



2023/24

WELLNESS FUND

GUIDELINES & FAQ<sub>s</sub>

## Table of Contents

	Page
Application Guidelines	3
Social Determinants of Health	6
Frequently Asked Questions	8

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## APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Community Health Boards (CHBs) across Nova Scotia are now accepting applications for Wellness Fund grants. Wellness Funds are available to support programs that advance CHB health plan priorities and use a population health-based approach in addressing the social determinants of health.

### Purpose and Eligibility

1. Funding is intended for new programs.
  - Designed to support new innovative programs.
  - Programs are considered to be organized activities that are grounded in active participation from community members in support of the social determinants of health and population health goals.
  - Applicants are encouraged to work in partnerships and to seek financial support from multiple funders.
2. Applicants must be aware that sustained funding for future years won't be available through Wellness Funds and they will need to consider other sources of funding.
  - Organizations applying to a CHB for a previously funded program by that CHB are ineligible.
  - Program applications must be for a new program to the CHB catchment area. There is no repeat funding for the same program in the same CHB.
3. Wellness Funds are intended to support programs that address the social determinants of health (see page 7) at the population level.
  - Program components must focus on healthy practices.
  - Programs must consider the [Canada Food Guide](#) for food and beverages served to participants.
  - Wellness Funds will not be provided for programs that involve alcohol or cannabis.
    - i. Programs must not be sponsored by, or partnered with, the alcohol or cannabis industries.
    - ii. Programs must not serve alcohol or cannabis to participants.
4. Applications will be considered **ineligible if applying for:**
  - **Health Services** - Programs that provide a health service (intended to diagnose/treat/rehabilitate) or one-on-one care and support.
  - **Existing Programs** - Initiatives that duplicate existing community services and programs.
  - **Fundraising appeals or campaigns**
  - **Annual operating costs** for existing programs
  - **Needs Assessments, Research, Evaluation & Engagement Projects**- Wellness funds are intended to implement programs in community.
  - **Equipment/Infrastructure Projects**- Infrastructure and Equipment projects (Building enhancements, playground equipment, trails, renovations to facilities etc.) Some minor equipment/infrastructure purchases are eligible as a portion of

the total funding if the equipment/infrastructure has a formal program associated with its direct use.

- **Counseling Programs** – Counseling programs. However, community-based support groups are considered eligible.
- **Employee Salary**- Compensation is only eligible if it's required to create a contracted position or enhance current staff contract hours.

5. Wellness funds are provided for non-profit community groups and organizations (registered and unregistered), municipalities and schools that have been together a minimum of six months and are able to receive and manage funds.
6. Groups that **cannot apply** include but limited to:
  - Individuals
  - For profit groups/organizations
  - Provincial and Federal Government Departments or Nova Scotia Health.

These groups may be partners in programs that apply as long as the applicant is a non-profit and the partnership is community-led. Funds cannot be used for operational purposes by the Nova Scotia Health (NSH) or CHBs.

7. Groups/organizations that do not have the ability to accept funds (e.g. do not have a bank account) must partner with another organization that can support the financial management of the program.
8. Grants typically range anywhere from \$250 to \$3000. The maximum granting amount is \$5000.
9. If any application is incomplete, it may be considered ineligible. If you are unclear on the instructions, please contact the CHB Coordinator in advance of the deadline.

## Process and Responsibilities

1. Before submitting your proposal, you are strongly encouraged to contact your local CHB Coordinator to ensure your program meets the application guidelines well in advance.
  - Please keep in mind Coordinators availability will be limited leading up to the application deadline.
  - **To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link below:**  
<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>
2. Applicants must identify the **specific CHB** to which they are applying. Please see the listing of CHBs by Zone below.
  - If applying to multiple CHBs for the same program, a **separate and unique application will be required for each CHB**.
  - Applications for each CHB area must identify unique and local budgets, community partners, and local impacts **in each of the CHB areas** to which you are applying.

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**To identify which CHBs support your geographical area, please click on the link below:**

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- Applicants are required to sign a contract before receiving funds. Cheques must be cashed within 30 days of receipt. Failure to do so may mean that you do not receive funding for your program.
- It is the responsibility of the group/organization/individual receiving the grant to ensure that all provincial and federal regulations are followed. This includes the requirements of Revenue Canada that a T4/T4A is issued to all personnel being paid an hourly wage, or hired by contract of more than \$500.
- Reports, receipts and a budget summary must be submitted to the CHB. Mid-term interviews may be conducted. Final Reports must be received within 60 days of program completion. Failure to submit reports will impact future funding applications. NSH may request a funding review if a final report is not received.
- Programs must be completed within 12 months upon receipt of funds. For more information on eligibility and funding criteria, please review the Wellness Fund FAQ (Page 8).

**If submitting paper copies of applications, please mail to:**

Community Health  
40 Freer Lane, Suite 3221  
Lower Sackville, NS B4C 0A2  
Or  
[CHB@nshealth.ca](mailto:CHB@nshealth.ca)

Please do not submit paper copies to your local CHB Coordinator or CHB member. Those individuals will not be responsible if your application is lost or misplaced.

*\*\*Reminder- if you plan to apply to more than one CHB for funding, a separate application is required for each submission.*

**Deadline for submissions is 5:00 pm on first Monday of May.** If sending by mail items must be postmarked on or before the deadline submission date.

**Confirmation of receipt of application will be sent. Please contact your CHB Coordinator if you do not receive this within two business days.**

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## SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The **social determinants of health** are the interrelated social, political and economic factors that create the conditions in which people live, learn, work, play and age.

The **intersection of social determinants of health** means these determinants shift and change in different settings and over time, impacting the health of individuals, groups and communities in different ways.

Source: National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, *Glossary of Essential Health Equity Terms*, 2015.

Community Health Boards are committed to addressing the social determinants of health in order to create better conditions for good health. Some sub-populations (e.g., people living with low incomes, people with disabilities, members of visible minority groups) have fewer resources to support their health, and may require additional resources and supports to reach the level of health enjoyed by more advantaged segments of the population.

The following are critical determinants of health for individuals, families and communities:

**Income and Social Status:** There is a gradient in health across the income spectrum. Lower income populations often experience economic and social exclusion, and tend to have poorer health and shorter lives than higher income populations.

**Social Support Networks:** People who have the support of family, friends and communities feel more connected to others and have better health.

**Education and Literacy:** Education is tied to income, to social networks, and to the resources needed to meet basic needs and to feel included in the economic, social and political life of the community.

**Employment/Working Conditions:** Employment provides income, a sense of personal identity, and the means to acquire the resources needed for health. Unemployment or precarious employment can contribute to stress and exclusion.

**Social Environments:** Feeling included and psychologically safe from harm in social settings (community, school, work) contributes to health and wellness.

**Physical Environments:** Clean air and water, adequate housing, safe neighbourhoods and adequate transportation are needed for health, and for engagement in education, employment and community life.

**Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills:** Adopting healthy practices and having skills to cope with life circumstances help people to stay healthy and safe.

**Healthy Child Development:** Early life experiences lay the foundation for lifelong health. These experiences impact brain development, school readiness and the ability to cope with life stresses.

**Biology and Genetic Endowment:** Some people have health advantages or disadvantages due to their biological make-up, but even people with disadvantages live full and healthy lives when their environments support their growth and development.

**Health and Social Services:** Everyone needs access to services that can support prevention of illness and injury, and provide timely and appropriate treatment and other supports when needed.

**Persons belonging to Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity (SOGI) groups:** 2SLGBTQIA+ populations can experience discrimination that has adverse health effects. Society places different demands and expectations on people of various genders, including transgendered people. Gender intersects with other health determinants to create circumstances that either support or challenge health and wellness

**Culture:** Language, social norms, and gender roles vary across cultures. Culture can be a source of strength and inclusion, but also a source of discrimination and exclusion.

**Aboriginal Ancestry:** First Nations and Aboriginal people have higher rates of food insecurity, lower levels of education and employment, and higher rates of illness and injury, all tied to their history of colonization and discrimination.

**Race/Racism:** Racialized populations (immigrants, members of visible minorities) experience higher rates of unemployment and under-employment, and both economic and social discrimination. New immigrants tend to experience deterioration of their health over time, known as the “immigrant health effect”.

Adapted from Source: J. Mikkonen & D. Raphael. (2010) *The Canadian Facts*.



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## WELLNESS FUND - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This FAQs are a resource to support and address questions related to wellness funds. You can also find helpful information on the CHB website at <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/wellness-funds> or by contacting your local CHB Coordinator.

### General Information

#### **What is the purpose of these funds?**

Funding is intended for new and innovative programs that advance community health board priorities. Programs are considered to be organized activities that are grounded in active participation from community members in support of the social determinants of health and population health goals.

#### **What if I have questions about the application or need assistance filling it out?**

All applicants are **strongly encouraged** to check in with your local CHB Coordinator prior to submitting your application. *To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link below:* <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

### Who is eligible for funding?

#### **Who can apply?**

Non-profit community groups and organizations (registered and unregistered), that have been together for a minimum of six months and are able to receive, manage and track funding can apply. Groups/organizations that do not have the ability to accept funds (e.g. do not have a bank account) must partner with another organization that can support the financial management of the program.

#### **If my group or organization cannot accept funds, can a government department, municipality or another community organization can accept the funds on our behalf as a partner?**

Yes, they can act as the holder of your funds. You must ensure that the funds are used appropriately, as you will be accountable for these funds.

#### **Can an organization apply if it is still in the middle of a program previously supported by wellness funds from last year?**

Yes, as long as the application is for a NEW program to the CHB. Repeat funding for previously funded programs will not be considered.

### **If a program previously funded by Wellness Funds is complete but the CHB has not received a final report (with receipts) can I still apply for a new program?**

Maybe. Please contact your CHB Coordinator to discuss the reasons why the report has not been submitted. *To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link below:*  
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### **Can Schools and School Advisory Committees (SACs) and Schools Plus apply?**

Yes. They are eligible to apply for funding as long as their program meets the other eligibility criteria.

### **Can Universities and Community Colleges apply?**

Yes. They are eligible to apply for funding as long as their program meets the other eligibility criteria (Wellness Funds are not intended for research). Universities and Community Colleges are strongly encouraged to demonstrate in their application that the program is community driven and not part of core operational programming.

### **Can Municipalities apply?**

Yes. They are eligible to apply for funding as long as their program meets the other eligibility criteria. Municipalities are strongly encouraged to demonstrate in their application that the program is community driven and not part of core operational programming.

### **Who cannot apply?**

Groups that **cannot apply** include but not limited to: individuals, for profit groups/organizations and, Provincial and Federal Government Departments. These groups may be partners in programs that apply as long as the applicant is a non-profit and the partnership is community-led. Funds cannot be used for operational purposes by the Nova Scotia Health (NSH) or CHBs.

### **Can (NSH) Youth Health Centres apply for funding?**

No. Youth Health Centres are a NSH program, so are not eligible. They may support a community partner in their application process and collaborate on the programs.

### **What can Wellness Funds be used for?**

Wellness Funds are intended to support new and innovative programs that advance community health board priorities and use a population health-based approach in addressing the social determinants of health.

**Can Wellness Funds be used to fund a health service in the community?**

No. Wellness Funds are not meant for programs and services that diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, or provide one on one care and support. The intent is to support community health promotion initiatives to offer new and innovative programs that address community need.

**Can Wellness Funds be used to provide a similar service to one that already exists in community to increase its availability?**

No. Wellness Funds are not intended to address perceived gaps/shortages in existing programs/initiatives.

**Can Wellness Funds be used to support our fundraising campaign?**

No. Wellness funds are intended for specific programs and are not eligible for fundraising campaigns.

**Can I apply for a Wellness fund grant for overall expenses to run my organization's program-we offer many great programs?**

No. Wellness Funds are intended for specific program. Operating costs for existing programs are not eligible.

**Can Wellness Funds be used for infrastructure and building programs?**

No. Wellness Funds are intended for community based program ideas to help create healthier communities. Some minor equipment/infrastructure purchases are eligible as a portion of the total funding if the equipment/infrastructure has a new program associated with its direct use.

**Can Wellness Funds be used to purchase playground equipment?**

No. Wellness Funds are intended for community based programs that impact on the health of the population rather than providing recreational equipment. Some minor equipment/infrastructure purchases are eligible as a portion of the total funding if the equipment/infrastructure has a new program associated with its direct use.

**Can Wellness Funds be used to support the building or maintenance of trails?**

No. Wellness Funds are intended for community based programs that impact on the health of the population rather than providing recreational opportunities, spaces or equipment.

**Can Wellness Funds be used to support needs assessments, research or broad engagement programs?**

No. Wellness funds are intended for programs and programs that improve health outcomes in our communities. However, CHBs also have operating funds that could support these initiatives if it is deemed to be in alignment with their priorities and implementation plans. Contact your CHB Coordinator to discuss.

### **Can I apply for a grant to fund an existing program offered by our organization?**

Maybe. The intent of this funding is not to cover annual operating costs for services and programs offered by their organization. Organizations applying to a CHB for a previously funded program by that CHB are ineligible. If they have never received Wellness Funding from the CHB before for the program, they are eligible to apply. Program applications must be for a new program to the CHB catchment area. There is no repeat funding for the same program in the same CHB. Please contact the CHB Coordinator before applying to discuss eligibility. *To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link below:*

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### **Can I use the funding to buy equipment/capital items?**

Maybe. Equipment or furniture may be purchased at the discretion of the CHB and NSH if it is essential to the program. If the program cannot be sustained beyond the life of the program the equipment must be transferred to another organization offering a similar program in accordance with the funding agreement. We do not fund equipment that is not part of a program.

### **Can I use the funding to pay for an employee?**

No. Wellness Funds cannot be used to cover the costs for employees of the organization, as this is operational costs. Compensation is only eligible if it's required to create a contracted position or enhance current staff contract hours. **Funding for people contracted to deliver programming or enhancing current contracted staff hours would be eligible.** It is the responsibility of the organization or individual receiving the grant to ensure that all provincial and federal regulations are adhered to. This includes the requirements of Revenue Canada that a T4 or T4A is issued to all personnel being hired with an hourly wage, or hired by contract of more than \$500. The organization or individual receiving the grant should contact Revenue Canada to determine what is required to adhere to such regulations.

### **Can I use Wellness Funds to advertise my organization?**

Maybe. Advertising costs associated with running a particular Wellness Fund program would be considered eligible. Advertising costs associated with promoting your overall organization would not be considered eligible.

## **How can I apply?**

You must fill out a Wellness Fund application online. To access the application please visit <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/wellness-funds> or contact your local CHB Coordinator.

## How will I know what CHB to apply to?

Applicants must identify the **specific CHB** to which they are applying. Please see the listing of CHBs by Zone below. You may apply to more than one CHB if your program covers a large geography. However, **a separate application will be required for CHB each submission.** Applications must identify local community partners and identify local impacts in each of the CHB areas to which you are applying.

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## Can I apply to more than one CHB?

Yes, but you must fill out a separate application for each CHB you apply to and outline which other CHBs are you applying to on each application. Each application must demonstrate local impacts and identify local community partners.

## When is the application deadline?

First Monday of May by 5:00 pm.

## Where can I find a paper copy of the application?

Please contact your local CHB Coordinator for a paper copy.

### **What are the typical amounts of grants awarded?**

Grants typically range anywhere from \$250 to \$3000. The maximum granting amount is \$5000.

### **When will I know whether or not our application has been successful?**

Grant applications are reviewed by a CHB Review Committee in May to June. We do our best to notify all applicants by the end of July. **Remind applicants to check their junk mail for emails as notification could go there.**

### **When will I receive my funding?**

As part of the Wellness Fund process—funding agreements must be signed before a cheque will be issued to the successful organization. Many CHBs have Wellness Fund celebrations where applicants can share their program with the community, sign the contract for funding and be presented with their cheque. These usually take place in June to September. The CHB will advise you of the process when they send your application response letter.

### **How long do I have to spend the funding?**

Successful grant applicants must spend their wellness funds within twelve months of receiving it. If funds remain after the twelve months, the CHB must be notified immediately. The CHB will then determine whether the remaining funds must be returned or, if appropriate, be used to continue the program as outlined in the application. Cheques must be cashed within thirty days of receipt.

### **Am I responsible for submitting any paperwork once I get my funding?**

Yes, the CHB Coordinator or member of the CHB will likely check in with you about half way into your program. In addition, a Final Report must be submitted no later than sixty days after the end date of the program. Copies of receipts of expenses must be kept and copies sent with the Final Report. Interac and credit card statements are not acceptable.

### **What if I am successful in getting a CHB Wellness Fund grant but I don't spend the full amount or my organization wants to spend it on something different?**

If you wish to spend the wellness funding you received in a way that is different from what was indicated on your funding application you must fill out a "Change of Grant Request" available from your local CHB Coordinator. Any unspent funds must be returned to NSH.