Response Update to DSU Council: UNB Students Union Solidarity

November 19, 2020

Madeleine Stinson, DSU President

*Content Warning: This report contains discussion of sexualized violence and medical misconduct*

Background

On Friday, November 13th, 2020, the University of New Brunswick Student’s Union (UNBSU) President contacted the DSU to notify us of disclosures made regarding a faculty member who teaches at Dalhousie Medicine, New Brunswick (DMNB). These disclosures were made online, in response to recent statements from survivors at other Universities in New Brunswick.

Dr. Bhargava teaches at the Dalhousie Medicine, New Brunswick (St. John’s) satellite program. The students he teaches are Dalhousie students. There are currently just under 20 allegations against Dr. Bhargava, dating back to the early 2010s. He not only works in a teaching capacity at UNB, but has a practice in the UNB Student Health Centre in Fredericton. This health facility is shared with St. Thomas University. All current disclosures have come from individuals who accessed Dr. Bhargava’s services through this health centre, or off-campus medical facilities in New Brunswick. As of right now, the DSU is not aware of any disclosures from Dalhousie students; this was confirmed on November 18th by the Student Affairs Office at Dalhousie.

Dr. Manoj Bhargava was previously listed as an Associate Professor with the Department of Psychiatry, under the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine. His contact and listing on the Department’s website has been removed. On November 17th, 2020, the College of Physicians
and Surgeons of New Brunswick suspended Dr. Bhargava’s license to practice. To the best of the DSU’s knowledge, Dr. Bhargava does not have an active license to practice medicine in Nova Scotia.

**DSU Response**

On the afternoon of Friday, November 13th, 2020, after receiving communication from UNBSU, the DSU contacted the Dalhousie Student Affairs Office, the DSU Survivor Support Centre Manager, the Director of Dalhousie Counselling & Psychological Services, and the Assistant Director of Security. The Students Affairs Office forwarded notification of the disclosures on to Dalhousie Human Rights and Equity Services and Student Health and Wellness. These units were all notified as soon as possible to ensure that appropriate supports and resources could be provided to any Dalhousie students who wish to access them in response to the allegations. The DSU Survivor Support Centre also clarified on Friday that their services are currently open to all students, from all universities, in both provinces. This information was immediately shared with the UNBSU.

The DSU continues to work with the UNBSU and Dalhousie Student Affairs to address the situation. The Student Affairs Office provided additional information on the University’s response on November 18th, 2020. Forwarded on from Dalhousie Human Resources, the SA Office provided the following response to inquiry on Dr. Bhargava’s status as a faculty member at Dalhousie:

“In order for a physician living in New Brunswick to have an active faculty appointment with Dalhousie’s Faculty of Medicine, they must have an active license with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick and privileges at one of New Brunswick’s health authorities.”

Dr. Bhargava no longer holds an active license to practice in New Brunswick, and thus, under this guideline, he no longer holds an active faculty appointment with Dalhousie. Typically, a CPSNB investigation takes a few months before a determination is made. The SA Office assumes this response to indicate that Dalhousie will continue to follow the lead of the CPSNB. Dalhousie Human Resources was unable to provide answers, due to confidentiality, as to whether Dr. Bhargava has ever taught on a Nova Scotian campus or held a practice at a Dalhousie Health Centre.

The DSU will continue to support students both in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, as well as our peers at the UNBSU. The DSU stands in solidarity with all survivors. Questions regarding the DSU’s response can be directed to Madeleine Stinson, at dsupres@dal.ca.

**Resources**

- Dalhousie Human Rights and Equity Services
- Crystal Ragush, Sexualized Violence Advisor – crystal.ragush@dal.ca
- The Purple Folder

- Dalhousie Student Health and Wellness
  - Website
  - Appointments in Truro
  - Appointments in Halifax

- The DSU Survivor Support Centre
  - survivorsupport@dal.ca
  - 902-425-1066

- Dalhousie Security
  - security@dal.ca
  - 902-494-4109 (Halifax)
  - 902-893-4190 (Truro)