

For Immediate Release

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Sackville, NB – The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) - atlanticuniversities.ca - in partnership with Medavie Health Foundation (Medavie) - medaviehealthfoundation.ca - has created a full-time Regional Coordinator position dedicated to supporting student mental health initiatives for post-secondary education (PSE) institutions across Atlantic Canada.

Dr. Elizabeth Cawley (see below for bio) has been appointed as the Regional Coordinator and was introduced by the AAU and Medavie representatives today at **'From Survive to Thrive'**, a regional student mental conference hosted by Mount Allison University.

Medavie's investment to create the Regional Coordinator position, which is also supported by the region's 16 universities and six community colleges, will increase capacity for further collaboration on challenges related to student mental health. Dr. Cawley serves the region's PSE institutions from Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL.

"For the past five years, Medavie Health Foundation has been a highly supportive partner helping our universities and community colleges improve student mental health services", said Dr. Alaa Abd-El Aziz, President, University of Prince Edward Island and Chair, AAU.

He added that, "Meeting student mental health needs is one of the most pressing issues on our campuses. With Medavie's generous support, the AAU is fortunate to have attracted someone of Dr. Cawley's background and experience to help our institutions meet student needs as efficiently and effectively as possible."

"We recognize that post-secondary life can be challenging for students", commented Bernard Lord, CEO, Medavie. "This new position will help enhance mental health initiatives at campuses across the region, helping our students not just survive, but thrive. It's also an example of a different kind of health care - one that begins on campus in helping students stay in school and live their best lives. Ensuring people receive the right support at the right time aligns with the way Medavie thinks about health care."

Dr. Peter Cornish, Director, Associate Professor, and Director of Memorial Counselling and Wellness Centre, Memorial University and Co-Chair, AAU student mental health committee, summarized the value of the newly created position to universities and colleges: "Through the synergy of our Atlantic-wide collaboration, we are poised to lead the country with innovative, highly engaging wellness programming. This aligns very well with the collective academic mission to prepare the next generation to thrive and lead with passion, purpose and an ethic of care."

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Medavie Health Foundation is funded by [Medavie Blue Cross](#) and [Medavie Health Services](#) as part of a long-term commitment to make a lasting impact in the communities where our employees and customers live and work. The Foundation supports and promotes innovative and evidence-based solutions to address some of our country's most pressing physical and mental health care challenges, with a focus on child and youth mental health, post-traumatic stress disorder, and type 2 diabetes. It aims to bring organizations and communities together through collaborative multi-year partnerships and to support grassroots, community-based initiatives through an annual grants program. For more information and to sign up for our e-newsletter, visit us at medaviehealthfoundation.ca.

As a not-for-profit company, Medavie is proud to commit an annual social dividend to the Medavie Health Foundation.



Dr. Elizabeth Cawley is currently the Regional Mental Health Coordinator for the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU). Dr. Cawley received her PhD in Psychiatry from McGill University. Her research focuses on help-seeking behaviour in post-secondary students and developing online strategies to increase early help-seeking via mental health literacy and self-assessment. Dr. Cawley has consulted at a number of top Canadian universities, assisting them with the development and implementation of their mental health strategies. In addition, Dr. Cawley was recently selected to participate in a Kids Help Phone Advisory Group. This Advisory Group was designed to be multidisciplinary and acts to inform the Board of Directors on relevant topics; Dr. Cawley specializes in the area of Service Design.