



# PHARM CIRCLE

*Connecting stories from Memorial's PharmD for Working Professionals Program*

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Happy Happenings


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## From the Dean's Desk

### Dr. Shawn Bugden

As 2023 draws to a close, we share another issue of the Pharm Circle newsletter.

It was another busy year for the School of Pharmacy. Two more students conferred their degrees at fall 2023 convocation, adding to our growing number of alumni. We also celebrated all the 2023 graduates during an informal reception held after the convocation ceremony in October and met some family members who travelled great distances to support their loved ones. And during Awards Night earlier in the fall, we presented awards to three members of the program's pharmily.

This ninth issue continues to share stories about the program and its people. This time we profile Dr. Lisa Bishop who teaches in the pharmaceutical care courses. Students get to experience her passion for the profession and are often empowered by her teaching style.

Our feature article discusses the important role preceptors play in the experiential learning component of the program. They mentor and guide students through APPE rotations and their commitment to the pharmacy profession is vital to their learning. They inspire our students, and we are grateful for their participation.

We also shine the spotlight on several pharmacists who chose Memorial University to obtain their PharmD degree. They balance work and school commitments with raising families and making time for volunteering and extra-curriculum activities.

We thank you for reading about our program and wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. See you in 2024.



*We have a diverse group of faculty, external content authors, and instructional designers who work together to make this program a success. We will share their profiles in every issue. Keep an eye out to learn more about our growing pharmily!*

# Instructor Spotlight

## Dr. Lisa Bishop



Dr. Lisa Bishop is a pharmacist and professor at Memorial University's School of Pharmacy and also holds a clinical assistant professor role within the Discipline of Family Medicine. With over 25 years of diverse pharmacy experience, she began her journey at Memorial University pursuing a Bachelor of Science in pharmacy. Her professional path includes roles as a hospital pharmacist and a community relief pharmacist. She also completed a hospital pharmacy residency at St. Joseph's Hospital in Hamilton, Ontario. Returning to Newfoundland and Labrador, she served as a critical care pharmacist. She attained a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Colorado, and then joined Memorial University as a clinical faculty member. Presently, she practices within an interdisciplinary family medicine clinic where she integrates her clinical expertise into her teaching endeavours. Her focus areas include pain, substance use, and chronic disease management.

As an educator, she primarily focuses on equipping students with the competence to excel as pharmacists in delivering exceptional patient-centered care. Her passion for teaching comes from a strong desire to mentor and impart practical, real-world skills, achieved through active learning methods that go beyond traditional knowledge acquisition. Her undergraduate teaching most notably involves the development of pharmacy skills and leadership courses. A significant milestone in her career was leading the development of the new entry-to-practice PharmD program.

In the PharmD for Working Professionals program, she leads the chronic pain module within the pharmaceutical care courses, utilizing her extensive expertise to enrich her teaching. Students in the program sense her passion for pharmacy. They value her interactive approach in the online learning environment and leave the course feeling more confident in their ability to provide patient-centred care to patients dealing with chronic pain.

Dr. Bishop's commitment to teaching earned her several prestigious awards, including Preceptor of the Year and Teaching Excellence awards. Beyond teaching, she was recognized for her dedication to professional and advocacy organizations. Among her notable honours were the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists Meritorious Service Award and the School of Pharmacy's Alumni Achievement Award.

She is also an established researcher with experience in cannabis education and policy, opioid stewardship, and mental health and addictions. Presently, she co-leads a cannabis harm reduction education program named Drug Education Centered on Youth Decision Empowerment (DECYDE; [www.DECYDE.ca](http://www.DECYDE.ca)). This program is designed for educators, caregivers, youth, and mentors of youth. Her primary goal is to protect the health and safety of youth by enhancing their substance use health literacy through a trauma-informed, skills-based, harm reduction approach. As a researcher, Dr. Bishop also prioritizes mentoring students. By fostering an environment that encourages curiosity and innovation, she ensures her mentees have diverse opportunities to excel. Through hands-on involvement in research projects, she equips them with the practical insights necessary for their future careers. Ultimately, her goal is to empower students to make meaningful contributions in their chosen fields.

In her spare time, she loves hiking and enjoying the outdoors with her friends, family, and dog. She has two daughters who she is extremely proud of; and one of them is following in her footsteps towards a career in pharmacy.



*“... Being a preceptor is an opportunity to give back to your profession and you learn so much from every student.”*

*Dr. Natasha Farrell  
Preceptor and PharmD alumni*

Dr. Natasha Farrell is a recent graduate and current preceptor in the program. She understands the value in having a preceptor who is a great mentor. And being a preceptor gives her the opportunity to offer the same guidance that was afforded her and provides an avenue to stay up to date with current practices. She knows first hand that working professionals' students are independent and already have a wealth of knowledge and experience. For this reason, they may require less supervision and are a positive addition to the workplace. For those who may consider becoming a preceptor, Natasha says “Just do it! Being a preceptor is an opportunity to give back to your profession and you learn so much from every student”.

While most preceptors in the program are pharmacists, some are not. They may be from other health disciplines such as a nurse practitioner or physician. Non-pharmacist preceptors find it rewarding to precept pharmacists. Feedback often cites the important interprofessional learning and collaboration that occurs between the preceptor and the student and with other professionals at the site. Students' feedback is similar. Learning the patient care process employed by other professionals can be eye-opening. Plus, it fosters interprofessional collaboration skills too.

Our students often find the experiential learning experience an invaluable learning tool. Having the opportunity to work side-by-side with their preceptor in an integrated way allows them to apply their learnings in a supportive environment. It helps improve their clinical skills while receiving coaching and facilitation from their preceptor. Even though they are pharmacists with their own years of accumulated skills and experiences, they still learn a lot from the rotations and their preceptor. Having the opportunity to develop personal

relationships with other health care professionals gives some of them a better sense of their own role within the interdisciplinary team. Some students even say their confidence increased and they rediscovered a love for the profession. The preceptor is key to providing a rotation that is filled with great learning moments and can even inspire a future generation of preceptors as a result.

To further support the important role preceptors play, the School of Pharmacy's experiential learning coordinator, Lisa Little, launched the inaugural preceptor newsletter—titled Preceptor PEP-Talk. Preceptor development is a key focus of the experiential learning program. So reinforcing preceptors' teaching skills is of benefit to both student and preceptor and yields rewarding rotations for all involved.

The Preceptor PEP-Talk aims to provide busy preceptors with a succinct source of precepting pearls, give updates on PEP happenings, and show an appreciation for preceptor volunteers (especially from student-written articles). Topics are informed by feedback received from both preceptors and students. It is hoped this valuable preceptor resource will enhance the preceptor's APPE experience and aid in their contribution to student learning.

For those interested in serving as a preceptor and playing a starring role in a student's experiential learning, contact the School of Pharmacy for more information.

**Contact details:**

- **Website:** <https://mun.ca/pharmacy/pharmacy-practice-community/practice-experience-program/>
- **Email:** [PPEprogram@mun.ca](mailto:PPEprogram@mun.ca)

# Students in the Spotlight

*We like to celebrate our students and let readers know a little more about the people in our neighbourhood. We share student profiles in every issue.*

## 2020 Cohort Jill LeBlanc

Jill LeBlanc is a native Cape Bretoner who now lives in Shediac, New Brunswick (NB). She completed a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry at Cape Breton University before pursuing a career in pharmacy. She moved to St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador, to complete a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from Memorial University and says she met the best people during her time there. When she graduated in 2011, she returned to the mainland with not only her pharmacy degree but with many lifelong friends too.

Her first pharmacy job was in Jean Coutu in Sackville, Nova Scotia, where she worked as a community pharmacist. She eventually moved to Moncton, NB, and switched to hospital pharmacy in 2022.

Committed to a lifelong learning mentality, Jill completed her injection training, Prescribing for Minor Ailments program, and several professional development courses through Dalhousie University's CPE and CPhA's websites. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Jill decided to take her pharmacy practice to another level and applied to the PharmD for Working Professionals program at Memorial. She returned to her alma mater in September of that year and was a member of one of the first cohorts who had to complete the first clinical skills course remotely.

During her second year in the program, while still completing courses, she accepted a new position as hospital pharmacist at the George L. Dumont Hospital in Moncton, NB. In this role, her training in cardiology, emergency, and central dispensing is being put to good use; as is her bilingualism since this hospital is primarily French speaking. Jill is never one to back down from a challenge and is embracing her French as a second language background.

She is currently completing her final online course while simultaneously completing her first APPE rotation at the George L. Dumont Leon Richard Oncology Centre. She



plans to complete her final APPE rotation and finish her degree in 2024.

Throughout her time in the program, Jill has met some new faces and has also reunited with some familiar ones (she is hesitant to say 'old'). She finds the program very flexible, making it a little easier to adapt to life's changes and challenges. Because not only is Jill a busy pharmacist and student, she is also a busy mom.

She considers completing this program a great accomplishment and one that will help her throughout her pharmacy career. After graduation, Jill plans to continue working in the hospital setting and knows the knowledge and skills she gained will be an invaluable asset going forward.

Outside the pharmacy clinic and online classroom, Jill enjoys crafting, cooking/baking, music, travelling, and spending time outdoors. She also volunteers as a soccer coach and takes her 2 boys - Nicolas (8) and Anthony (5) - to hockey, basketball, or any sport they are interested in. She loves to watch them grow and hopes to continue to be a positive role model in their lives. She is certainly leading by example and teaching her sons to follow their dreams and to know that only the sky is the limit.



## 2021 Cohort Amer Sharaf

harboured a desire to expand his knowledge in patient care. This desire led Amer to Memorial University in 2021 to pursue the PharmD for Working Professionals program.

Currently, Amer is working as a hospital pharmacist and is leveraging the skills and knowledge gained in the program to deepen his understanding of patient care. He says, "the program not only expanded my clinical expertise but also provided a platform to connect with like-minded students and knowledgeable instructors, forming valuable connections in the process."

Meet Amer, a dedicated and accomplished pharmacist who has a passion for expanding his knowledge in patient care. His pharmacy journey began in Jordan in 2010, where he completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Jordan. Seeking new opportunities and experiences, he decided to make a life-changing move to Canada and obtained his pharmacy license in 2013.

Embarking on a pharmacy career in Canada, his first job took him to Langley, British Columbia. Building on his expertise, he then transitioned to Stettler, Alberta, taking on the role of a pharmacy manager in a retail store. In 2017, driven by a strong entrepreneurial spirit, Amer took a bold step and opened his own pharmacy, demonstrating both his dedication and leadership to the pharmacy profession.

Amer and his wife decided to relocate to London, Ontario, in 2020 because they wanted to be closer to family and friends. This move to their third Canadian province marked a significant chapter in their lives. But alongside his professional commitments, he always

Amer is one of a handful of students who was able to complete both APPE rotations in the same semester as the final online course. Fall 2023 marks his final semester in the program. He looks forward to graduating but remains committed to the pursuit of excellence in his field. His journey is marked by a dedication to patient-centered care, continuous learning, and fostering collaborative relationships in the healthcare community.

Beyond his professional endeavors, Amer has a penchant for exploring different cultures through food and other cultural experiences. He enjoys playing basketball and soccer to not only stay active but to add to the vibrancy of his life outside of work and school. Amer also loves travelling with his wife and two sons and creating lasting memories as they explore new places together. A soon-to-be PharmD graduate, his dedication to both his career and personal interests paints a vivid picture of a pharmacist with a bright future ahead.

### Important Dates

For future applicants:

*This is a limited life program and may have limited admission cycles left*

Next application deadline date:  
**\*new\* March 1, 2024**

For current students:

*PHAR 6900 Clinical Skills II*  
*Onsite: April 19-21, 2024*

## 2022 Cohort

# Sarah Hyslop

Born and raised in St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador, Sarah Hyslop enrolled in Memorial University after highschool. A pharmacy career was not on the radar during her first year of studies. But she is forever thankful to that friend who suggested she apply to pharmacy 10 years ago.

Sarah completed her Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy in 2018. Following graduation, she began working relief for the Sobeys National Pharmacy group on the Avalon Peninsula. That first year working as a pharmacist felt very much like a fifth year of pharmacy school for her because she worked in many different facilities and with a plethora of pharmacists, support staff, and patients who taught her so much about community pharmacy.

After her first year as a relief pharmacist, Sarah accepted a staff position at Lawtons Continuing Care in St. John's, which is one of the company's largest long-term care pharmacies. As a consultant pharmacist in long-term care, Sarah attends weekly inter-professional patient conferences, participates in quarterly review rounds, and provides pharmacy-related education to nursing staff.

Up until 2023, Sarah worked her entire pharmacy career in St. John's. She began practicing on the west coast of the island this year where she helps with the onboarding of several new long-term care facilities in the Corner Brook area for Lawtons Continuing Care.

In addition to working in long-term care, she is dedicated to (and passionate about) helping educate the next generation of pharmacists. So in 2021, she began assisting with the pharmacy practice courses in the Entry-to-Practice PharmD program at Memorial University. These courses help students develop



and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for professional practice.

These hands-on student experiences influenced Sarah to consider doing a PharmD. With encouragement from Dr. Stephen Coombs, one of the pharmacy practice course coordinators, Sarah returned to Memorial University in September 2022 and is now in her second year of the program.

Since starting her PharmD, she has already gained more confidence in providing care to her patients. She has also gained deeper therapeutic knowledge in many areas that she uses and applies daily. Plus, she can see the impact the program is having in her pharmacy practice. She says, "In my first applied learning course, I created a change management project that helped increase pharmacists' clinical roles in the personal care homes that are served by my pharmacy."



Sarah leads a busy life. But when she is not studying or working, she enjoys reading, going to the gym, and spending time with her two cats, Winston and Matilda (who, by example, do their best to remind her of the importance of getting enough rest).



## 2023 Cohort *Jillian Doherty*

medication profiles. She also works with a wonderful team of pharmacists, registered technicians, and assistants whom she considers family.

Jill always knew she would further her education some day. "I love learning. With the ever changing pharmacy landscape, I knew the time was right to start my PharmD." She heard wonderful things about Memorial University and was excited to experience a different educational institution at home in Atlantic Canada.



She admits she felt a bit nervous returning to school after almost ten years since graduating. That feeling was eventually replaced by the excitement and joy of having the opportunity to go back to university. Visiting campus in September for the first three-day course helped her feel welcomed and inspired. She already feels greatly supported by the program's faculty and staff and looks forward to learning from her remarkable classmates over the next few years.

Jill and her husband reside in Charlottetown, PEI, where they joyfully welcomed their first child, Will, in December 2022. Between managing life as a new parent and working around her husband's busy schedule as a television sports broadcaster, she feels grateful for the support and flexibility that the program offers.

Jill is an avid runner. She also loves to golf (a benefit of living in PEI) and enjoys rewatching episodes of *Downton Abbey*. A fun fact about Jill is that she recently stepped outside of her comfort zone and played the role of Lucky, a puppet character in "Silly Robbie's World," a children's television series created and produced by her husband.

Jill was born and raised in Stratford, Prince Edward Island (PEI). After completing three years of biology at the University of PEI, she was accepted to Dalhousie Pharmacy and graduated in 2014. For Jill, the pharmacy profession combines two of her passions: teaching and health care. She takes pride and a sense of responsibility in educating her patients, empowering them to become engaged in their own health journeys.

Throughout her pharmacy degree, Jill returned to PEI each summer to work for Murphy's Pharmacies. She accepted a full-time position upon graduation and continues to practise there today. It has been especially meaningful for Jill to come full circle, now working alongside an exceptional group of pharmacists who mentored and supported her when she was a student.

Murphy's Pharmacies has multiple locations across PEI and a variety of practice settings. One of their sites works in conjunction with PEI's first outpatient methadone clinic. Jill spent four years at this site and worked closely with the clinic's team. This strengthened her knowledge and experience in this area of practice. Her current position is in Murphy's long-term care dispensary, an area Jill loves working in. She regularly collaborates with the facility's doctors and nurses, provides educational sessions for residents and staff, and uses her clinical knowledge to address complex

# Happy Happenings



## HATS OFF!

Congratulations to Michael Hatt and W. Chandler Pafford who conferred their PharmD degrees at Fall 2023 Convocation



## KUDOS!

Dr. Scott Edwards received the Ambulatory Patient Care Preceptor-of-the-Year award



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PROGRAM ALUMNI!

The Pharmacists' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL) recently elected a new Executive Committee--all made up of former PharmD for Working Professionals students:

President:	Dr. Ashley Waghmare
Vice President:	Dr. Vanessa Bennett
Executive Member:	Dr. Kara O'Keefe
Past President:	Dr. Janice Audeau



## WELL DONE!

Emily Edison, a student from the 2021 cohort, received the Travel Award for Working Professionals in Pharmacy



## SALUTE!

Rebecca Goudling, a student from the 2020 cohort, received the David J Collins Legacy Award for NL Pharmacists

## STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON SCHOOL OF PHARMACY COMMITTEES (2022-2024)

Academic Council  
**Nishi Gupta**

Professional Suitability  
**Holly Noftall**

Recruitment  
**Alishia Anstey**

Undergraduate Student Admissions  
**P. Garrett O'Leary**

Undergraduate Studies  
**Sarah Hyslop**

*We wish you a  
holiday season filled with  
peace, rest, and time with  
family and friends*

*Happy Holidays*