

President's Letter

December 17, 2020



Lynette Powell, MD
President

NLMA makes donation on behalf of physicians to support food security

Dear Colleagues,

As physicians, we see every day in our practices how the social determinants of health can influence a person's well-being. We also know that people in the lowest socio-economic groups often carry the greatest burden of illness. Newfoundland and Labrador has some of the highest rates of unhealthy non-medical determinants of health in Canada. It's no coincidence then that we also have the worst prevalence of chronic disease, cancer and vascular mortality in Canada.

The Community Food Sharing Association (CFSA) is the provincial distribution centre for food banks throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. From its St. John's office and warehouse, the CFSA manages the collection and distribution of food through more than 50 food banks throughout the province.

I am happy to report that later this morning, the NLMA will present a donation on behalf of all physicians in the province to the Community Food Sharing Association for \$200,000 to help support them in supplying food banks across the province. This is the largest donation ever made to the CFSA from a single donor.

Due to COVID-19 and temporary changes in the way we do business, the NLMA has encountered an unexpected surplus in our operational budget this year. As you may know, our building has largely remained closed and our staff are working virtually from home offices. Expenses such as travel, accommodation, honoraria, and building utilities and services have been reduced or eliminated. We have also received funding from the CMA this year to help offset work expenses related COVID-19.

The NLMA's Finance and Administration Committee discussed options for these savings and presented recommendations to the Board of Directors. The Board and the Finance Committee unanimously agreed to use these unexpected one-time savings to make a philanthropic donation focused on food security.

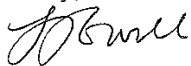
Food bank usage in the province increased by 59 per cent in 2019, and usage is expected to increase by an additional 20 per cent this year. Our donation gives the Community Food Sharing Association the ability to acquire much needed supplies as food banks deal with the increased demand resulting from the economic downturn.

The CFSA informed us that the closure of the North Atlantic Oil Refinery, the postponement of the White Rose Project, the cancellation or postponement in many of the major construction projects throughout the province, and the closure of many businesses as a result of COVID-19, has resulted in increased unemployment and left many struggling to put food on the table for their families.

This is why we decided to help support the work of the Community Food Sharing Association and their team of volunteers who do amazing work every day to help our fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have fallen on hard times.

The donation will help food banks in the following communities and surrounding areas: Baie Verte, Bay Roberts, Bayview, Bell Island, Bonavista, Botwood, Buchan's, Burin, Carbonear, Cartwright, Catalina, Clarenville, Conception Bay South, Corner Brook, Deer Lake, Freshwater, Gander, Glovertown, Goulds, Grand Bank, Grand Falls-Windsor, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Harbour Grace, Holyrood, Labrador City, Lewisporte, Lower Island Cove, Marystown, Mount Pearl, Nain, New-Wes-Valley, Pasadena, Port aux Basques, Rigolet, Springdale, St. Anthony, St. John's, Stephenville, Summerford and Torbay.

Sincerely,



Lynette Powell, MD
President



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