 2020: Day of Mourning in a time of COVID-19](#)

This year, union activists in Ottawa will be marking the National Day of Mourning on April 28th with a virtual candlelight vigil.

[Changes to Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#)

Because so many changes are being made to the CERB and other programs, people are encouraged to check the [Government of Canada website](#) to make sure information hasn't changed.

[Pallister government's austerity during this crisis is dangerous, short-sighted](#)

Although the government has been [tight-lipped on details](#), it seems clear that Pallister is trying to push through his plan to cut and privatize public services [under the guise of the pandemic](#).

[Immediate action required to protect seniors and workers at Northwood Manor](#)

Since writing this story 2 days ago, 4 more people have died due to COVID-19.

[Secrecy at Homes First putting all at risk](#)

"There is just no excuse. When lives are at risk, employers like Homes First need to come to the table. They need to come clean."—Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida, OPSEU First Vice-President/Treasurer

[Threatening memo shows Manitoba government determined to impose cuts](#)

"We agree with [economists](#) and [so many in our community](#) who are saying the Premier's cuts and mass layoffs are wrong for Manitoba, particularly as officials are starting to talk about reopening the economy."—Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[Earth Day 2020: Reflecting on one crisis during another](#)

The pandemic has underscored our collective responsibility to look out for one another and ensure that nobody is left behind—and how we are stronger when we do.

[BC Ferries rescinds layoff notices](#)

BCFMWU committed to take any legal action required to protect the rights of its members while remaining open to working cooperatively to facilitate the workforce adjustment in the best manner possible for the employees.

[New mental health resources available from Kids Help Phone](#)

The resources provided by Kids Help Phone are now free to anyone living in Canada, regardless of age.

[Workers need enhanced presumptive legislation during COVID-19 pandemic](#)

"We must recognize that in this extraordinary, unique, and surreal moment of crisis, workers are experiencing unprecedented mental health injuries arising from work-related stress." — Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[People with disabilities uniquely vulnerable to pandemic impacts](#)

It is also a difficult and stressful situation for the people who work with this vulnerable population, who are already inadequately supported and underpaid.

[Judge rules Man. govt. must appoint arbitration panel, case for refusal 'disingenuous at best'](#)

"I hope [this] ruling shows the Premier and his government that it's time for them to stop fighting with their own employees, to stop the threats, and to start treating the people who deliver vital public services with respect."—Michelle Gawronsky, MGEU President

[NUPGE calls on federal government to bring residential care facilities under Canada Health Act](#)

"I am calling on your government to extend the provisions of the Canada Health Act to include Canada's residential care facilities. By doing so you would ensure that they must meet the 5 principles of the CHA: public administration, accessibility, comprehensiveness, universality and portability."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Pandemic underscores the value of child care](#)

"On behalf of NUPGE, thank you to our members in the child care field, who are doing critical work during these difficult times. We see you and we are grateful for your service."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Workers in community-based organizations need protections during COVID-19 pandemic](#)

"Our members in the CBO sector provide vital services to some of the most vulnerable people in our society. We need to recognize these workers for their dedication and ensure they have access to proper personal protective equipment (PPE)." — Bob Bymoan, SGEU President

[Polling confirms gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

The proportion of Canadians who are "very worried" (32%) about losing their income is higher among women (36%).

[BC Ferries layoffs may leave workers in the lurch](#)

"We expected a workforce adjustment given the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, but in the spirit of 'getting through this together,' we expected more from BC Ferries. These workers and their families deserve better."—Grame Johnston, Provincial President, BCFMWU

[Lower credit card fees during COVID-19](#)

[Tell the big banks and credit card companies](#) they need to do their part to help Canadian families and support our economy in these extraordinary times.

[NUPGE publishes new research on COVID-19 and income inequality](#)

"This paper is one step of many that NUPGE will be taking on the topic of COVID-19 and income inequality. We know more work needs to be done on specific needs for different vulnerable populations. The problems facing our northern Indigenous communities are going to be different from the problems facing a new immigrant family who resides in the Greater Toronto Area. We want to make sure everyone's voice is heard, and their needs addressed. We hope this paper helps our lawmakers to understand the complexity of how COVID-19 affects different social and economic groups and encourages lawmakers to take further action."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[World Health Day 2020](#)

"The current pandemic might have been unpredictable. But strong public health systems rooted in a global economic order which prioritises solidarity and the wellbeing of people and the planet over the profits of a few would have made it much more manageable. The unfolding public health, social and economic crisis is a clarion call of history for drastic change. It is now clear that we cannot rely on the market to protect our health."—Baba Aye, PSI Health and Social Services Officer

[Applications open for federal assistance for people out of work due to COVID-19](#)

Federal government programs to help people who are without work due to COVID-19 have changed several times since they were first announced. There may be further changes so it's important to double-check any information on federal programs.

[NSGEU signs on to joint call for safety equipment for health care workers](#)

Our front-line health care workers deserve the same level of respect, peace of mind, and protection that is being provided to health care workers in other parts of this country.

[NUPGE concert: bringing people together](#)

"We need to take care of our health—including our mental health. Music is a beautiful salve for worry and anxiety."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[President's Commentary: Every day heroes. Heroes Every Day](#)

And what about the long list of workers that have been deemed essential during this pandemic? People who work in our grocery and convenience stores, at gas stations, or who provide food delivery. These are also the heroes we're hearing about. Would you have seen them that way before the pandemic broke out?

[OPSEU urges greater attention be paid to community social service workers and vulnerable populations](#)

"You can't provide emergency housing over a video conference. We need to be there to ensure that they get the safe and supportive housing they need."—Kareen Marshall, OPSEU Community Agencies Sector Chair

[Strong majority want government to halt rent, mortgage, and utility payments during COVID-19 crisis](#)

"We need a national housing plan for mortgage and rent relief to protect people from the economic fallout of COVID-19."—Larry Brown, NUPGE President

[Research shows young people are just as worried about COVID-19 as other age groups](#)

The truth is that young people are not behaving differently than Canadians in other age groups.

March 2020

[Pay equity matters not only during a crisis but year-round](#)

Now is the time for genuine action and follow-through, not simply rhetoric.

[NUPGE STATEMENT: Fighting COVID-19 in Adult and Youth Correctional Facilities](#)

The urgency of COVID-19 is something the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) takes very seriously because inmates are living in an environment in which our members work.

[SGEU responds to confirmation of corrections officers testing positive for COVID-19](#)

“Once we’re through this emergency, things cannot go back to business as usual. Long term changes need to be made.” — Bob Bymoer, SGEU President

[Details of new federal assistance for people unable to work due to COVID-19](#)

The work of the labour movement and our allies is having an effect, as shown by the fact that the CERB is an improvement on earlier announcements. However, there is still more to do.

[Despite pandemic, governments mustn’t forget housing is a right](#)

Over 1/3 of Canadians are worried about missing a rent or mortgage payment this month because of COVID-19.

[Viral Solidarity: An online concert with David Rovics](#)

Join us on Thursday, April 2 at 8 p.m. EDT for an evening of songs and solidarity to inspire us during this health crisis

<https://www.facebook.com/136476216406652/videos/528073681243657>

[Article on COVID-19 outbreak at long-term care home no surprise for workers fighting for better conditions](#)

When work was contracted out, the number of sick days for workers was reduced from 10 to 3.

[COVID-19: Protecting mental health during crisis](#)

We need to take care of ourselves, especially now, and a big part of being healthy means taking care of our mental health. Stress is a major factor in poor health. And for those who struggle with mental illness, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder, these times are especially difficult.

[Health care workers need protection during pandemic](#)

NUPGE and HSABC release new research showing higher precautions needed.

[Amidst COVID-19 pandemic, we are likely to see a rise in domestic violence](#)

In this time of high stress and growing uncertainty, and as people are spending more time in their homes, the risk of domestic violence is high. Employers and governments must ensure the proper protections and additional resources are in place to support victims and survivors of domestic violence.

[Governments need to step in to protect workers](#)

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) is concerned about our members, but also about those that don't have the same labour rights and protections in the workplace.

[COVID-19 pandemic highlights need for urgent action to ensure access to health care for the medically uninsured](#)

“Health care is a human right, regardless of immigration status. All levels of government and health institutions need to act now to remove barriers to care for the medically uninsured to ensure appropriate COVID-19 assessment and care are available. This crisis demonstrates why we need a health care system that ensures access for all.”

— Melanie Spence, OHIP for All member and Registered Nurse

[COVID-19: Safety is not negotiable for anyone — including health care workers](#)

The strength of our health care system rests on our doctors, nurses, health science professionals, allied health workers, EMS personnel, Direct Support Workers (DSWs), Personal Support Workers (PSWs), health care aides, orderlies, cleaners, food service workers and others. To treat patients and keep the broader public safe, these workers need to be protected.

[President's Commentary: More reasons than ever to support public health care](#)

We are always grateful for our strong public system of health care, but never more so than during a time of uncertainty. We are confident in the knowledge that we have highly trained, experienced public sector workers on the front lines helping to protect our communities during this stressful period.

[NUPGE urges PM, Premiers to greater coordinated action on COVID-19](#)

Top concerns are protecting front-line workers, personal protective equipment (PPE), testing for COVID-19, and wage protection.

[Survey results raise significant concerns about impact of workloads, stress, and strain on NAPE social work members](#)

“Social workers across this province are struggling to deal with unbearable workloads, massive stress, and toxic workplace environments. The survey results quantify what we have been hearing from social workers. It is truly alarming.” — Jerry Earle, NAPE President

Meetings

- March 3 Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE)
- March 5 Advisory Committee on Young Workers' Issues (ACYWI)
- March 10 Canadian Health
Professional Secretariat
(CHPS)—COVID-19
- March 18 Broader Discussion Group
(big tent) on COVID-19
- March 24 Correctional Officers and
Youth Facility Workers
- March 31 Broader Discussion Group
(Big tent) on COVID-19
Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers
- April 1 Broader Discussion Group (big tent) on COVID-19
- April 2 Occupational Health and Safety
- April 6 Privatization Researchers
- April 7 Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers
Public Health Agency of Canada—Tuesday weekly calls
- April 8 Broader Discussion Group (big tent) on COVID-19
- April 9 Liquor Board Representatives
- April 14 Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers
Public Health Agency of Canada—Tuesday weekly
- April 15 Broader Discussion Group (big tent) on COVID-19
- April 16 Occupational Health and Safety Workers
Long-Term Care Representatives
- April 17 EMS Workers
- April 20 Collective Bargaining Advisory Committee (CBAC)



- April 21 Public Health Agency of Canada
- April 22 Broader Discussion Group (big tent) COVID-19
Legal Opinions regarding Component Convention Postponements
- April 24 Community Service Workers
National Union Finance Committee
- April 28 NEB #309 Meeting
Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers
Public Health Agency of Canada
- April 29 Broader Discussion Group (big tent) COVID-19
- April 30 Occupational Health and Safety
Workers—bi-weekly
- May 4 EMS Workers
- May 5 Public Health Agency of Canada
- May 7 Broader Discussion Group (big
tent) on COVID-19
- May 11 Group Home Representatives
- May 12 Correctional Officers and Youth
Facility Workers
Public Health Agency of Canada
- May 13 Broader Discussion Group (big tent) on COVID-19
- May 14 Occupational Health and Safety Workers
- May 19 Public Health Agency of Canada
- May 26 Probation Officers
Public Health Agency of Canada
- May 27 Broader Discussion Group (big tent) on COVID-19
- May 28 Occupational Health and Safety Officers
- June 2 Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers



June 3	Advisory Committee on Women's Issues
June 8	Post-secondary Education Representatives
June 10	Broader Discussion Group (big tent) COVID-19
June 11	Occupational Health and Safety Officers
June 15	Advisory Committee on the Environment
June 23	Component Representatives for Probation Officers Canadian Health Professionals Secretariat (CHPS)
June 24	Broader Discussion Group (big tent) COVID-19
June 25	Occupational Health and Safety Officers Wildland Firefighters Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre
June 26	Advisory Committee on Young Workers Issues' (ACYWI))
June 29	Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers
June 29	Presidents and Component Senior Staff
July 7	Working from Home Considerations for Unions
July 9	Special Committee on Child Care
July 10	Legal Strategies Component Coordinating Committee
July 20	Special Anti-racism Committee
July 28	Report on Bill 30 (Alberta) and Potential Implications for Public Health Care in Canada
August 24	Special Anti-racism Committee
September 22	Component Liquor Board Representatives
September 24	Occupational Health and Safety Officers



September 24–25	Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers
September 25	Communications Officers
September 28	Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE)
September 29	Privatization Researchers
September 30	Broader Discussion (Big Tent) COVID-19
October 1-2	Collective Bargaining Advisory Committee
October 7–9	National Executive Board Meeting #311
October 13	Special Committee on Child Care
October 15	Post-secondary Education Representatives
October 19-20	Advisory Committee on Women’s Issues (ACWI)
October 27	Component Education Representatives
November 3	Legal Strategies Component Coordinating Committee
November 4	Probation Officers
November 10	Advisory Committee on Young Workers Issues (ACYWI)
November 19-20	Canadian Health Professional Secretariat
December 4	COVID Outbreaks in Provincial Corrections
December 10	Wildland Fire Fighters Meeting with CIFFC

Letters

March 11	Prime Minister and Premiers of the provinces and territories: Urgent call for greater coordinated action related to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Canada and around the world
March 13	Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada: Urgent call for greater coordinated action related to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Canada and around the world

- March 24 Letters to the Premiers: *Respiratory Protection for Health Workers Caring for COVID-19 Patients* by Dr. John H. Murphy, Adjunct Professor of the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto
- April 2 Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC): WFX-FIT test administered by the CIFFC
- April 17 Prime Minister Trudeau, PC, MP: Tragedy in residential facilities for care of seniors during the pandemic
- May 1 Federal Government’s Consultations on Strengthening Corporate Beneficial Ownership Transparency: NUPGE's submission
- May 6 Prime Minister Trudeau: Community Social Services workers and COVID and people experiencing homelessness in Canada
- May 7 Leader of the NDP Jagmeet Singh: Long-term care crisis and the inclusion of long-term care under the *Canada Health Act*
- May 8 National Union opinion piece, *Winnipeg Free Press*, May 8, 2020: Manitoba's austerity agenda sets it apart
- May 12 Hassan Yussuff, President, Canadian Labour Congress President: Request to raise the issue of Wildland Firefighters—public safety occupation—in his meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau
- May 25 Rt. Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food: in support of UFCW food-processing workers
- June 4 Bill Morneau, PC, MP, Minister of Finance: Re the difficulties that the COVID-19 pandemic has created for many pension plans
- June 8 Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance, and Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion: the CERB and CEWS administration
- June 15 Prime Minister Trudeau: Impact of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) cases arising from actions taken to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing economic crisis



- June 19 Alberta premier Jason Kenney: Recent notice of a private member's bill to repeal Alberta's *Voluntary Blood Donations Act*
- June 30 NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh: Asking for support for the call for a moratorium on a system known as the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS)
- June 30 Prime Minister Trudeau: Security certificates
- July 8 Euan Gibb, Inter-America Regional Organization of PSI: Submission of names for PSI IARO committees: Regional LGBT+, Committee to Combat Racism and Xenophobia, Regional Young Workers' Committee
- July 14 President of Guatemala, as part of the PSI campaign: Increase in violations of the right to freedom of association, collective bargaining, and human rights in general, in Guatemala
- July 24 Letter to Minister Ahmed Hussen: Social Finance Fund
- July 28 Letter to Minister Ahmed Hussen: National Child Care System
- July 28 Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Patty Hajdu: Alberta's Bill 30
- August 24 Francois-Phillippe Champagne, Minister of Foreign Affairs: Killing of trade unionist, Zara Alvarez in the Philippines
- Sept. 10 Centre for International Corporate Tax and Research (CICTAR), donation
- Sept. 17 José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Collective (CCAJAR), donation
- Sept. 23 Child Care Now, NUPGE support for strategy for recovery including child care
- Sept. 23 Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, responding to report
- Sept. 29 LabourStart Canada, donation
- Sept. 29 Rohingya Women Welfare Society, donation
- October 7 Minister Champagne, arbitrary detention of Cihan Erdal by Turkey
- October 15 Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED), donation
- October 20 Union of Mining and Metallurgical Workers Paititi (STMMP), donation
- October 20, Prime Minister Trudeau, withdraw its appeal re Safe Third Country Agreement

- October 21 Orvana Minerals Corporation, expression of concern with situation at the Don Mario Complex
- October 27 Progress Gala 2020, donation
- October 27 Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Provincial Premiers, domestic violence
- Nov. 3 Canadian Red Cross Lebanon Humanitarian Needs Fund, donation
- Nov. 12 Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC), donation
- Nov. 12 Prime Minister Trudeau, failure to protect people in long-term care in Canada
- Nov. 12 Minister Freeland, need for a national child care system
- Nov. 13 Euan Gibb, Public Services International, nominations for committees
- Nov. 17 Letter to Minister Maryam Monsef, Domestic Violence
- Nov. 18 Global Youth Education Network Society, donation
- Dec. 14 Oxfam Canada, donation
- Dec. 16 Asian Canadian Labour Alliance, donation
- Dec. 16 Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, destruction of person of interest reports in regard to St. Anne's Indian Residential School

Publications

- March *COVID-19 Considerations for Components*
- March 18 *NUPGE Pandemic Planning List*
- April *Comments on the Consultation on Strengthening Corporate Beneficial Ownership Transparency in Canada*
- April 7 *COVID-19 and Income Inequality*
- May *Long-term Care Survey*
- June *The Provincial Role in Canada's Post- COVID Economic Recovery*
- July *Working from Home: Considerations for Unions*

- July 28 *Bill 30 (Alberta) and Potential Implications for Public Health Care in Canada*
- September *Domestic Violence and The Workplace: How Non-Canadian Jurisdictions Have Implemented Workplace Protections for Victims of Domestic Violence*
- Workers' Health and Safety Protections and Working from Home*
- December *NUPGE Wildland Firefighters Representatives: Recommendation for CIFFC to Change or Replace the WFX-FIT Test*
- The Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Global Trade, Trade and Investment Agreements, and Trade and Investment Negotiations*

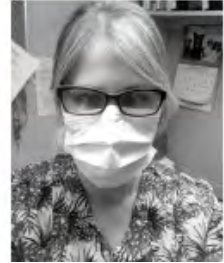
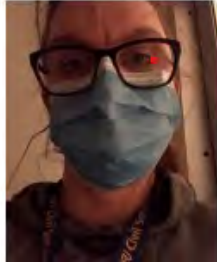
Conclusion

This year will be one for the record books. All our regular struggles were exacerbated by COVID-19. The devastating consequences of income inequality and austerity measures have always been clear to us, but many were made aware of them for the first time. Institutional racism was also thrust into the spotlight at the international level and sparked important questions about institutional racism in Canada.

While we have all done amazing work for our members this year to help them—in our usual fights, and with all the changes that have come with the pandemic—there are many more challenges ahead of us. Governments and employers will be looking at instituting further austerity measures. Those measures must be resisted if we want to achieve fairness for all.

Members of the public have been so grateful for the work our members are doing, and so we need to ensure they understand what austerity means for them. We need their support moving forward to build the kind of Canada we have been waiting for.

Now is the time.





NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES

- B. C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)
- Health Sciences Association of British Columbia (HSABC)
- Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA)
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union (SGEU)
- Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU)
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)
- Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers (CUBGW)
- New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees (NBU)
- Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU)
- PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (PEI UPSE)
- Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE)

The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of Public Services International.

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