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The Importance of the Ontario Nurses' Association for Nurses

The tireless efforts of nurses is often gone unnoticed and maybe sometimes overlooked, with the government making pay cuts and the constant lack of recognition of the profession. At least until people saw how nurses were on the front lines of healthcare, when the pandemic hit. It was clear that more than ever, the nurses needed help with the overwhelming demand that the pandemic provided with more people becoming hospitalized. Just seeing nurses work firsthand in my first clinical placement blew me away at how terribly painful the job can be at times.

Having a mother who works full-time then comes home to cook and clean when she's off, gives me a way larger appreciation for how much nurses do. The Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) is an organization run to speak on the issues nurses may face and aid them in solving these issues within the practice, or outside of the practice. They provide ways to promote safety for the health care professionals, as well as the community. ONA does this by utilizing their many executives and representatives to bring up issues to employers regarding the nurses' rights, entitlements and the capacity they can provide professional and equitable care.

ONA's advocating takes place as newsletters, campaigns and actions, resources, awards, events and much more. These resources include educational pieces about health and safety at the workplace, dealing with inequality, as well as services that help members deal with mental and physical struggles and human rights problems, etc.. Recently, ONA's actions include working on Bill 124, wage suppression legislation, where ONA has been vocal about creating a Charter in an attempt to fight the Bill and shows how vocal the organization is when it comes to prominent concerns within the practice. Nurses have so much on their plate with work, family and other

hobbies and commitments. Therefore, the career makes having to advocate for oneself extremely difficult and is why ONA is so essential for nurses and health care professionals.

In turn, ONA is highly necessary in advocating for the rights of the nurses to allow for the promotion of high-quality health care for the residents of Ontario. They value things such as unity and strength, integrity and professionalism, and diversity and inclusion. With such a strong foundation and committed team running the organization, ONA is the backbone support for our Ontario nurses, and without it nurses would have no one to advocate, support and fight for their rights as employees. I am optimistic for the future of the organization's work and how impactful it will continue to be for nurses and other health care professionals. With a difficult field in terms of it being physically and mentally demanding, it is incredibly integral to have a union that stands behind the nurses, so that the nurses feel heard and safe in their workplace.