

GLOBAL WORKFORCE SURVEY (GWS) RESULTS FAQ

What is the GWS?

The Global Workforce Survey (GWS) is a new, organization-wide survey that helps Nova Scotia Health understand and improve the overall employee experience. It focuses on key areas of workplace culture that impact staff well-being, patient care, and organizational success. The GWS replaces the former Patient Safety Culture and Worklife Pulse surveys and is required by Accreditation Canada at least once every four years.

What does the GWS measure?

The GWS looks at seven key areas called dimensions that together describe how we experience our work environment at Nova Scotia Health. These dimensions help us understand what's working well and where improvements can make the biggest impact.

The seven dimensions are:

1. Work Team - collaboration, relationships, mutual respect, and support among colleagues.
2. People-Centered Care - how staff uphold compassion, inclusivity, respect, and dignity with patients and families, involving them in their care.
3. Job Characteristics - role clarity, training and supports, and feeling empowered and valued.
4. Patient Safety - perceptions of safety culture, reporting, and learning from patient safety incidents.
5. Leadership - organizational vision in fostering a high-quality workplace, communication, and trust in senior leadership.
6. Immediate Supervisor - how effectively direct supervision support staff through feedback, recognition, and openness to suggestions.
7. Well-Being & Engagement – job fulfillment, psychological safety, health and stress Together, these dimensions provide a complete picture of our workplace culture and help guide improvements that strengthen both staff well-being and patient care.

Why is the GWS important?

Your feedback is essential in helping us understand what's working well and where improvements are needed. By listening to staff experiences, we can take meaningful action to strengthen our culture, improve engagement, and enhance patient care. The survey will guide decisions, programs, and improvements that support both our teams and the communities we serve.

Who oversees the GWS?

The GWS is jointly managed the Accreditation Readiness Team within the QIPS portfolio and teams from People Services, including Talent & Organizational Development (T&OD) and Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness (OHSW). This partnership ensures a balanced approach, focusing on both high-quality patient care and a positive, supportive workplace culture. Questions can be directed to accreditation@nshealth.ca

What were the results in the executive summary?

More than 8,100 employees completed the survey — a 24.5% response rate. The executive summary of results highlights both strengths and opportunities for improvement across Nova Scotia Health:

- The Work Team dimension scored highest (83.5%), showing strong collaboration and support among colleagues.
- The statement “Patients are treated with respect and dignity” received a 94% positive response, the highest across the entire survey.
- The Well-Being & Engagement dimension received the lowest score (62.7%), showing a need for greater focus on staff well-being and psychological safety.

Overall, the results show that teamwork and compassion are key strengths, while leadership, well-being, and engagement are priorities for continued improvement.

How will we use the results?

Survey results will be used to guide actions to strengthen our workplace culture and support staff across the organization. We’re currently reviewing the survey results carefully to understand what’s working well and where we can improve. Teams and leaders will be provided with resources, support, and tools to help use this feedback to identify priority areas for action. These efforts will draw on existing organizational supports, resources, and initiatives to guide meaningful improvements.

Do managers, leaders, or staff need to submit action plans to address the results?

No, action plans are not required. During our next onsite visit however, surveyors will ask leaders and staff about the GWS; however, Accreditation Canada does not require all teams to develop or submit a formal plan. We will be transparent about our results and the steps we are taking to address them, so everyone is informed and engaged in the process.

What is the difference between the GWS and other surveys like TEND and Pulse?

The GWS is part of the Accreditation Canada program and helps us meet national standards. The Pulse Survey was developed internally at Nova Scotia Health and is not part of the Accreditation process. It provided a snapshot of our workplace culture. The TEND Survey was created externally and adopted by Nova Scotia following the Mass Casualty recommendations. It is also separate from Accreditation Canada. In summary, the GWS, Pulse, and TEND surveys each measure different things for different purposes.

What’s next?

Full results of the survey will be shared with leaders in December 2025, followed by further updates and resources to address areas for improvement.