

NEW BRUNSWICK ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS



REPORT:  
**Results from  
the Social Work  
Recruitment  
and Retention  
Strategy Member  
Survey**  
November 2022

NBASW  ATTSNB



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The New Brunswick Association of Social Workers** is leading the development of a strategy to recruit and retain more social workers in New Brunswick to ensure there are enough professional social workers to meet the growing needs of the public today and into the future.

The profession has been identified as the second highest in need of a recruitment and retention strategy in the province, with a pre-pandemic projection suggesting there could be a shortage of 272 workers by 2030. Due to increased demand for social work services since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's believed that, if major steps aren't taken, the actual shortage of social workers will be much greater than was originally projected.

As a social worker shortage is already being felt across the province, it's important to start work now to prevent a future crisis. Social workers do critical, essential work, with close to half of social workers surveyed working for the Department of Social Development, the majority of whom work in the area of child welfare. By working together now to start planning for the future, we can ensure our province's most vulnerable will not be at risk both now and for years to come.

To inform the strategy, the Association surveyed its members in spring 2022, asking more than 30 questions to find out what specific challenges they're facing in their daily jobs. Findings are intended to assist the Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy Steering Committee, comprised of stakeholders across departments and sectors,

in their development of a 5-year Action Plan to address recruitment and retention in New Brunswick (N.B.). It's important to the NBASW that the voices of frontline workers are heard and incorporated into the plan's development.

Overall, the survey found that change is needed. Respondents made it clear they're already feeling the effects of being short-staffed due to the job vacancies that exist. Social workers are feeling burnt out and expressed a need for support.

In terms of demographic information, the survey found that New Brunswick's social workers primarily identify as female, are relatively young, and for the most part, work full-time (many with additional overtime hours logged) in the public sector. The Department of Social Development was the main employer of survey respondents, followed by the Regional Health Authorities.

Overall, social workers reported taking great pride in their work and it's hoped that pride can be maintained going forward.

Stress and burnout, along with a high number of caseloads and compensation were identified as the top three reasons that may lead social workers to consider leaving their jobs and the profession. Higher percentages for each category were noted among those working in the Department of Social Development than the Regional Health Authorities, although it is clear that social workers around the province are struggling and are burning out, and that changes need to be made across organizations.

It was encouraging to hear that short-term retention projections suggest the majority of social workers are not currently considering leaving the profession or the province, nor their current position for another one within New Brunswick. But, over half of the respondents from all Chapters reported vacancies in their workplaces, with the vast majority of those reporting vacancies working for the Department of Social Development. Within that department, a high percentage of respondents from each Child Welfare program reported vacancies.

More than half of the respondents said they've changed jobs within the past five years. When asked what would have helped them stay in their jobs, the top three things cited were lower case numbers, better compensation, and a greater ability to focus on direct interventions with clients and less time spent on administrative duties.

Many social workers polled suggested their workplaces did not provide enough support to deal with vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and that they were nearing or already experiencing burnout. The places of employment in which respondents reported very frequently experiencing unmanageable levels of stress in the past year were within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Social Development.

To attract more people to the field of social work, respondents suggested providing paid social work field placement opportunities, educating the public on the profession, offering tuition rebates, and providing social work students with job offers during their field placements prior to graduation.

When asked their thoughts on the best ways to recruit social workers to N.B., the top three responses given were reducing administrative requirements, providing paid social work field placement opportunities, and offering employment incentives and bonuses.



To increase the number of social workers in the province, it is also recognized that further actions should be explored within the strategy, such as having provincial universities increase the number of seats in their Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) programs.

Retaining existing social workers is also a key component of the strategy, to which respondents identified the top three ways to retain social workers in N.B. as being lower case numbers, offering better compensation and benefits, and having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance.

The survey responses showed that there are distinct differences among demographics and how social workers felt about their jobs was largely dependent on where they worked. This suggests that individual strategies should be developed to reflect those distinctions. In addition, it's believed a specific strategy should be created to address recruitment and retention among those working in Child Welfare in the Department of Social Development, due to the difficult nature of the work and the specific challenges faced by Child Welfare social workers.



## Abstract

This report is based on a survey sent to all NBASW members. The survey was open from April 22 to May 16, 2022. The survey's confidence level is 95% with a margin of error of 3%. With a 37% response rate, NBASW members highlight the importance of developing a strategy that focuses both on recruiting and retaining New Brunswick social workers, across sectors, and identifying specific priorities to include in the Action Plan.

## Acknowledgements

This survey would not have been possible without the Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy Steering Committee members, who provided vital input in the development of the survey, and the Demand Sub-Committee, that proposed developing a member survey to ensure the input of NBASW members was included in the development of 5-year Action Plan for the *Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy*.

This survey also would not have been possible without the participation of NBASW members! We wish to sincerely thank all members for their time in responding to the survey. As the social workers we hope to retain in the province, your input is vital for developing the strategy. Thank you for your ongoing devotion to the profession of social work!

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## 1.0 Survey Overview

### 1.1 Introduction

The NBASW regulates the profession of social work in New Brunswick and has the dual mandate of protecting the public and promoting excellence in social work practice. The NBASW presently has nearly 2,200 members province-wide.

Based on provincial labour projections, social work has been identified as the second-highest profession in need of a recruitment and retention strategy. Based on the pre-pandemic demand for social work services, it was projected that by 2030 there will be a shortage of 272 social workers in the province. With population needs rising since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased demand for social work services across sectors, and it is likely that the future gap for social workers will be even more significant than forecasted in this projection. If nothing is done, the Workforce Planning Data shows **there won't be enough social workers to fill social work positions and meet people's needs** in the coming years. Some would suggest we are already seeing this, recognizing the current social work vacancies in the province.

The NBASW is currently leading the development of a *Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy* which brings together individuals from the various government departments, health authorities, schools of social work, colleges, unions, and more, to develop a 5-year strategy to ensure there are enough social workers in the province to meet the needs of citizens, both now and for years to come.

### 1.2 Purpose

To develop an effective strategy for recruiting and retaining social workers in and to New Brunswick, the NBASW surveyed its members to identify the main issues they feel are affecting social workers and the most effective strategies to increase the number of social workers in the province. This survey was proposed and developed by the Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy Demand Sub-Committee with the input of the Steering Committee members.

While the survey data could be used to help understand a variety of important factors, such as the social work landscape in New Brunswick and short-term labour projections, the main objectives of the survey were to:

1. identify recruitment strategies to include in the Action Plan; and
2. identify retention strategies to include in the Action Plan.

By identifying challenges currently experienced by New Brunswick social workers, specific recommendations for major social work employers can be drawn, and the actions NBASW members consider priorities, in terms of both recruitment and retention, can be incorporated into the Action Plan.

### 1.3 Method

The NBASW sent the survey to all 2,178 NBASW members to ensure the voice of members are incorporated into the work of the Steering Committee to develop the Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy. The survey was open from April 22 to May 16, 2022. An initial email to members about the survey was sent on April 22, with reminders sent on May 2 and May 10, 2022.

The survey was available in both French and English and could be completed in the respondent's language of choice. The survey received a total of 804 responses (a 37% response rate). For a population size of 2,178 and a sample size of 804, there is a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 3%. This indicates that the survey is statistically significant and overall generalizable to the membership.

The survey had a 96% completion rate, took an average of 10 minutes to complete, and included a total of 37 questions. Question 36 was an optional open-ended question for members to add additional thoughts for consideration if they wished to, and question 37 was optional for respondents to provide their name and email address for a chance to get their 2022-2023 membership dues reimbursed. Results from these questions (36 and 37) are omitted from the analysis of the results.

The question types were as follows:

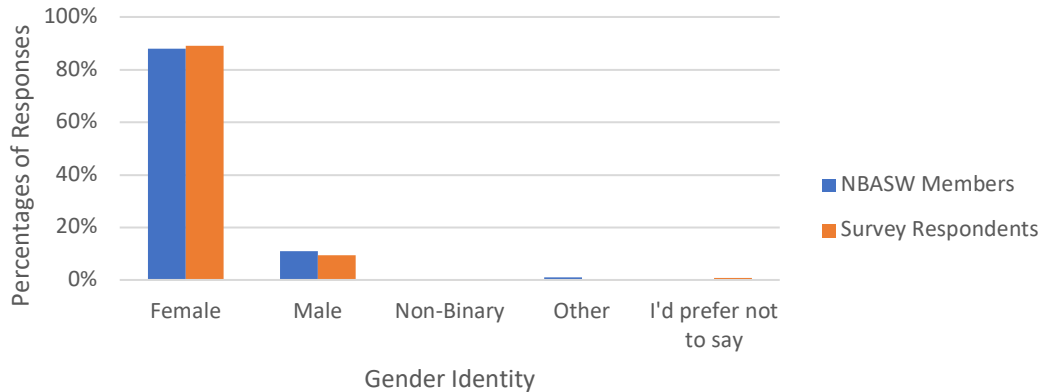
- Questions 6 and 13 used *select all that apply up to a maximum of five*.
- Question 21 used *select all that apply*.
- Questions 1-5, 7-12, and 14-35 used *multiple choice*.
- Questions 36 and 37 were open-ended and are not included in this report.

## 2.0 Survey Results

### 2.1 Question 1 (Gender Identity)

What is your gender identity?

#### 2.1.1 Results



Gender Identity	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Female	89.18%	717
Male	9.58%	77
I'd prefer not to say	0.75%	6
Non-Binary	0.37%	3
Other	0.06%	1
<b>Answered</b>		<b>804</b>

#### 2.1.2 Analysis

A significant majority of survey respondents (89%) identify as female. This is consistent with NBASW member registration data (2022), which shows that 88% of NBASW members identify as female, 11% as male, and 1% as other, as represented in the graph above.

When looking at the two major social work employers, it is found that 90% of respondents from the Department of Social Development and 90% of respondents from the Regional Health Authorities identify as female.

Women typically take on roles as primary caregivers in families, even when participating in the workforce full-time, and are more likely to take a significant amount of time off from work or leave the workforce for family reasons than men. Recognizing the gender variations that exist, female-identifying respondents were significantly more likely than male-identifying respondents to say that stress and/or burnout and difficulty in balancing work and life were some of the main issues that may lead to exiting the profession (question 15), as well as being more likely to view having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance as a priority to retain social workers (question 35).

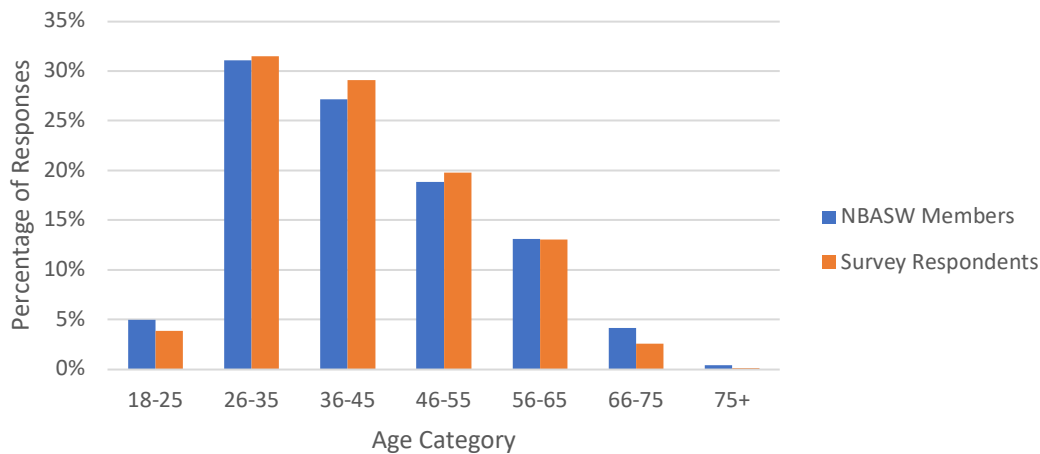


Female-identifying respondents were significantly less likely than male-identifying respondents to report having access to scheduled clinical supervision (question 27) and to report having achieved what they wanted to as a social worker (question 11). The fact that the profession of social work is predominantly female should be taken into consideration while interpreting data and drawing recommendations, as well as during the development of the Action Plan.

## 2.2 Question 2 (Age)

In which age category do you fall?

### 2.2.1 Results



Age Category	Percentage	Sum of Responses
18-25	3.86%	31
26-35	31.47%	253
36-45	29.10%	234
46-55	19.78%	159
56-65	13.06%	105
66-75	2.61%	21
75+	0.12%	1
<b>Answered</b>		<b>804</b>

### 2.2.2 Analysis

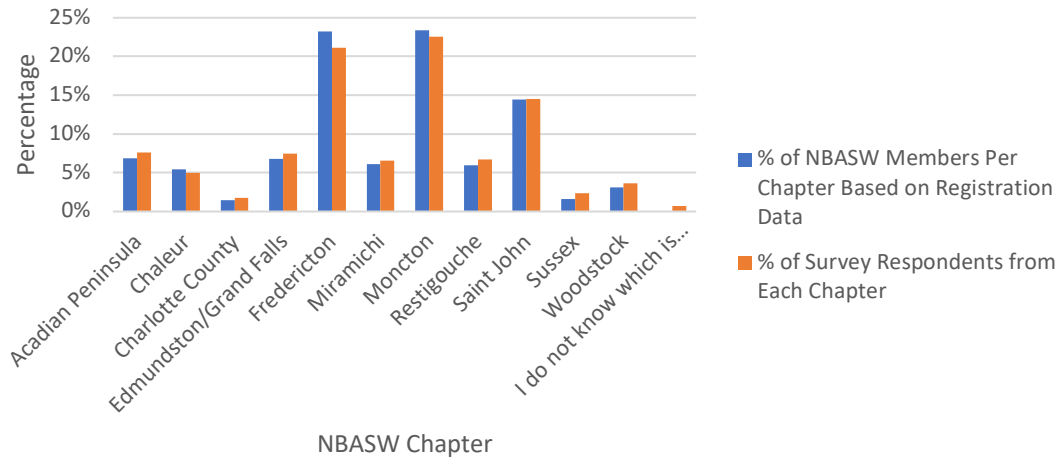
Most survey respondents were between the ages of 26-35 (31%), with 36-45 being the second highest age bracket (29%), and the number of respondents decreased with each age bracket until the 66-75 age bracket (3%), with the exception of respondents ages 18-25 (4%). This is also consistent with NBASW registration data (2022), as demonstrated in the chart above.

When looking at the two major social work employers, it is found that most survey respondents fall in the 26-35 age bracket. For respondents employed by the Department of Social Development, 36% are between 18 and 35 years of age. For those employed by the Regional Health Authorities, 41% are between 18 and 35.

## 2.3 Question 3 (Chapter)

Which of the following is your local chapter?

### 2.3.1 Results



NBASW Chapter	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Moncton	22.51%	181
Fredericton	21.14%	170
Saint John	14.55%	117
Acadian Peninsula	7.59%	61
Edmundston/Grand Falls	7.46%	60
Restigouche	6.72%	54
Miramichi	6.59%	53
Chaleur	4.98%	40
Woodstock	3.61%	29
Sussex	2.36%	19
Charlotte County	1.74%	14
I do not know which is my local chapter	0.75%	6
<b>Percentage</b>		<b>804</b>

### 2.3.2 Analysis

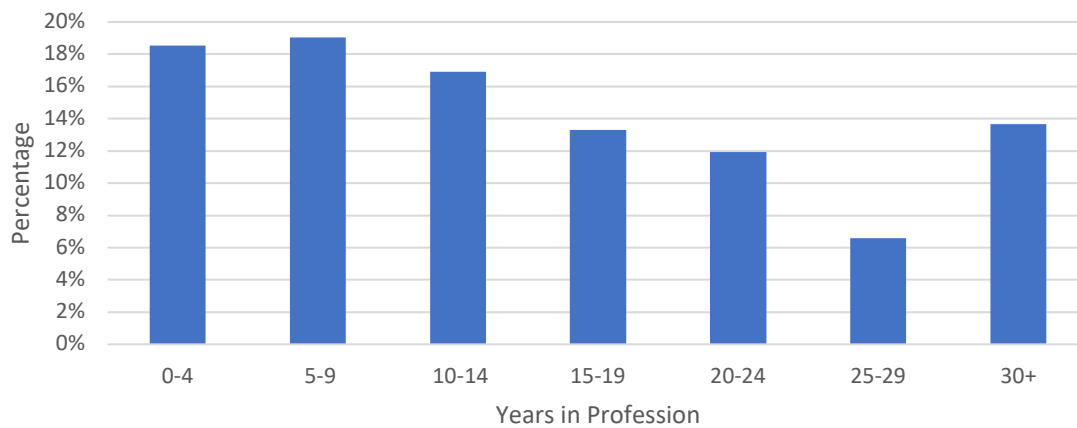
The survey received the most responses from members of the Moncton Chapter (23%), Fredericton Chapter (21%), and Saint John Chapter (15%). The number of respondents from each Chapter is consistent with the total number of Chapter members. The percentage of survey respondents is represented in orange in the graph above, while the blue bar represents the percentage of the overall NBASW membership that is from each Chapter, as based on the NBASW's 2022-2023 registration data. By breaking down both the registration data and the survey respondent data by Chapter and comparing the percentage of each side by side, a similar trend can be found, demonstrating consistency and representation from social workers in each Chapter of the province.

When looking at the two major employers, it is found that for the Department of Social Development most respondents were from the Moncton Chapter (20%), with the Saint John Chapter being a close second (19%). For the Regional Health Authorities, most respondents were from the Moncton Chapter (26%), followed by Fredericton Chapter (20%).

## 2.4 Question 4 (Years in Profession)

How many years have you worked in the social work profession?

### 2.4.1 Results



Number of Years Working in Profession	Percentage	Sum of Responses
0-4	18.53%	149
5-9	19.03%	153
10-14	16.92%	136
15-19	13.31%	107
20-24	11.94%	96
25-29	6.59%	53
30+	13.68%	110
<b>Answered</b>		<b>804</b>

### 2.4.2 Analysis

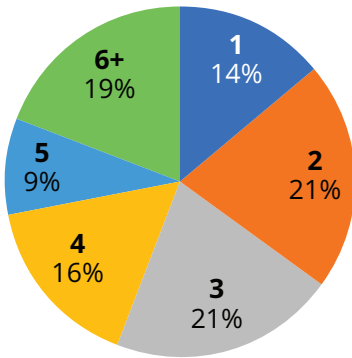
The greatest number of respondents have been working in the social work profession for 5-9 years (19%), the second greatest number 0-4 years (19%), the third greatest number 10-14 years (17%). The lowest number of respondents have been working in the profession for 25-29 years (7%) with a greater number working in the profession for over 30 years (14%). The age of respondents largely corresponds with the number of years they've worked in the profession.

For both major employers, the Department of Social Development (SD) and the Regional Health Authorities (RHA's), over half of the respondents have worked in the profession for less than 15 years, with the RHA's having a slightly higher percentage (SD: 0-4 (20%), 5-9 (18%), 10-14 (16%); RHA's: 0-4 (23%), 5-9 (19%), 10-14 (16%)).

## 2.5 Question 5 (Number of Roles)

During this time, how many different social work positions have you had, either with the same or different employers?

### 2.5.1 Results .....



Number of Different SW Positions	Percentage	Sum of Responses
1	13.93%	112
2	21.14%	170
3	21.27%	171
4	16.17%	130
5	8.96%	72
6+	18.53%	149
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>804</b>

### 2.5.2 Analysis

The survey found that, over the course of their social work careers, most respondents (86%) have had more than one social work position, either with the same or a different employer. Most respondents have had either two (21%) or three (21%) social work positions, with over 18% of respondents having had six or more positions over the course of their careers.

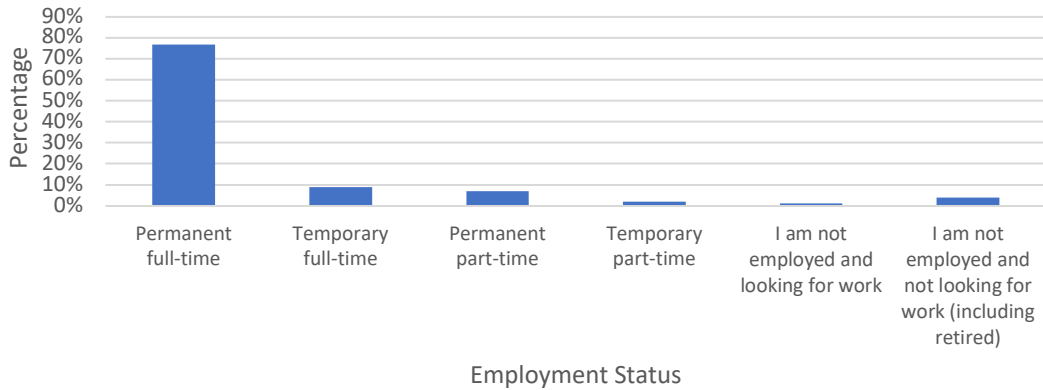
Naturally, the more years someone is working in the profession, the more chances they've had multiple social work positions, which is represented in the data. When we compare the age of social workers with the number of social work positions they've held, we find that 44% of respondents who've worked in the profession for 0-4 years report having had one social work position, while 32% have had two, 15% have had three, and 9% have had four or more positions during this time.

It is common to hear that the Department of Social Development employs many new social workers and that it is common for social workers to begin their social work career with the Department. This is supported by the data when looking at the two major employers, as a higher percentage of respondents with the Department of Social Development have had one social work position when compared to the Regional Health Authorities (SD: 1 (17%), 2 (22%), 3 (22%), 4 (15%); RHA's: 1 (9%), 2 (23%), 3 (21%), 4 (21%)).

## 2.6 Question 6 (Employment Status)

What employment status best applies to your current situation?

### 2.6.1 Results



Employment Status	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Permanent full-time	76.87%	618
Temporary full-time	8.96%	72
Permanent part-time	6.97%	56
Temporary part-time	1.99%	16
I am not employed and not looking for work (including retired)	3.98%	32
I am not employed and looking for work	1.24%	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>804</b>

### 2.6.2 Analysis

The majority of survey respondents (77%) reported having permanent full-time positions. 9% of respondents have temporary full-time positions, 7% have permanent part-time positions, 2% are temporary part-time, 4% are not currently employed and are not looking for work, and 1% are not employed and are looking for work. When comparing respondents' primary employers with their employment status, the Department of Social Development employs social workers on a permanent full-time basis most often (89%), which is further discussed in question 7.

The Fredericton Chapter had the smallest number of respondents employed in permanent full-time positions (69%) of any area of the province, having significantly fewer respondents employed in permanent full-time positions than Chaleur (85%), Moncton (79%), and Restigouche (85%).

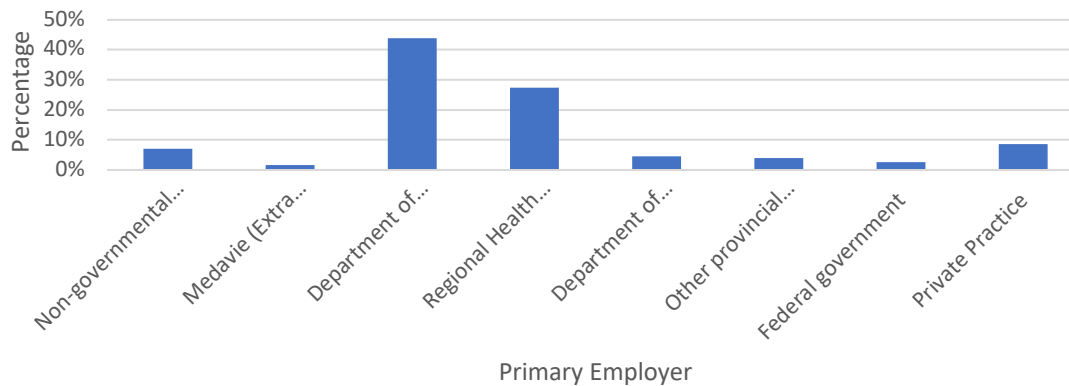
While the Sussex Chapter had the greatest number of respondents employed in temporary full-time positions (16%), the Acadian Peninsula (13%), Fredericton (11%), and Saint John (12%) Chapters had significantly more when compared to the Miramichi (2%) and Restigouche (2%) Chapters.

## 2.7 Question 7 (Primary Employer)

If you are currently working, where are you employed?

If you currently have more than one job as a social worker, please select what you consider to be your primary place of employment.

### 2.7.1 Results .....



Row Labels	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Department of Social Development	43.88%	330
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	27.39%	206
Private Practice	8.64%	65
Non-governmental organization	7.18%	54
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	4.65%	35
Other provincial government department	3.99%	30
Federal government	2.66%	20
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	1.60%	12
<b>Answered</b>		<b>752</b>

## 2.7.2 Analysis

The Department of Social Development was the main employer of survey respondents, with 330 (44%) working for the Department. The second main employer of survey respondents were the Regional Health Authorities, composed of the Horizon and Vitalité health networks, with 206 (27%) of respondents working for the RHA's. This corresponds with the most recent NBASW registration data, which broke down the primary employers of social workers based on data of 2,178 members between the dates of April 1, 2021, to February 8, 2022, and found that 686 members (31%) were employed by the Department of Social Development while 500 members (23%) were employed by the Regional Health Authorities.

The slight overrepresentation of respondents from the two major employers, particularly Social Development, ensures that their perspectives and needs are represented in the data findings and subsequent Action Plan items, as having the major social work employers take the appropriate steps has the greatest impact potential for the recruitment and retention of social workers in New Brunswick.

For the Department of Social Development, using a population size of 686 and a sample size of 330, there is a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 4%. For the Regional Health Authorities, using a population size of 500 and a sample size of 206, there is a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. Using registration data informed by the population size, it is found that recommendations specific to the Department of Social Development and Regional Health Authorities can be generalized to the subset of the overall member (New Brunswick social worker) population.

The Chapters with the greatest number of respondents working for the Department of Social Development correspond with the bigger cities in New Brunswick, with 20% of respondents being from Moncton, 19% from Saint John, and 15% from Fredericton. The same is true for the Regional Health Authorities, with 26% of respondents being from Moncton, 20% from Fredericton, and 13% from Saint John.

When comparing respondents' primary employers with their employment status, the Department of Social Development employs social workers on a permanent full-time basis most often, with 89% of respondents indicating this employment status. Social Development employs 9% of respondents on a temporary full-time basis. The other employers that employ the most respondents permanent full-time include the Federal government (85%), the Regional Health Authorities (Horizon and Vitalité; 83%), and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (80%). The majority of respondents who are employed on a temporary full-time basis work for other provincial government departments than those listed as employer options in the survey (33%), as represented in Table A below.

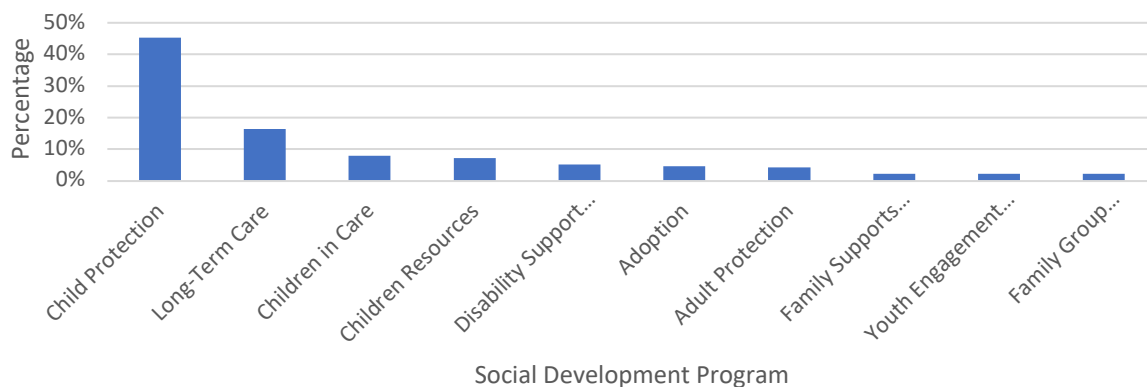
Table A

Full-Time Employment Status vs. Primary Employer	Permanent Full-Time	Temporary Full-Time
Non-governmental organization	70.37% 38	11.11% 6
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	50.00% 6	8.33% 1
Department of Social Development	88.79% 293	9.39% 31
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	82.52% 170	6.80% 14
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	80.00% 28	17.14% 6
Other provincial government department	63.3% 19	33.33% 10
Federal government	85.00% 17	10.00% 2
Private Practice	60.00% 39	1.54% 1
<b>Answered</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>71</b>

## 2.8 Question 8 (Social Development Employment Breakdown)

If you are employed by the Department of Social Development, which program do you currently work in most often? If you are not employed by the Department of Social Development, please select “not applicable” below.

### 2.8.1 Results





Social Development Program	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Child Protection	45.25%	138
Long-Term Care	16.39%	50
Children in Care	7.87%	24
Children Resources	7.21%	22
Disability Support Services	5.25%	16
Adoption	4.59%	14
Adult Protection	4.26%	14
Family Supports for Children with Disabilities	2.30%	13
Youth Engagement Services	2.30%	7
Family Group Conference	2.30%	7
<b>Answered</b>		<b>305</b>

### 2.8.2 Analysis

The majority of respondents from the Department of Social Development work in Child Protection, with 45% of respondents working for the program. The second highest result was Long-Term Care at 17%, and the third highest was Children in Care at 8%. Please note that this analysis, and subsequent analyses related to Social Development programs, are based on the responses from the listed programs and omit the results from “not applicable.”

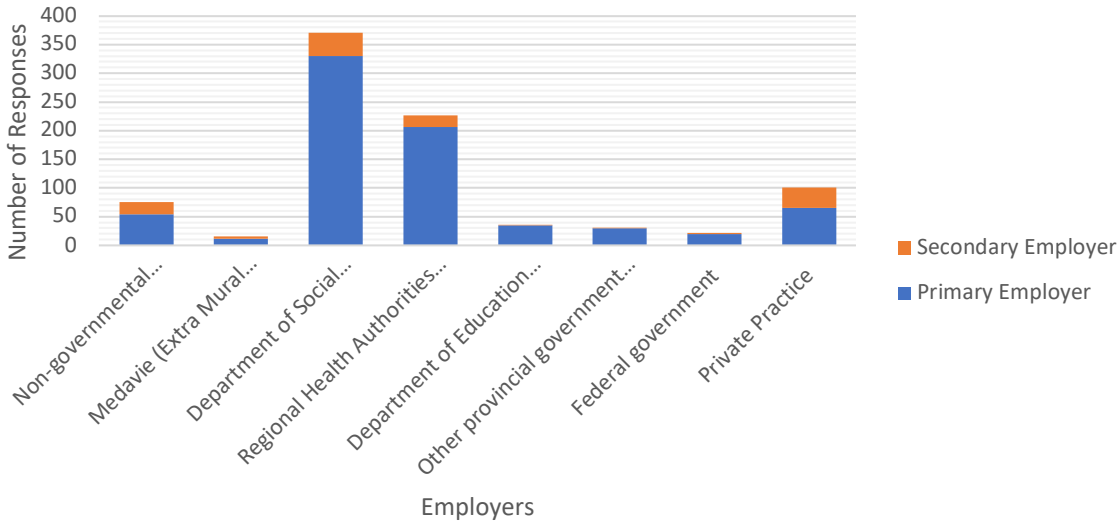
When comparing the various programs with the number of years respondents have been working in the profession, it is found that the highest percentage of new social workers work in the area of Child Protection, with 34% of respondents working in Child Protection having worked in the profession 0-4 years. This is significantly higher than the results for those working in Long-Term Care, which includes 12% of respondents who’ve been in the profession for 0-4 years.

The finding that new social workers often work in Child Protection is further supported by the comparison with the number of different social work positions respondents have had. The results for this question found that Child Protection had the highest percentage of respondents who’ve had one social work position, at 29%.

## 2.9 Question 9 (Secondary Employer)

If you have more than one job as a social worker, please select what you consider to be your secondary place of employment. If you do not have more than one job as a social worker, please select “not applicable” below.

### 2.9.1 Results



Secondary Employer	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Not applicable	82.59%	607
Department of Social Development	5.58%	41
Private Practice	4.90%	36
Non-governmental organization	2.99%	22
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	2.86%	21
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	0.54%	4
Federal government	0.27%	2
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	0.14%	1
Other provincial government department	0.14%	1
<b>Answered</b>		<b>735</b>

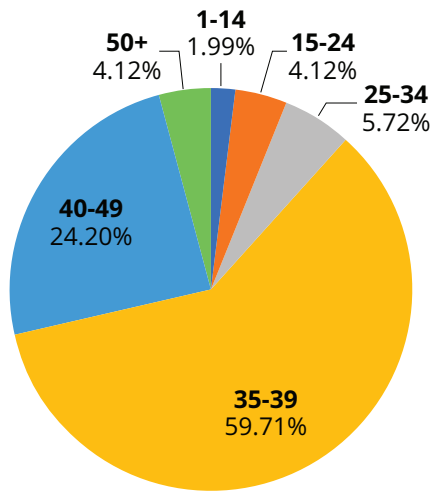
### 2.9.2 Analysis

Of all 804 survey respondents, 128 (16%) reported having a secondary employer. It was found that the Department of Social Development was the secondary employer for the highest number of respondents, at 6%. An additional 5% of respondents worked in a Private Practice setting as their secondary place of employment, and 3% worked for non-governmental organizations. The total number of respondents who work for each place of employment, both as their primary and secondary employment positions, can be seen in the graph above. Throughout the rest of the analysis, employer-based comparisons and data will be based solely on respondents' primary place of employment.

## 2.10 Question 10 (Hours Worked)

On average, how many hours a week do you work?

### 2.10.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
1-14	1.99%	15
15-24	4.12%	31
25-34	5.72%	43
35-39	59.71%	449
40-49	24.20%	182
50+	4.12%	31
I am retired or not employed	0.13%	1
<b>Answered</b>		<b>752</b>

### 2.10.2 Analysis

The majority of respondents (60%) reported working between 35-39 hours a week, with 40-49 hours a week being the second most common average for respondents (24%).

35 hours a week is considered a full-time work week, and many workplaces, including the provincial government, employ full-time workers at 37.25 hours a week. Recognizing this, respondents from other provincial government departments were most likely to work overtime, with 40% of respondents working 40+ hours a week. Respondents with the Department of Social Development the second most likely to work overtime, with 32% of respondents working 40+ hours a week.

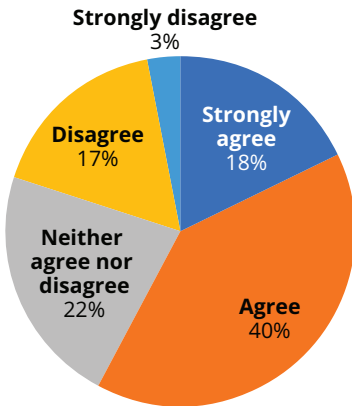
When breaking down programs within Social Development, it was found that respondents with Adult Protection (43%), Child Protection (42%), and Children in Care (42%) worked overtime (more than 40 hours a week) on average most often.

For respondents with the Regional Health Authorities, 21% work 40+ hours a week, on average.

## 2.11 Question 11 (Accomplishment)

Do you agree that you have accomplished what you had originally hoped to as a social worker?

### 2.11.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Strongly agree	18.01%	141
Agree	40.10%	314
Neither agree nor disagree	21.84%	171
Disagree	16.60%	130
Strongly disagree	3.45%	27
<b>Answered</b>		<b>783</b>

### 2.11.2 Analysis

The results of this question have found that most respondents have accomplished what they originally hoped to as a social worker. 18% of respondents “strongly agree,” 40% “agree,” 22% “neither agree nor disagree,” 17% “disagree,” and 3% “strongly disagree.”

Male-identifying respondents were significantly more likely to strongly agree that they’ve accomplished what they had hoped to as social workers compared to female-identifying respondents (32% of male respondents vs. 17% of female respondents).

When breaking down the level of accomplishment based on their primary employer, it is found that respondents in Private Practice are most likely to agree with the statement (38% “strongly agree” and 35% “agree”), while those with the Federal government are most likely to disagree (30% “disagree” and 5% “strongly disagree”).

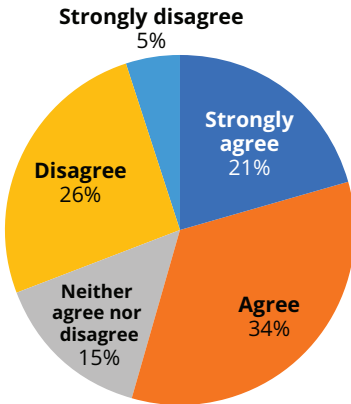
For the Department of Social Development, 11% “strongly agree” and 38% “agree.” For the Regional Health Authorities, 19% “strongly agree” and 49% “agree.”

When combining the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” results among the various Social Development programs, respondents with Disability Support Services (44%), Children in Care (46%), and Adult Protection (29%) were the most likely to disagree that they’ve accomplished what they originally hoped to as social workers, while respondents with Family Group Conferencing were most likely to agree, with “strongly agree” and “agree” combined (46%). Respondents with Long-Term Care were significantly more likely to select “agree” than those with Child Protection (53% in Long-Term Care vs. 34% in Child Protection).

## 2.12 Question 12 (Drive & Passion)

Do you agree that you still have the same drive and passion for social work as you did upon entering the profession?

2.12.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Strongly agree	21.20%	166
Agree	33.72%	264
Neither agree nor disagree	14.56%	114
Disagree	25.67%	201
Strongly disagree	4.85%	38
<b>Total</b>		<b>783</b>

### 2.12.2 Analysis

The highest number of respondents agreed that they have the same drive and passion for social work as they did upon entering the profession (34%), with the second highest number of respondents selecting that they disagreed with the statement (26%). When combining responses, it is found that 55% of respondents either “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement, while 31% either “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”

The level of agreement with the statement also corresponded with the age of respondents, as the percentage of respondents who strongly agreed that they have the same drive and passion as when they entered the profession increased steadily with age. Respondents ages 56-65 are significantly more likely to “strongly agree” with the statement when compared to those 18-45 (31% ages 56-65 vs. 10% ages 18-25, 17% ages 26-35 and 21% ages 36-45). In terms of disagreement, while the 18-25 age group had the highest number of respondents who disagreed with the statement (33%), respondents ages 26-35 were significantly more likely to “disagree” with the statement (32%) when compared to those ages 36-45 (22%) and 56-65 (19%).

When combining the results for “strongly agree” and “agree”, it is found that respondents from the Department of Social Development agreed with the statement least often (45%), while respondents working for Medavie agreed most often (83%), as represented in Table B below.

Table B

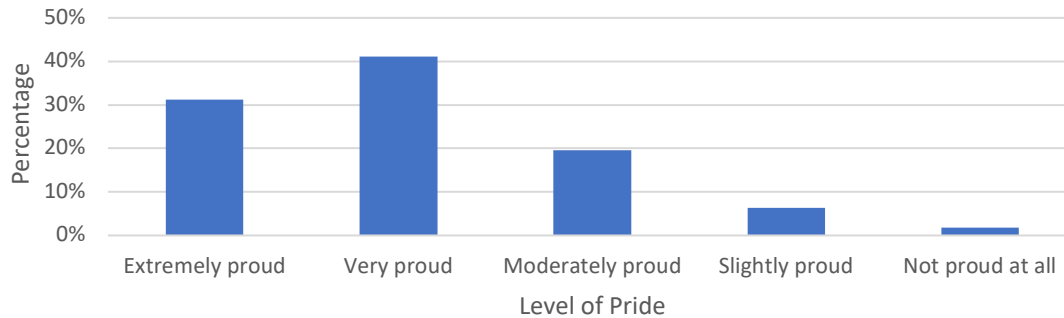
Primary Employer vs. Drive & Passion	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Non-governmental organization	66.04% 35	13.21% 7	20.76% 11
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	83.33% 10	0.00% 0	16.67% 2
Department of Social Development	45.37% 147	15.43% 50	39.20% 127
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	63.06% 128	15.27% 31	21.67% 44
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	52.94% 18	17.65% 6	29.41% 10
Other provincial government department	53.33% 16	20.00% 6	26.66% 8
Federal government	50.00% 10	20.00% 4	30% 6
Private Practice	63.49% 40	11.11% 17	25.39% 16

When comparing this question with the specific Social Development programs and asking respondents whether they agree that they still have the same drive and passion for the profession as when entering the profession, respondents with Children in Care disagreed most often, with 58% saying “disagree” and 4% saying “strongly disagree.” Respondents in Long-Term Care were also significantly more likely than those in Child Protection to “disagree” with the statement (26% in Child Protection and 41% in Long-Term Care).

## 2.13 Question 13 (Pride)

Are you proud that you are a social worker?

### 2.13.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Extremely proud	31.16%	244
Very proud	41.12%	322
Moderately proud	19.54%	153
Slightly proud	6.39%	50
Not proud at all	1.79%	14
<b>Answered</b>		<b>783</b>

### 2.13.2 Analysis

When respondents were asked if they are proud to be a social worker, the highest number of respondents stated that they were “very proud,” at 41%. 31% stated they were “extremely proud,” 20% said they were “moderately proud,” 6% said they were “slightly proud,” and 2% said they were “not proud at all.”

Comparing the level of pride with the primary place of employment, it was found that 41% of those in Private Practice reported being extremely proud, as did 40% of those employed in non-governmental organizations and 33% of those employed with Medavie. Respondents who reported being extremely proud least often worked in other provincial departments (23%), the Department of Social Development (27%) and the Federal government (30%). There were significantly fewer respondents with Social Development who reported being extremely proud compared to respondents in Private Practice (27% SD vs. 41% Private Practice). There were significantly more respondents employed by Regional Health Authorities who reported being very proud compared to those in Private Practice (46% RHA's vs. 32% Private Practice).

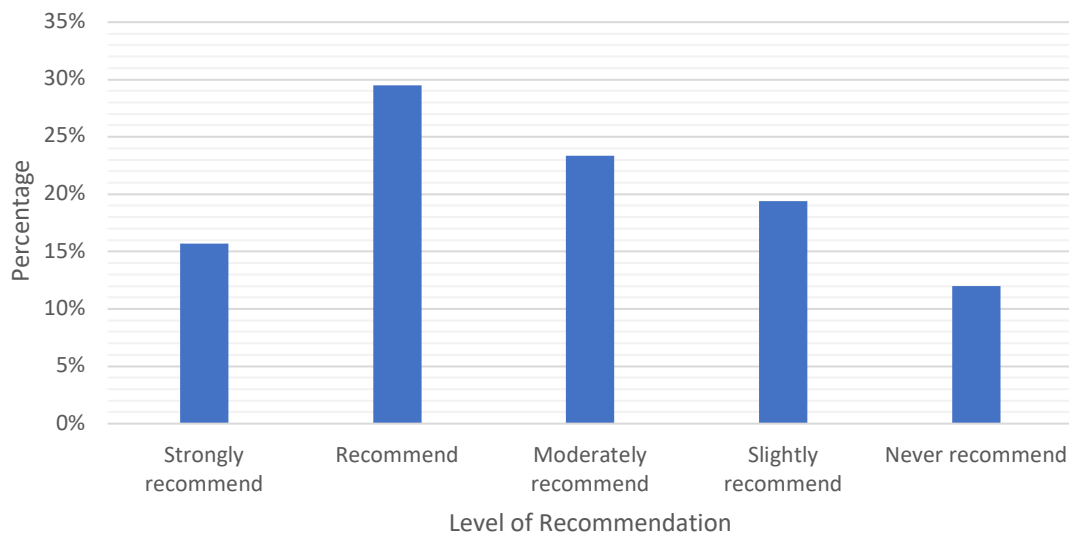
Children in Care, Youth Engagement Services, and Adult Protection social workers also report the least pride in being a social worker. When asked if they're proud to be a social worker, for Children in Care respondents, 17% said they're “slightly proud,” and 13% said they're “not proud at all.” For Youth Engagement Services, 29% of respondents said they're “slightly proud,” as did 21% of Adult Protection respondents. Respondents with Adult Protection were also the least likely to recommend others pursue a career in social work.

When applying an age analysis to the data, it was found that respondents who reported being “extremely proud” increased with age. Respondents ages 26-35 were significantly less likely than those ages 36-65 to report being “extremely proud” that they are a social worker (25% of respondents ages 26-25 vs. 33% ages 36-45, 36% ages 46-55, and 37% ages 56-65) and significantly more likely to report being “moderately proud” when compared to the 56-65 age group (26% ages 26-35 vs. 13% ages 56-65) and “slightly proud” when compared to the 46-55 age group (9% ages 26-35 vs. 4% ages 46-55). Respondents ages 18-25 (7%) were significantly more likely than those ages 36-45 (1%) to report being “not proud at all” to be a social worker.

## 2.14 Question 14 (Recommendation of Profession)

Do you recommend that others (such as your friends and loved ones) pursue a career in social work?

### 2.14.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Strongly recommend	15.71%	123
Recommend	29.50%	231
Moderately recommend	23.37%	183
Slightly recommend	19.41%	152
Never recommend	12.01%	94
<b>Answered</b>		<b>783</b>



### 2.14.2 Analysis

The highest number of respondents (30%) said that they would “recommend” that others pursue a career in social work, while 23% said they would “moderately recommend,” 19% said they would “slightly recommend,” 16% said they would “strongly recommend,” and 12% said they would “never recommend” pursuit of a career in the profession.

Respondents aged 18-25 reported being significantly less likely to “recommend” that others pursue a career in social work (10% ages 18-25) when compared to respondents ages 26-65 (29% ages 26-35, 31% ages 36-45, 30% ages 46-55, and 33% ages 56-65) and were significantly more likely to “moderately recommend” pursuit of the profession (40% ages 18-25 vs. 22% ages 46-55 and 17% ages 56-65). Respondents ages 56-65 were significantly more likely to “strongly recommend” the pursuit of the profession (25% ages 56-65) compared to those ages 26-35 (11%) and 36-45 (14%).

When comparing the survey data between primary place of employment and recommendation of the profession, it was found that respondents who work for the Department of Social Development are significantly less likely to both “strongly recommend” and “recommend” the profession to others when compared to other social work employers, as found in Table C.

Table C

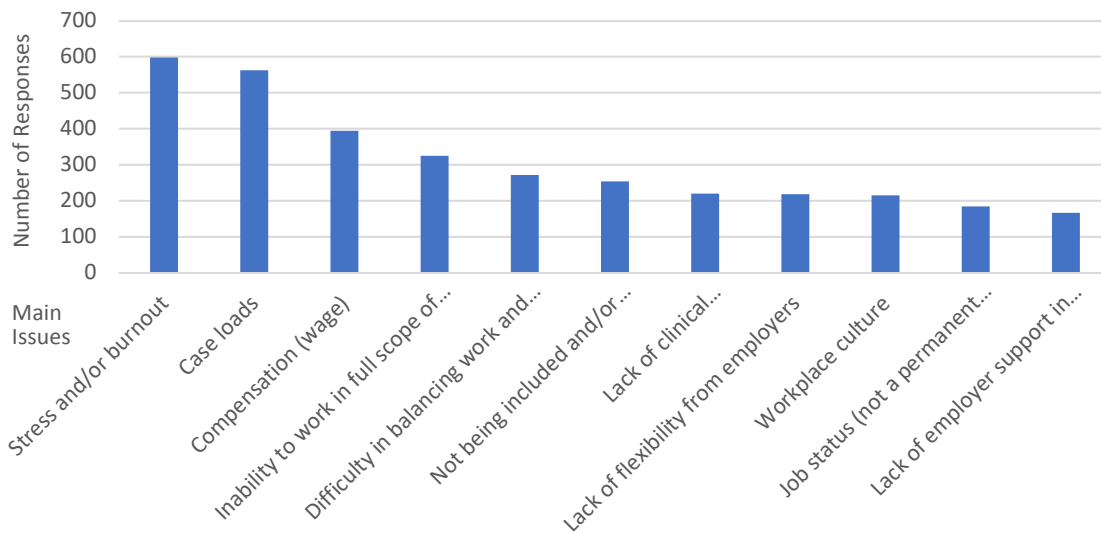
Primary Employer vs. Recommendation of Profession	Strongly Recommend	Recommend	Moderately Recommend	Slightly Recommend	Never Recommend	Total
Non-governmental organization	20.75% 11	43.40% 23	9.43% 5	22.64% 12	3.77% 2	7.17% 53
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	25.00% 2	41.67% 5	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	25.00% 3	1.62% 12
Department of Social Development	8.95% 29	24.69% 80	27.78% 90	22.22% 72	16.36% 53	43.84% 324
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	18.23% 37	35.47% 72	22.66% 46	15.76% 32	7.88% 16	27.47% 203
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	23.53% 8	41.18% 14	8.82% 3	17.65% 6	8.82% 3	4.60% 34
Other provincial government department	10.00% 3	23.33% 7	30.00% 9	26.67% 8	10.00% 3	4.06% 30
Federal government	10.00% 2	25.00% 5	35.00% 7	15.00% 3	15.00% 3	2.71% 20
Private Practice	28.57% 18	26.98% 17	22.22% 14	14.29% 9	7.94% 5	8.53% 63
<b>Answered</b>	<b>15.02%</b> <b>111</b>	<b>30.18%</b> <b>223</b>	<b>23.55%</b> <b>174</b>	<b>19.35%</b> <b>143</b>	<b>11.91%</b> <b>88</b>	<b>100.00%</b> <b>739</b>

When comparing recommendation of the profession with current employment status, it was found that respondents employed in a permanent full-time position were the least likely to “strongly recommend” that others pursue a career in the profession (15% permanent full-time) with a significant difference compared to respondents who are not employed and not looking for work (29% not employed & not looking for work).

## 2.15 Question 15 (Main Issues)

What are the main issues you see that may lead you or others to consider leaving their jobs and/or the profession? While we recognize that all of these may be potential issues, please select all that apply up to a maximum of five.

### 2.15.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Stress and/or burnout	76.50%	599
Caseloads	71.90%	563
Compensation (wage)	50.45%	395
Inability to work in full scope of practice due to administrative duties	41.51%	325
Difficulty in balancing work and life	34.74%	272
Not being included and/or meaningfully consulted on changes within the workplace (such as policy changes)	32.44%	254
Lack of clinical support/supervision	28.22%	221
Lack of flexibility from employers	27.97%	219
Workplace culture	27.59%	216
Job status (not a permanent employee)	23.63%	185
Lack of employer support in accessing professional development opportunities	21.46%	168
<b>Answered</b>		<b>783</b>

### 2.15.2 Analysis

The five main issues related to retention that respondents highlighted included stress and/or burnout (77%), caseloads (72%), compensation (50%), inability to work in the full scope of practice due to administrative duties (42%), and difficulty balancing work and life (35%).

Female-identifying respondents were significantly more likely than male respondents to say that stress and/or burnout (78% of women vs. 57% of men) and difficulty in balancing work and life (37% of women and 11% of men) were some of the main issues that may lead themselves or others to leave the profession.

When it comes to factors that may result in social workers leaving their jobs and/or the profession, respondents ages 18-25 were significantly more likely than those ages 26-65 to report not being a permanent employee (50% ages 18-25 vs. 25% ages 26-35, 25% ages 36-45, 18% ages 46-55, and 19% ages 56-65) and lack of health and dental benefits as reasons (20% ages 18-25 vs. 6% ages 26-35, 5% ages 36-45, 3% ages 46-55, and 7% ages 56-65). Respondents ages 18-25 (50%) were also more likely than those ages 26-55 to report lack of access to clinical supervision as a reason (32% ages 26-35, 26% ages 36-45, 22% ages 46-55).

Those ages 36-75 were more likely than those 18-35 to report not being included and/or consulted on changes within the workplace as a reason. Respondents ages 56-75 were more likely than those ages 18-35 to report workplace culture as a reason.

Respondents ages 56-65 were significantly less likely than those ages 36-45 to state difficulty balancing work and life as a reason (24% ages 56-65 vs. 38% ages 36-45) and were significantly more likely than those both 18-25 and 36-45 to state lack of flexibility from employers (38% ages 56-65 vs. 10% ages 18-25 and 25% ages 36-45) and lack of employer support in accessing professional development opportunities (30% ages 56-65 vs. 10% ages 18-25 and 19% ages 36-45) were reasons.

Respondents ages 56-65 were less likely to report caseloads (51% ages 56-65 vs. 79% ages 26-35, 74% ages 36-45 and 74% ages 46-55) and burnout (58% ages 56-65 vs. 85% ages 26-35) as being reasons social workers may leave their jobs when compared to other age groups.

Respondents who were employed on a temporary full-time basis were significantly more likely than those employed on a permanent full-time basis to view job status (66% temporary full-time vs. 18% permanent full-time) and a lack of benefits (14% temporary full-time vs. 5% permanent full-time) as main issues that lead to social workers leaving their jobs. All full-time respondents identified stress and/or burnout (80% permanent full-time; 72% temporary full-time) and caseloads (76% permanent full-time; 63% temporary full-time) as key barriers to retaining social workers.

In recognizing that the job requirements and day-to-day lives of social workers can vary greatly, based on their area of practice and place of employment, in addition to the overall data it's important to recognize the main issues that social workers face in their individual areas of practice. Table D compares the main barriers to recruitment with the primary employers and breaks down the top three results for each place of work.

Table D

Primary Employer vs. Main Issues Faced <sup>1</sup>	Highest Choice	Second Highest Choice	Third Highest Choice
Non-governmental organization	Stress and/or burnout 78.58% (39)	Caseloads 62.26% (33)	Compensation 52.83% (28)
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	Stress and/or burnout 75.00% (9)	Caseloads 66.67% (8)	*Difficulty balancing work and life 58.33% (7) *Lack of flexibility from employers 58.33% (7)
Department of Social Development	Stress and/or burnout 85.19% (276)	Caseloads 83.33% (270)	Compensation 58.02% (188)
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	Stress and/or burnout 70.44% (143)	Caseloads 60.10% (122)	Compensation 44.33% (90)
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Stress and/or burnout 88.24% (30)	Caseloads 85.29% (29)	Job status 44.12% (15)
Other provincial government department	Caseloads 83.33% (25)	Stress and/or burnout 73.33% (22)	Compensation 60.00% (18)
Federal government	Stress and/or burnout 80.00% (16)	Caseloads 70.00% (14)	Difficulty balancing work and life 60.00% (12)
Private Practice	Stress and/or burnout 65.08% (41)	Caseloads 53.97% (34)	Inability to work in full scope of practice due to administrative duties 55.56% (35)

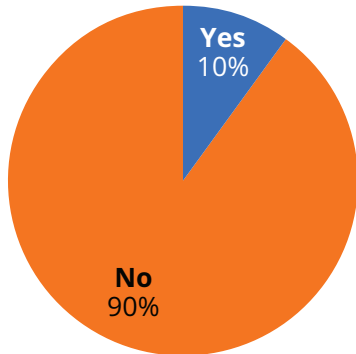
**\*Tie in results, two in third place.**

<sup>1</sup> While job status (access to permanent employment) is not seen as a main retention issue when comparing the results from question 15 with respondents' primary place of employment, due to the majority of respondents being employed in permanent positions, job status is seen as a key retention issue for those that do not currently have access to permanent employment.

## 2.16 Question 16 (Leaving New Brunswick)

Are you currently considering leaving the province?

### 2.16.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	10.15%	79
No	89.85%	699
<b>Answered</b>		<b>778</b>

### 2.16.2 Analysis

The majority of survey respondents report that they are not currently considering leaving the province, with 90% saying “no” and 10% saying “yes.” When comparing this with respondents’ primary place of employment, it is found that the highest percentage of “yes” responses from respondents working in Private Practice (19%), working for the Federal government (15%), and working for another provincial government department (13%). No respondents who work for Medavie said that they were currently considering leaving the province (0%).

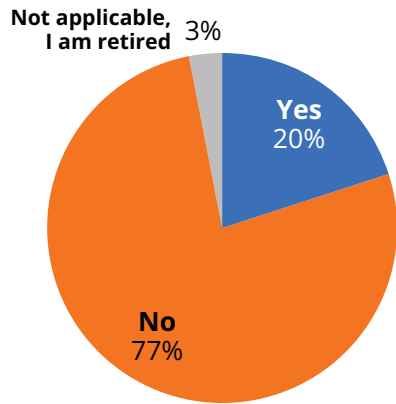
Responses for the two major employers should be noted. For the Department of Social Development, 9% said “yes” while 91% said “no” and for the Regional Health Authorities, 8% said “yes” while 92% said “no.”

Respondents from the Fredericton and Saint John Chapters were most likely to report that they are currently considering leaving the province, with Fredericton Chapter respondents reporting “yes” at a rate of 13% (22 respondents) and Saint John Chapter respondents at a rate of 16% (18 respondents). The responses from these Chapters were significantly more than others, with Saint John Chapter having significantly more respondents considering leaving the province than Moncton, Edmundston/Grand Falls, and Acadian Peninsula Chapters (16% Saint John vs. 6% Moncton, 5% Edmundston/Grand Falls and 2% Acadian Peninsula) and the Fredericton Chapter having significantly more than the Acadian Peninsula and Moncton Chapters (13% Fredericton vs. 2% Acadian Peninsula and 6% Moncton). The inverse of these results was also true, with respondents from the Moncton, Acadian Peninsula, and Edmundston/Grand Falls Chapters selecting “no” significantly more frequently than Fredericton and Saint John Chapter respondents (87% Fredericton vs. 98% Acadian Peninsula and 94% Moncton; 84% Saint John vs. 94% Moncton, 95% Edmundston/Grand Falls and 98% Acadian Peninsula).

## 2.17 Question 17 (Leaving Profession)

Are you currently considering leaving the profession of social work?

### 2.17.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	19.54%	152
No	77.38%	602
Not applicable, I am retired	3.08%	24
<b>Answered</b>		<b>778</b>

### 2.17.2 Analysis

The survey found that the majority of respondents are not currently considering leaving the profession of social work, with 20% saying “yes,” 77% saying “no,” and 3% saying “not applicable.”

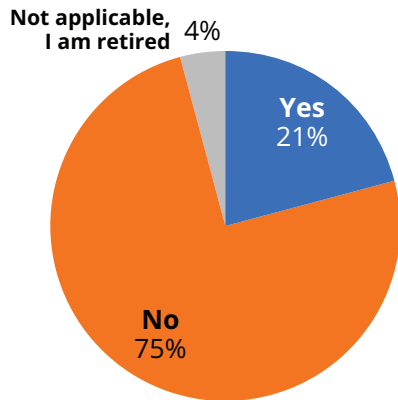
When comparing those considering leaving the profession with the primary employer, the highest percentage of respondents worked for another provincial government department at 30%, with the next highest being 25% of respondents from both Medavie and the Federal government currently considering leaving. Those who selected “no” most often worked for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (85%), in non-governmental organizations (83%), and for the Regional Health Authorities (81%).

Responses for the two major employers should be noted. For the Department of Social Development, 19% said “yes,” while 80% said “no,” and for the Regional Health Authorities, 19% said “yes,” while 81% said “no.”

## 2.18 Question 18 (Leaving Current Job)

Are you currently considering leaving your current job for another social work position within New Brunswick?

### 2.18.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	21.34%	166
No	75.06%	584
Not applicable, I am retired	3.60%	28
<b>Answered</b>		<b>778</b>

### 2.18.2 Analysis

The majority of survey respondents are not currently considering leaving their current job for another one within the province, with 75% of respondents saying “no,” 21% of respondents saying “yes,” and 4% saying “not applicable.” These results are similar to those from the previous question, which asked respondents whether they’re currently considering leaving the social work profession.

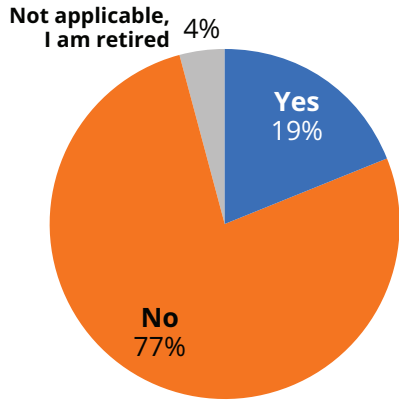
When respondents were asked whether they’re considering currently leaving their current job for another social work position in New Brunswick, the number of “yes” responses decreased steadily with age, with those ages 18-35 significantly more likely than higher age groups to consider changing positions. Along those same lines, respondents ages 36-55 were significantly less likely than the younger age groups to state that they were not considering leaving their current social work position for another.

When comparing place of work with this question, it is found that 27% of respondents from other provincial government departments, 25% of respondents from the Department of Social Development, and 24% of respondents from the Regional Health Authorities are currently considering leaving their positions for another within the province. These three responses are significantly higher than the number of “yes” responses from respondents in Private Practice, at 10%.

## 2.19 Question 19 (Retirement)

Are you planning to retire from the profession of social work within the next five years?

### 2.19.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	18.89%	147
No	77.12%	600
Not applicable, I am retired	3.98%	31
<b>Answered</b>		<b>778</b>

### 2.19.2 Analysis

These results are again similar to the previous questions, with 77% of respondents stating that “no” they aren’t planning to retire within the next five years, 19% saying “yes,” and 4% saying “not applicable”.

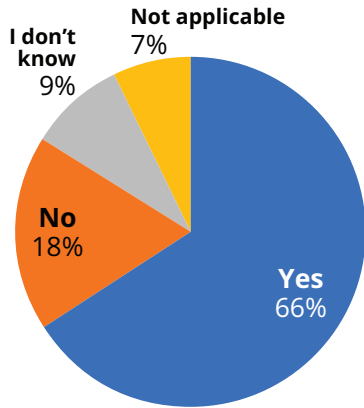
When comparing this question with primary places of work, it is found that 20% of respondents with the Department of Social Development and 14% of respondents with the Regional Health Authorities answered that “yes,” they’re planning to retire from the profession of social work within the next five years. The highest percentage of “yes” respondents work for Medavie (42%), in Private Practice (33%), and for non-governmental organizations (25%).



## 2.20 Question 20 (Current Vacancies)

Are there presently vacant social work positions in your work unit or place of work?

### 2.20.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	65.68%	511
No	18.12%	141
I don't know	9.25%	72
Not applicable	6.94%	54
<b>Answered</b>		<b>778</b>

### 2.20.2 Analysis

Over half of the respondents from all the Chapters reported currently having vacancies in their place of work (range of 55% (Fredericton) to 85% (Sussex)) with an overall average of 66% “yes” responses. 18% of all respondents said there weren’t any vacancies presently, while 9% said they don’t know, and 7% said the question wasn’t applicable.

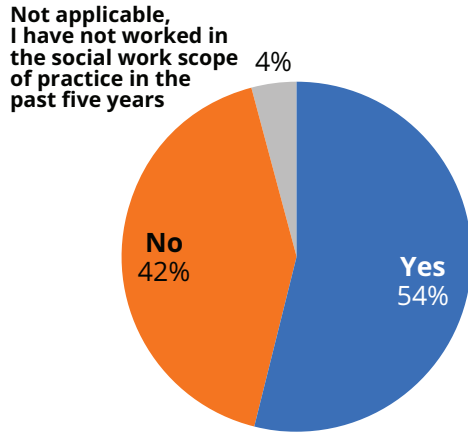
The vast majority of “yes” respondents worked for the Department of Social Development, with 91% of respondents from the Department answering as such. The second highest percentage of reported vacancies was for the Regional Health Authorities at 65%, and the third highest was for other provincial government departments at 63%. The highest percentage of “no” responses came from respondents who work for Medavie, at 67%.

When looking at the vacancies among the different programs within the Department of Social Development, it is found that a high percentage of respondents from each child welfare program report vacancies within their place of work. Notably, respondent’s working in Adoption, Children’s Resources, and Family Group Conference answered “yes” at a rate of 100%. 96% of respondents with Child Protection said “yes,” which is significantly higher than the 81% of respondents with Long-term Care that responded “yes.”

## 2.21 Question 21 (Changed Jobs)

Have you changed social work jobs in the last five years?

2.21.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	53.86%	419
No	42.42%	330
Not applicable, I have not worked in the social work scope of practice in the past five years	3.73%	29
<b>Answered</b>		<b>778</b>

### 2.21.2 Analysis

The majority of respondents reported that they've changed social work jobs in the last five years, with 54% saying "yes," 42% saying "no," and 4% saying "not applicable."

Respondents ages 26-45 were significantly more likely than other age groups to say that "yes", they have changed jobs in the last five years (33% ages 18-25, 59% ages 26-35, 60% ages 36-45, 50% ages 46-55, 46% ages 56-65, and 29% ages 66-75).

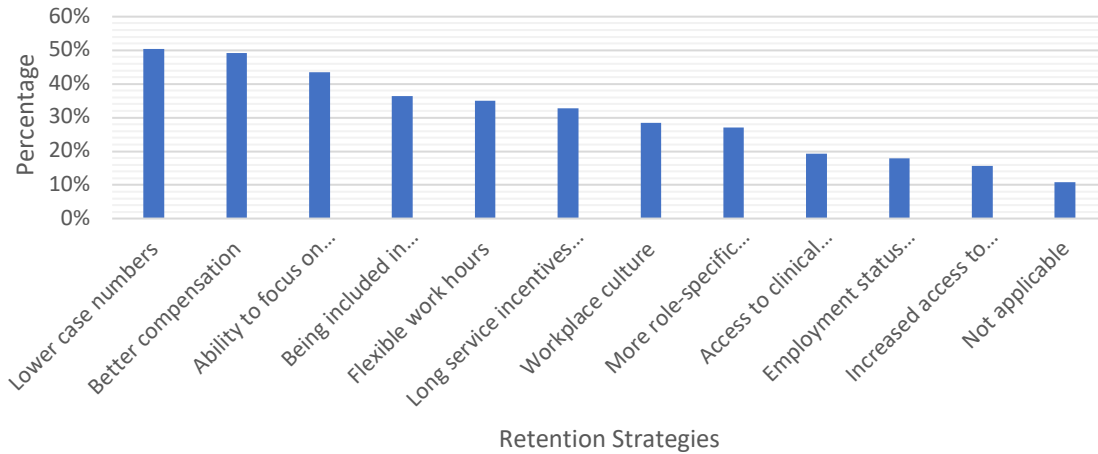
The respondents who were employed in permanent full-time positions were significantly less likely to have changed jobs in the last five years (18%) compared to those employed temporary full-time (66%).

Also, Department of Social Development respondents were significantly less likely than those from the Regional Health Authorities to answer "yes" to this question (49% Department of Social Development vs. 60% Regional Health Authorities). This finding may be due to the increased opportunities that permanent employees within Regional Health Authorities have to fill job vacancies internally (internal "job shopping").

## 2.22 Question 22 (Retention Strategies)

Thinking about your current social work role(s) or the social work role(s) you've held in the past five years, what would help or would have helped you stay in that position (if applicable)? Please select all that apply up to a maximum of five.

### 2.22.1 Results



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Lower case numbers	50.39%	392
Better compensation	49.10%	382
Ability to focus on direct interventions with clients, less time spent on administrative duties	43.44%	338
Being included in decision-making processes within the workplace (for example, being included in meaningful discussions on policy changes)	36.38%	283
Flexible work hours	34.96%	272
Long service incentives (bonuses for staying in a position for a certain number of years, for example, 15 years, 20 years, or 25 years)	32.78%	255
Workplace culture	28.41%	221
More role-specific training opportunities	27.12%	211
Access to clinical supervision	19.28%	150
Employment status (temporary vs. permanent)	17.99%	140
Increased access to mental health supports	15.68%	122
Not applicable	10.93%	85
<b>Answered</b>		<b>778</b>

### 2.22.2 Analysis

To identify potential retention strategies, respondents were asked to identify what would help or what would have helped them stay in their recent social work positions. The top five responses included lower case numbers (50%), better compensation (49%), the ability to focus on direct interventions

with clients with less time spent on administrative duties (43%), being included in decision-making processes within the workplace (36%), and flexible work hours (35%).

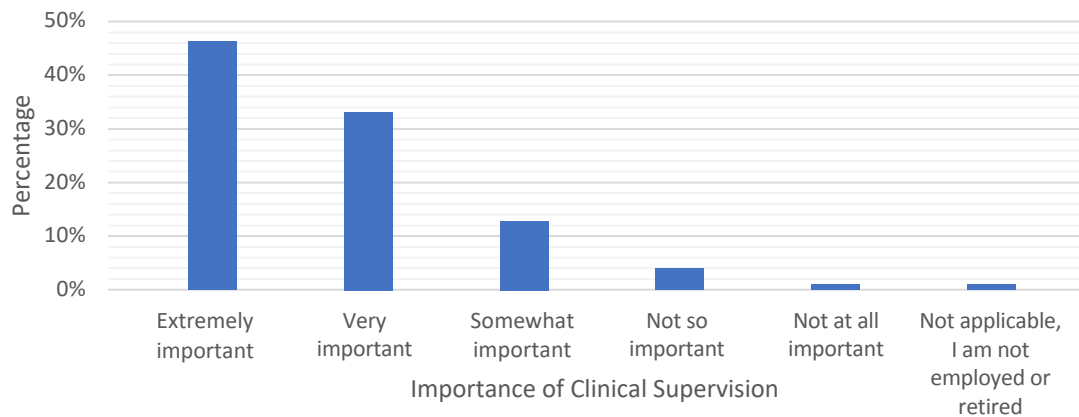
When looking specifically at responses from respondents with the Department of Social Development, the top three responses were lower case numbers (66%), better compensation (56%), and the ability to focus more on direct interventions with clients with less time spent on administrative duties (51%).

For respondents with the Regional Health Authorities, flexible work hours (45%) and better compensation (45%) were the top choices, with the third being lower case numbers (41%).

## 2.23 Question 23 (Importance of Clinical Supervision)

How important is clinical supervision for your practice?

### 2.23.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Extremely important	46.56%	359
Very important	33.46%	258
Somewhat important	13.10%	101
Not so important	4.28%	33
Not at all important	1.30%	10
Not applicable, I am not employed or retired	1.30%	10
<b>Answered</b>		<b>771</b>

### 2.23.2 Analysis

Respondents identified clinical supervision being important to their practice, with 47% saying it was “extremely important,” 33% saying it was “very important,” 13% saying it was “somewhat important,” 4% saying it was “not so important,” and 1% saying it was “not at all important.”

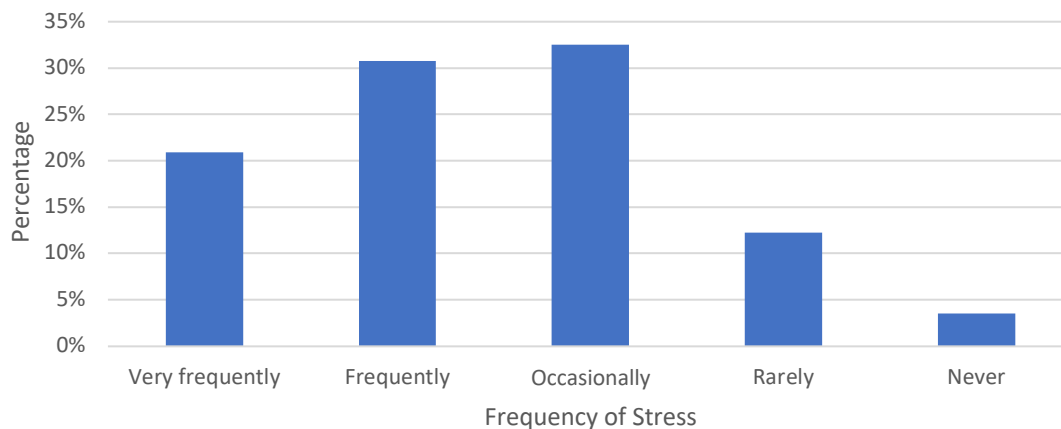
Respondents working with the Federal government identified clinical supervision as being “extremely important” most often (60%), followed by those in Private Practice (56%).

When looking at the responses from the various areas of work and combining the answers for “extremely important” and “very important,” the highest percentage of responses included 85% of respondents from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and 85% of respondents from the Department of Social Development, who thought it was important to their practice.

## 2.24 Question 24 (Stress)

In the past year, how frequently have you experienced what you consider to be unmanageable levels of stress?

### 2.24.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Very frequently	20.93%	162
Frequently	30.75%	238
Occasionally	32.56%	252
Rarely	12.27%	95
Never	3.49%	27
<b>Answered</b>		<b>774</b>

### 2.24.2 Analysis

The highest percentage of respondents reported “occasionally” feeling unmanageable stress levels during the past year, at 33%. 31% of respondents experienced it “frequently,” 21% experienced it “very frequently,” 12% experienced it “rarely,” and 3% reported “never” having experienced it this past year.

When comparing this question with the various employers, the three places of employment in which respondents report very frequently experiencing unmanageable levels of stress during the past year were those in other provincial government departments (30%), the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (26%), and the Department of Social Development (25%). Responses are further broken down in Table E.

Table E

Stress vs. Primary Employer	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Total
Non-governmental organization	15.38% 8	19.23% 10	40.38% 21	19.23% 10	5.77% 3	7.10% 52
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	16.67% 2	16.67% 2	33.33% 4	25.00% 3	8.33% 1	1.64% 12
Department of Social Development	24.69% 79	36.88% 118	27.81% 89	8.44% 27	2.19% 7	43.72% 320
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	14.93% 30	28.36% 57	37.81% 76	15.92% 32	2.99% 6	27.46% 201
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	26.47% 9	20.59% 7	47.06% 16	5.88% 2	0.00% 0	4.64% 34
Other provincial government department	30.00% 9	33.33% 10	23.33% 7	10.00% 3	3.33% 1	4.10% 30
Federal government	15.00% 3	40.00% 8	40.00% 8	5.00% 1	0.00% 0	2.73% 20
Private Practice	22.22% 14	22.22% 14	33.33% 21	15.87% 10	6.35% 4	8.61% 63
<b>Answered</b>	<b>21.04%</b> <b>154</b>	<b>30.87%</b> <b>226</b>	<b>33.06%</b> <b>242</b>	<b>12.02%</b> <b>88</b>	<b>3.01%</b> <b>22</b>	<b>100.00%</b> <b>732</b>

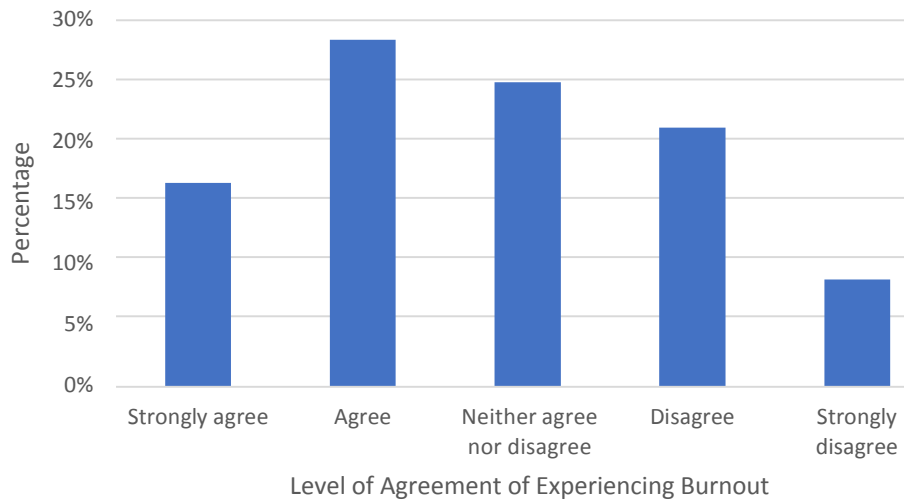
In looking at specific Social Development programs and combining the responses for “very frequently” and “frequently,” respondents with Children in Care reported the highest percentage of frequent unmanageable stress, with a combined percentage of 74%.

When comparing stress levels with how many hours respondents work per week, it is found that higher numbers of weekly work hours are associated with higher stress frequencies. Respondents who work 40-49 hours per week selected “very frequently” significantly more often (27%) than those who worked 35-39 hours per week (18%). Respondents that work 35-39 (33%) and 40-49 (35%) hours per week selected “frequently” significantly more often than those that work 15-24 (10%) and 25-34 (17%) hours per week.

### 2.25 Question 25 (Burnout)

Burnout is described as a state of extreme exhaustion that is caused by excessive or prolonged stress. Burnout is typically associated with feeling down and reduced performance. With this in mind, please indicate your current level of agreement with the statement “I am nearing or experiencing burnout.”

#### 2.25.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Strongly agree	16.67%	129
Agree	28.42%	220
Neither agree nor disagree	24.94%	193
Disagree	21.19%	164
Strongly disagree	8.79%	68
<b>Answered</b>		<b>774</b>

#### 2.25.2 Analysis

When asked whether they’re nearing or experiencing burnout, the highest percentage of respondents agreed with the statement, with 17% saying “strongly agree,” 28% saying “agree,” 25% saying “neither agree nor disagree,” 21% saying “disagree,” and 9% saying “strongly disagree.”

Table F

Burnout vs. Primary Employer	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Non-governmental organization	9.62% 5	26.92% 14	19.23% 10	28.85% 15	15.38% 8	7.10% 52
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	8.33% 1	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	33.33% 4	33.33% 4	1.64% 12
Department of Social Development	21.88% 70	29.06% 93	25.00% 80	19.38% 62	4.69% 15	43.72% 320
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	11.44% 23	26.87% 54	28.36% 57	24.88% 50	8.46% 17	27.46% 201
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	14.71% 5	44.12% 15	26.47% 9	8.82% 3	5.88% 2	4.64% 34
Other provincial government department	20.00% 6	40.00% 12	16.67% 5	20.00% 6	3.33% 1	4.10% 30
Federal government	5.00% 1	40.00% 8	20.00% 4	25.00% 5	10.00% 2	2.73% 20
Private Practice	14.29% 9	25.40% 16	19.05% 12	23.81% 15	17.46% 11	8.61% 63
<b>Answered</b>	<b>16.39%</b> <b>120</b>	<b>29.37%</b> <b>215</b>	<b>24.18%</b> <b>177</b>	<b>21.86%</b> <b>160</b>	<b>8.20%</b> <b>60</b>	<b>100.00%</b> <b>732</b>

When comparing the specific Social Development programs, it is found that respondents with Children in Care report the highest rates of burnout, with 55% of respondents saying they either “strongly agree” or “agree” that they’re nearing or experiencing burnout.

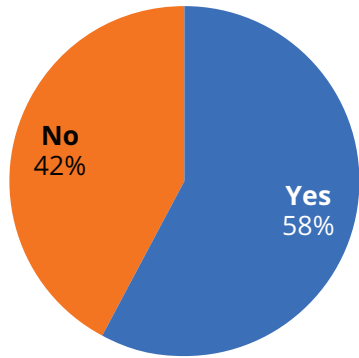
Respondents that consistently work overtime report nearing or experiencing burnout at higher rates than those that work under regular full-time hours. For respondents that work 40-49 hours per week, 27% strongly agreed with the statement, which was significantly higher than the percentage of respondents that selected “strongly agree” who worked 15-24 (10%), 25-34 (12%), and 35-39 (13%) hours per week.



## 2.26 Question 26 (Access to Clinical Supervision)

In your current position, do you have access to regular clinical supervision by a Registered Social Worker?

2.26.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	57.66%	444
No	42.34%	326
<b>Answered</b>		<b>770</b>

### 2.26.2 Analysis

The majority of respondents reported having access to regular clinical supervision by a Registered Social Worker in their current position, with 58% saying “yes” and 42% saying “no.”

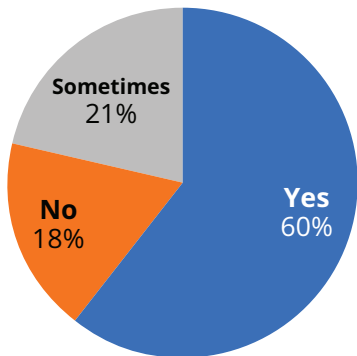
When comparing these responses with the responses received for question 23, which asked how important clinical supervision is for your practice, it is found that not all respondents who see the importance of clinical supervision have access to it in their current place of work. Of those that see it as “extremely important,” 49% said “yes” they have access to it, while 44% said “no.” Of those that see it as “very important,” 36% said “yes” they have access to it, while 30% said “no.”

For the major social work employers, 78% of respondents with the Department of Social Development said “yes,” while 22% said “no.” For the Regional Health Authorities, 48% said “yes,” while 52% said “no.” Questions 27 and 28 further discuss clinical supervision and potential differences in interpretation across workplaces as to what constitutes “clinical supervision.”

### 2.27 Question 27 (Scheduled Clinical Supervision)

If you answered yes, is the clinical supervision you receive scheduled?

#### 2.27.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Yes	60.36%	265
No	18.22%	80
Sometimes	21.41%	94
<b>Answered</b>		<b>439</b>

#### 2.27.2 Analysis

The majority of respondents reported having access to scheduled supervision, with 60% saying “yes,” 21% saying “sometimes,” and 18% saying “no.”

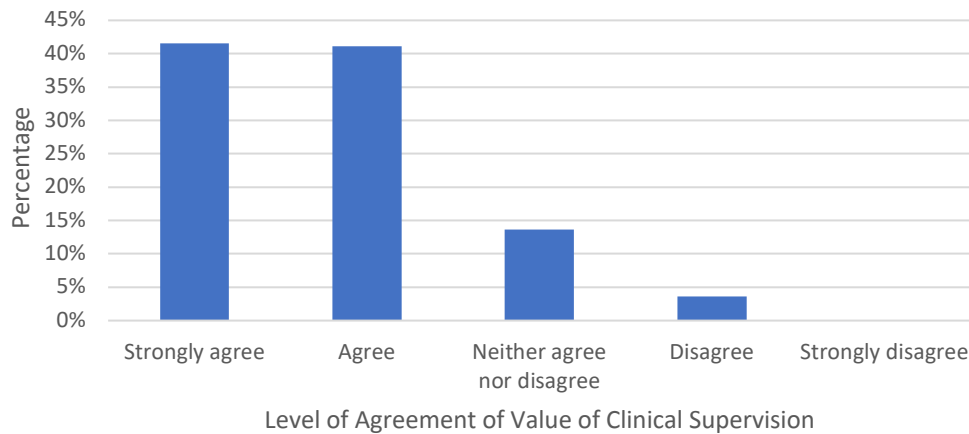
In the Department of Social Development, 75% said “yes,” 8% said “no,” and 17% said “sometimes.” For the Regional Health Authorities, 37% said “yes,” 39% said “no,” and 24% said “sometimes.”

Male-identifying respondents were significantly more likely than female-identifying respondents to report receiving scheduled access to clinical supervision in their roles (79% of men vs. 58% of women).

## 2.28 Question 28 (Value of Clinical Supervision)

Do you agree the clinical supervision that you receive is valuable?

### 2.28.1 Results



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Strongly agree	41.59%	183
Agree	41.14%	181
Neither agree nor disagree	13.64%	60
Disagree	3.64%	16
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>Answered</b>		<b>440</b>

### 2.28.2 Analysis

The majority of respondents who receive clinical supervision report it being valuable, with 42% saying they “strongly agree,” 41% saying they “agree,” 14% saying they “neither agree nor disagree,” 4% saying they “disagree,” and no respondents indicating they “strongly disagree” (0%).

When comparing the combined responses for “strongly agree” and “agree” with the different workplaces, it’s found that 100% of respondents in Private Practice, 90% of those with other provincial government departments, 85% of those with the Regional Health Authorities, and 80% of those with the Department of Social Development find it valuable to their practice. Those with the Federal government were least likely to find it valuable, at 67%.

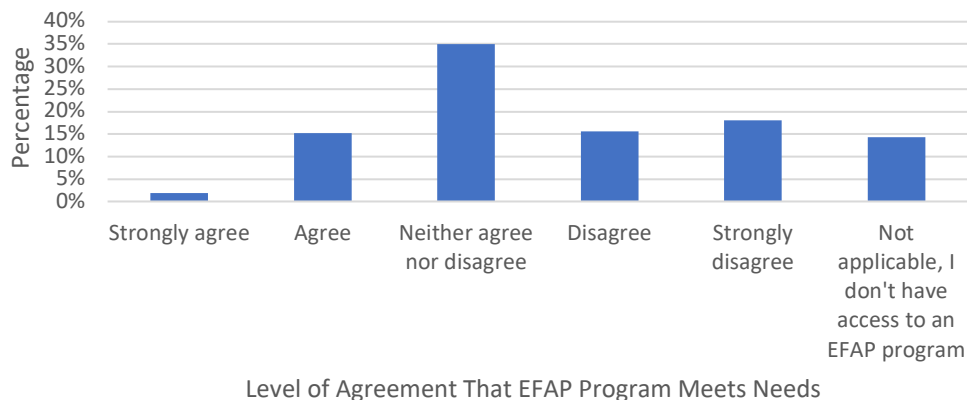
From the results obtained through the questions on clinical supervision, it appears there may be different interpretations of what constitutes “clinical supervision.” With Social Worker 3 roles eroded within the Department of Social Development over time, from a purely clinical role to now having their own caseloads, respondents with the Department may consider their meetings with unit supervisors as clinical supervision.

This interpretation may differ from what those with Regional Health Authorities consider to be “clinical supervision,” as clinical supervision within the health authorities typically refers to supervision sessions that focus solely on clinical skills and not current caseload. While this difference is worth noting, it should also be noted that one cannot be valued above the other; it is important that all workplaces allow for appropriate supervision to take place, where social workers feel appropriately supported and are given the time to learn and enhance their skills and abilities. Based on the survey findings, social workers within the Regional Health Authorities would benefit from increased access to clinical social work supervision.

## 2.29 Question 29 (EFAP Program)

Do you agree that the Employee and Family Assistance (EFAP) program is sufficient to meet your needs?

### 2.29.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Strongly agree	1.95%	15
Agree	15.19%	117
Neither agree nor disagree	34.94%	269
Disagree	15.58%	120
Strongly disagree	18.05%	139
Not applicable, I don't have access to an EFAP program	14.29%	110
<b>Answered</b>		<b>770</b>

## 2.29.2 Analysis

When asked whether the EFAP program is sufficient to meet their needs, the highest percentage of respondents agreed nor disagreed with the statement. 2% said “strongly agree,” 15% said “agree,” 35% said “neither agree nor disagree,” 16% said “disagree,” and 18% said “strongly disagree.” 14% of respondents did not have access to an EFAP program and therefore the question was “not applicable.”

When breaking down the responses with the respondents’ primary place of employment, the responses from those in other provincial government departments were particularly noteworthy as 33% of respondents said they “strongly disagreed,” compared to zero “strongly agree” responses (0%), 13% saying “agree,” 27% saying they “neither agree nor disagree,” 17% saying they “disagree,” and 10% saying “not applicable.”

The results from respondents with the Department of Social Development were also noteworthy, with 2% saying they “strongly agree,” 15% saying they “agree,” 40% saying they “neither agree nor disagree,” 17% saying they “disagree,” 22% saying they “strongly disagree,” and 3% saying the question is “not applicable.”

For the Regional Health Authorities, 2% “strongly agree,” 17% “agree,” 41% “neither agree nor disagree,” 18% “disagree,” 13% “strongly disagree,” and 8% said “not applicable.”

Respondents with Medavie seemed to be more satisfied with the EFAP program, with 8% saying they “strongly agree,” 17% saying they “agree,” 58% saying they “neither agree nor disagree,” no one (0%) selecting “disagree” or “strongly disagree,” and 17% saying the question is “not applicable.”

As of August 1, 2020, the Government of New Brunswick retained the services of Homewood Health as the new EFAP provider for the province. The EFAP program is offered by employers at no cost to employees and offers confidential short-term counselling (4-6 hours<sup>2</sup>), coaching, and online services for employees and their immediate family members.<sup>3</sup> The EFAP represents a significant government investment and should be designed in a way that is effective in meeting the needs of those that would benefit from its services. Survey findings show that the potential benefit of promoting the EFAP and the services it offers, as well as the government reviewing the program to ensure its efficacy.

Recognizing the limitations of the EFAP program (e.g. counselling services are short-term and may not be sufficient to address long-term mental health needs) and the finding that the EFAP program is not sufficient to meet the needs of social workers, having social workers be recognized as first responders and included in provincial first responder mental health programs should be explored.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Retrieved online from <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ohr-brh/pdf/efap-paef/HomewoodFrequentlyAskedQuestions.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved online from <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ohr-brh/pdf/efap-paef/IntroducingHomewoodHealth.pdf>

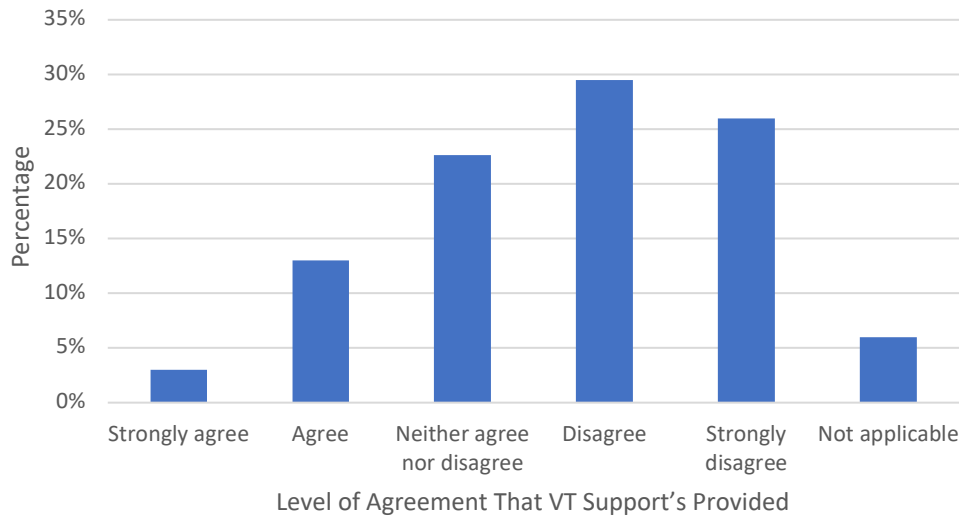
<sup>4</sup> Retrieved from [https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/health/news/news\\_release.2022.02.0068.html](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/health/news/news_release.2022.02.0068.html)

### 2.30 Question 30 (Vicarious Trauma)

Do you agree that your workplace provides the supports and services that are required to deal with the impact of vicarious trauma (also called compassion fatigue)?

With vicarious trauma being the emotional impact of indirect exposure to a traumatic event through first-hand accounts of narratives of that event.

#### 2.30.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Strongly agree	2.99%	23
Agree	12.99%	100
Neither agree nor disagree	22.60%	174
Disagree	29.48%	227
Strongly disagree	25.97%	200
Not applicable	5.97%	46
<b>Answered</b>		<b>770</b>

#### 2.30.2 Analysis

When asked whether their workplaces provide the necessary supports to deal with vicarious trauma, the largest percentage of respondents said “disagree,” at 29%. 3% of respondents said that they “strongly agree,” 13% said that they “agree,” 23% said that they “neither agree nor disagree,” 29% said that they “disagree,” 26% said that they “strongly disagree,” and 6% said that it was “not applicable.” When combining the “strongly agree” and “agree” responses and the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” responses, the majority disagree (55%), while the minority of respondents agree (16%).

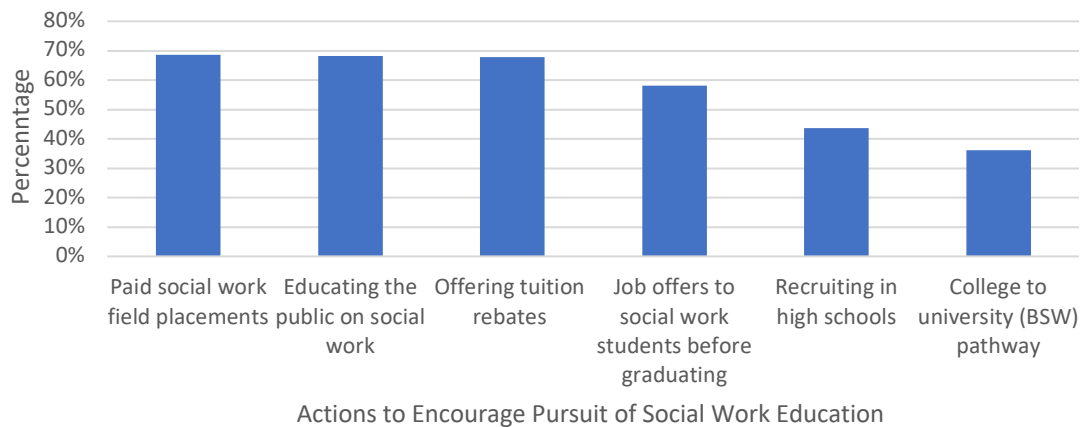
Respondents working for other provincial government departments were the least likely to agree with the statement. To highlight the data from the two major employers, respondents from the Department of Social Development largely disagree with the statement (1% “strongly agree,”

11% “agree,” 22% “neither agree nor disagree,” 36% “disagree,” 29% “strongly disagree” and 2% say “not applicable”). Results were similar within the Regional Health Authorities (3% “strongly agree,” 14% “agree,” 29% “neither agree nor disagree,” 28% “disagree,” 23% “strongly disagree,” and 1% say “not applicable”).

### 2.31 Question 31 (Recruitment Strategies (to University))

What actions do you think would be most effective in encouraging people to pursue a social work education? Please select all that apply.

#### 2.31.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Providing paid social work field placement opportunities	68.70%	529
Educating the public on the profession of social work	68.18%	525
Offering tuition rebates (tax credits, tuition reimbursement after years of service, etc.)	67.79%	522
Providing social work students with job offers during their field placements/prior to their graduation	58.05%	447
Engaging in recruitment efforts in high schools	43.77%	337
Providing college graduates with streamlined pathway to university to obtain a Bachelor of Social Work degree	36.10%	278
<b>Answered</b>		<b>770</b>

#### 2.31.2 Analysis

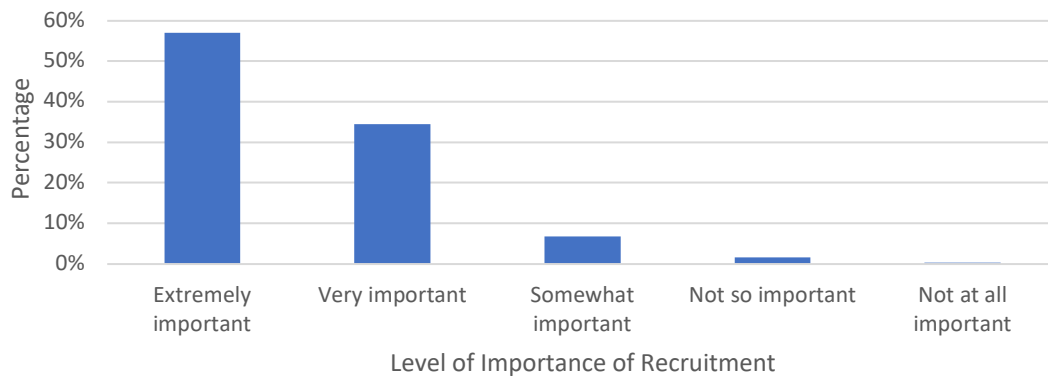
In terms of what activities respondents thought would be the most effective in encouraging people to pursue a social work education, the top three results were “providing paid social work field placement opportunities” (69%), “educating the public on the profession of social work” (68%), and “offering tuition rebates” (68%).

The top result for respondents from the Department of Social Development was “offering tuition rebates” (66%), while the top result for respondents from the Regional Health Authorities was “educating the public on the profession of social work” (76%).

### 2.32 Question 32 (Importance of Recruitment)

How important do you think it is to recruit social workers in/to New Brunswick?

#### 2.32.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Extremely important	57.01%	439
Very important	34.42%	265
Somewhat important	6.75%	52
Not so important	1.56%	12
Not at all important	0.26%	2
<b>Answered</b>		<b>770</b>

#### 2.32.2 Analysis

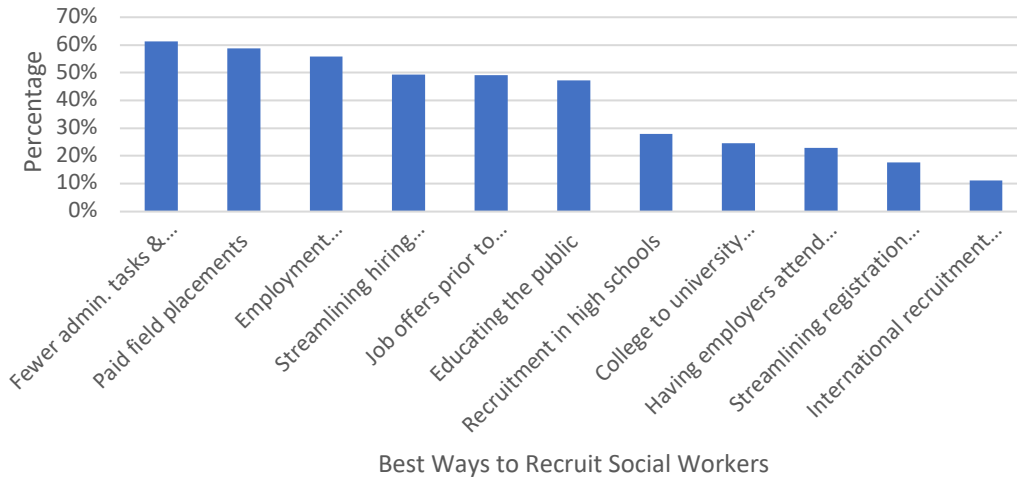
The majority of respondents see the importance of recruiting social workers in and to New Brunswick, with 57% of respondents saying it’s “extremely important,” 34% saying it’s “very important,” 7% saying it’s “somewhat important,” 2% saying it’s “not so important,” and 0% saying it’s “not at all important.” Respondents from the Department of Social Development were most likely to view it as “extremely important,” at 67%. This is 20% higher than respondents from the Regional Health Authorities, 47% of whom regarded it as “extremely important.”



### 2.33 Question 33 (Recruitment Strategies (to NB))

What do you think are the best ways to recruit social workers in and/or to New Brunswick?  
Please select the methods you consider to be most effective, up to a maximum of five.

#### 2.33.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Reducing administrative requirements and allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice	61.43%	473
Providing paid social work field placement opportunities	58.83%	453
Offering employment incentives/bonuses (ex. signing bonuses)	55.97%	431
Streamlining hiring processes (advertising permanent job positions)	49.35%	380
Providing social work students with job offers prior to their graduation	49.22%	379
Educating the public on the profession of social work	47.27%	364
Engaging in recruitment efforts in high schools	27.92%	215
Providing college graduates with a streamlined pathway to university to obtain a BSW	24.55%	189
Having employers attend university job fairs in New Brunswick and across Canada	22.99%	177
Streamlining registration processes	17.66%	136
Engaging in international recruitment efforts	11.17%	86
<b>Answered</b>		<b>770</b>

#### 2.33.2 Analysis

The five methods that respondents' felt would be the most effective to recruit social workers in and/or to New Brunswick included reducing administrative requirements and allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice (61%), providing paid social work field placement opportunities

(59%), offering employment incentives/bonuses (56%), streamlining hiring processes (49%), and providing social work students with job offers prior to their graduation (49%).

When comparing respondents' primary employer with what they see as the best recruitment method, it is found that the priority actions differ slightly based on the area of work. This is highlighted in Table G below, which breaks down what respondents consider to be the top recruitment methods for each place of work.

Table G

Primary Employer vs. Recruitment Strategies	Highest Choice	Second Highest Choice	Third Highest Choice
Non-governmental organization	Reducing administrative requirements & allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice 62.75% (32)	*Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 54.90% (28)	*Streamlining hiring processes 54.90% (28)
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	Educating the public on the profession of social work 83.33% (10)	Offering employment incentives/bonuses 66.67% (8)	Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 58.33% (7)
Department of Social Development	Reducing administrative requirements & allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice 67.71% (216)	Offering employment incentives/bonuses 62.38% (199)	Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 55.49% (177)
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 61.19% (123)	Offering employment incentives/bonuses 54.23% (109)	**Streamlining hiring processes 50.75% (102) **Providing social work students with job offers prior to their graduation 50.75% (102)
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Reducing administrative requirements & allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice 76.42% (26)	Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 67.65% (23)	Streamlining hiring processes 55.88% (19)
Other provincial government department	Reducing administrative requirements & allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice 63.33% (19)	*Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 56.67% (17)	*Educating the public on the profession of social work 56.67% (17)
Federal government	Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 90.00% (18)	*Reducing administrative requirements & allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice 65.00% (13)	*Offering employment incentives/bonuses 65.00% (13)
Private Practice	Reducing administrative requirements & allowing social workers to work within their full scope of practice 73.77% (45)	Providing paid social work field placement opportunities 57.38% (35)	Educating the public on the profession of social work 55.74% (34)

**\*Tie in results, no difference in placement ranking.**

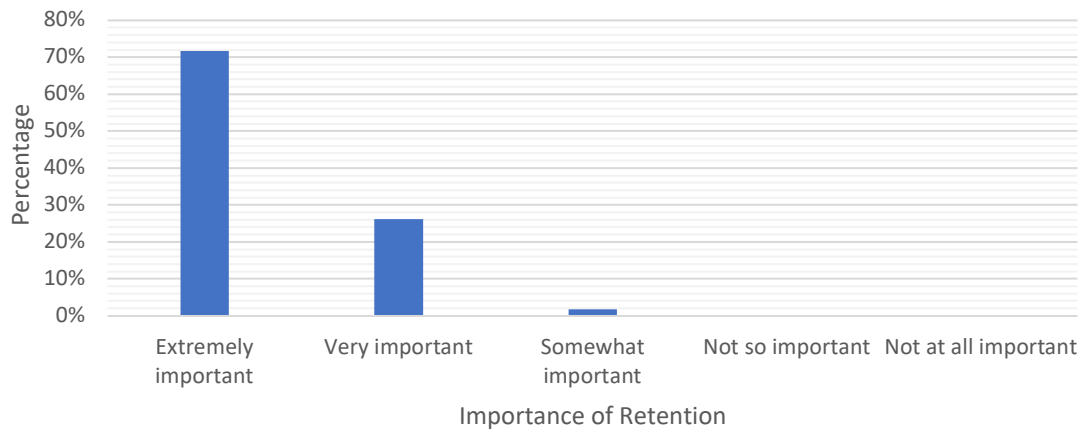
**\*\* Tie in results, two in third place.**

When looking at the results specific to the different programs in Social Development, certain variations can be seen in terms of what respondents view as recruitment strategies. Respondents with Children in Care were significantly more likely to view educating the public on the profession of social work as a recruitment strategy when compared to respondents with Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (65% Children in Care vs. 15% Family Supports for Children with Disabilities). Respondents with Children's Resources were significantly more likely to view streamlining registration processes as a recruitment strategy compared to those with Child Protection (33% Children's Resources vs. 14% Child Protection). The last significant response difference among Social Development programs is seen with the results for engaging in international recruitment efforts; where respondents from Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (31%) are significantly more likely to view it as a recruitment strategy compared to respondents from Child Protection (9%), Children's Resources (5%), and Long-Term Care (2%).

### 2.34 Question 34 (Importance of Retention)

How important do you think it is to retain social workers in New Brunswick?

#### 2.34.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Extremely important	71.67%	549
Very important	26.24%	201
Somewhat important	1.83%	14
Not so important	0.26%	2
Not at all important	0.00%	0
<b>Answered</b>		<b>766</b>

#### 2.34.2 Analysis

The majority of respondents see the importance of retaining social workers in New Brunswick, with 72% of respondents saying it's "extremely important," 26% saying it's "very important," 2% saying it's "somewhat important," and 0% saying it's both "not so important" and "not at all important."

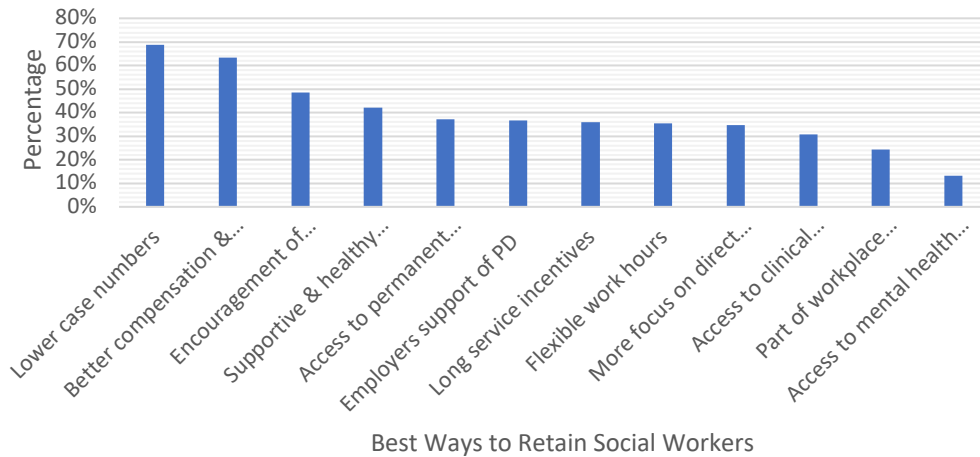
Respondents from both the Department of Social Development and Medavie were most likely to view it as "extremely important," at 75%. Due to the greater number of respondents from the Department of Social Development, respondents from the Department were significantly more likely to view retaining social workers as "extremely important" when compared to social workers with the Regional Health Authorities (75% of Department of Social Development respondents vs. 67% of respondents from the Regional Health Authorities).

### 2.35 Question 35 (Retention Strategies)

What do you think are the best ways to retain New Brunswick social workers?

Please select the methods you consider to be most effective, up to a maximum of five.

#### 2.35.1 Results .....



Answer Choices	Percentage	Sum of Responses
Having lower case numbers	68.80%	527
Offering better compensation and benefits	63.32%	485
Having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance	48.56%	372
Having a supportive and healthy workplace culture	42.04%	322
Providing access to permanent employment positions	37.21%	285
Having employers support professional development opportunities (provide trainings, allow paid time off to attend trainings elsewhere, fund trainings, etc.)	36.81%	282
Providing long service incentives (bonuses for staying in a position for certain number of years, for example, 15 years, 20 years, or 25 years)	35.90%	275
Providing flexible work hours	35.51%	272
Providing increased ability to focus on direct interventions with clients with less time spent on administrative duties	34.73%	266
Providing access to clinical supervision	30.81%	236
Being included in decision-making processes within the workplace (for example, being included in meaningful discussions on policy changes)	24.28%	186
Providing increased access to mental health supports	13.32%	102
<b>Answered</b>		<b>766</b>

### 2.35.2 Analysis

The five methods that respondents' felt would be the most effective in retaining New Brunswick social workers included having lower case numbers (69%), offering better compensation and benefits (63%), having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance (49%), having a supportive and healthy workplace culture (42%), and providing access to permanent employment positions (37%). Female-identifying respondents (51%) were significantly more likely than male-identifying respondents (31%) to view having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance as a priority.

When comparing respondents' primary employer with what they see as the best retention method, it is found that the priority actions differ slightly based on the area of work. This is highlighted in Table H below, which breaks down what are considered to be the top retention methods for each place of work.

When looking at the results specific to the different programs in Social Development, certain variations can be seen in terms of what respondents view as recruitment strategies. Respondents from Family Group Conference (86%), Adoption (62%), and Adult Protection (65%) were significantly more likely than those with Child Protection (29%) and Children in Care (13%) to view providing access to permanent employment positions as a key retention strategy, while those with Long-Term Care (48%) were significantly more likely than those with Children in Care (13%) to view it as such.

Table H

Primary Employer vs. Retention Strategies	Highest Choice	Second Highest Choice	Third Highest Choice
Non-governmental organization	Having a health and supportive workplace culture 60.78% (31)	Having lower case numbers 58.82% (30)	Having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance 54.90% (28)
Medavie (Extra Mural Program)	*Having employers support professional development opportunities 75.00% (9)	*Offering better compensation and benefits 75.00% (9)	*Having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance 75.00% (9)
Department of Social Development	Having lower case numbers 82.02% (260)	Offering better compensation and benefits 71.61% (227)	Providing long service incentives 47.00% (149)
Regional Health Authorities (Horizon or Vitalité)	Offering better compensation and benefits 62.50% (125)	Having lower case numbers 55.50% (111)	Having employers support professional development opportunities 49.00% (98)
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Having lower case numbers 85.29% (29)	*Offering better compensation and benefits 58.82% (20)	*Having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance 58.82% (20)
Other provincial government department	Having lower case numbers 73.33% (22)	Offering better compensation and benefits 63.33% (19)	Having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance 56.67% (17)
Federal government	Having lower case numbers 70.00% (14)	Offering better compensation and benefits 65.00% (13)	**Having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance 50.00% (10) **Providing flexible work hours 50.00% (10)
Private Practice	Having employers encourage wellness and work/life balance	Having a health and supportive workplace culture 53.33% (32)	Having lower case numbers 51.67% (31)

**\*Tie in results, no difference in placement ranking.**

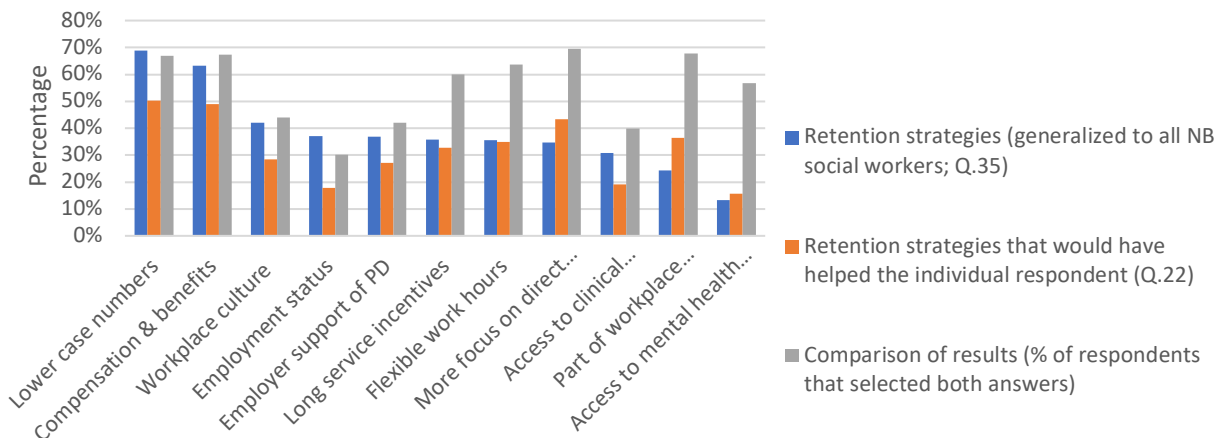
**\*\* Tie in results, two in third place.**

Unsurprisingly, when comparing the employment status of respondents who are currently employed (working in permanent full-time, temporary full-time, permanent part-time, and temporary part-time positions) with the strategies they consider to be most effective in retaining social workers, it is found that respondents who are employed in temporary full-time positions are significantly more likely to consider providing access to permanent employment positions a key retention strategy than those employed in permanent full-time and permanent part-time positions (51% temporary full-time vs. 36% permanent full-time and 28% permanent part-time). In return, respondents who are permanent full-time and permanent part-time are significantly more likely to view providing long service incentives as a main retention strategy when compared to those who are temporary full-time (40% permanent full-time and 28% permanent part-time vs. 10% temporary full-time).

Respondents from Long-Term Care (46%) and Disability Support Services (50%) were significantly more likely than those from Child Protection (21%), and Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (8%) to see flexible work hours as a key retention strategy, and respondents from Children’s Resources (38%), Adoption (38%), and Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (38%) were significantly more likely than respondents from Long-Term Care (11%) and Child Protection (15%) to view being included in decision-making processes within the workplace as a key retention strategy.

Question 22 asked respondents to think about their current social work role(s) or the social work role(s) held in the past five years and identify the main strategies that would help or would have helped them stay in that position up to a maximum of five. The phrasing of this question asks respondents to self-reflect in order to identify the main strategies that would serve to retain social workers. This differs slightly from the phrasing of Question 25, which asks respondents to identify what they consider to be the top five strategies to retain New Brunswick social workers. The response options for both of these questions are similar, and when we do a cross-comparison of both questions, the actions respondents consider most effective in retaining both themselves and others can be identified. In this comparison (personal vs. general/external), the top five retention strategies identified by respondents include the ability to focus on direct interventions with clients with less time spent on administrative duties (70%), being included in decision-making processes within the workplace (68%), better compensation and benefits (67%), lower case numbers (67%), and flexible work hours (64%).

Retention Comparison (Q. 22 vs. Q. 35)



Best Ways to Retain Social Workers



### 3.0 Discussion & Recommendations

It is recognized that social work is a broad field and that the day-to-day realities of social workers change dramatically based on their specific area of practice and place of employment. While acknowledging the variations that exist within the profession, there will be a shortage of social workers within the province, if significant changes aren't made in a timely fashion. Social work employers, across sectors, will need to be competitive to recruit and retain social workers.

The results obtained from this survey will be considered in all actions related to recruitment and retention, as the survey garnered many responses and is representative of the social work population in New Brunswick. With a slight overrepresentation of respondents from major social work employers in the province, the Department of Social Development and the Regional Health Authorities (Horizon & Vitalité), based on employment-based NBASW registration data, the data obtained through this survey paints a picture of the needs of social workers in all sectors of the province, while also providing specific findings for social work employers.

While some actions are specific to recruitment and/or retention, these initiatives are more often closely intertwined, as many actions that would entice people to pursue the profession would also entice people to stay in the profession and vice versa.

Employers should recognize their workforce demographics and develop individual strategies for recruiting and retaining social workers, taking into account the specific roles, day-to-day realities, and current policies and procedures specific to their workplace.

It is recommended that a child-protection-specific strategy also be developed, recognizing the difficult nature of the work, which is supported by the findings of this survey.

### 4.0 Conclusion & Next Steps

As outlined in this report, survey findings will be distributed to NBASW members and to the Social Work Recruitment and Retention Steering Committee, who will use the findings to inform the content of the 5-year Action Plan. The Committee comprises stakeholders across sectors and departments who will continue to work together in developing and implementing a widespread strategy to recruit and retain social workers in New Brunswick.

Once again, thank you to all the NBASW members who took the time to participate in this survey! The NBASW greatly appreciates your ongoing dedication to the profession, and this work would not be possible without the support and engagement of New Brunswick social workers.