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## News Release

Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour

### **Full tuition costs to be covered for personal support workers and human services counsellors**

06 August 2021

FREDERICTON (GNB) – New Brunswickers who wish to become personal support workers (PSW) or human services counsellors (HSC) can now have their tuition costs paid in full.

The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour has changed the guidelines of two programs in order to get more personal caregivers working at adult residential facilities, special care homes and in the homes of those who need their services.

“We need to do everything we can to provide care for our most vulnerable residents,” said Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour Minister Trevor Holder. “By making these changes, we are confident more New Brunswickers will be encouraged to choose a career in these occupations, while also addressing one of the province’s most critical labour needs.”

Those interested should contact an employment counsellor at their nearest WorkingNB office and upon approval of an employment action plan, WorkingNB clients can now have the full costs of tuition covered. Previously, only 50 per cent, up to a maximum of \$4,000 was provided. The courses are offered at several private and community colleges in the province.

Funding for other eligible costs such as transportation, child care and living allowances may also be provided to WorkingNB clients who participate in this training.

“We are very pleased to see this major step. Anything that makes it easier for people to receive high-quality PSW training is a benefit to our residents and the entire sector,” said Jan Seely, president of the New Brunswick Special Care Home Association. “We have seen, during the pandemic, just how important it is for our staff to have high-quality and consistent training; PSWs have been the backbone of the senior care system at so many levels. So, this is a great step forward.”

“We continue to focus on resolving long-standing challenges in the human services sector such as recruitment and retention,” said Lise Hitchcock, president of the Association of Human Service Counsellors of New Brunswick. “This free training should help us with the recruitment of qualified employees and help us move toward our ultimate goal of making this profession a more attractive career choice.”

This change is expected to help fill about 350 seats available for training in the personal support workers sector and about 150 seats available in the human services counsellor sector. It is funded by the federal and provincial governments through the Canada-New Brunswick Labour Market Agreements.

“Personal Support Workers are key to a viable home care program in New Brunswick,” said Tina Learmonth, president of the New Brunswick Home Support Association. “The increased demand for homecare services and personalized care only makes sense, as hospitals continue to struggle with over capacity issues. It is really about the right care at the right time in the right place and this training opportunity will hopefully entice more people to look at working in the community as a career option.”

Employers who need to train PSWs or HSCs may also be eligible for financial support. Up to 100 per cent of training costs will be reimbursed where approved training is necessary to maintain employment. For more information, employers should contact a workforce consultant at their nearest WorkingNB office.

Personal support workers provide supervision and personal care to people with disabilities or chronic illnesses. Human services counsellors help children and families with developmental and functional issues, vocational training, rehabilitation and skills training, among other things.

Additional information about this opportunity is available online, or by contacting the nearest WorkingNB office.

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