

ONA WINS



SUMMARY OF ANOTHER SUCCESS AS YOUR UNION STRIVES TO IMPROVE YOUR WORKING CONDITIONS

Significant improvements to RN staffing levels at Kingston General Hospital: A major win for safe, patient care

Workplace/Department: Kingston General Hospital, Emergency Department

The Issue

Since 2013, ONA members had continuously reported to their employer concerns about Registered Nurse staffing levels in Kingston General Hospital's (KGH) Emergency Department. Due to patient volumes, acuity and the ongoing state of gridlock that resulted in hallway care, RNs and other health-care professionals consistently raised these issues with their employer. ONA members believed that KGH officials were failing to adequately address their concerns related to patient safety.

Evidence notes that employing sufficient numbers of RNs in the Emergency Department is vital to safe patient care and a quality practice setting.

How ONA helped

ONA members and Kingston General Hospital Bargaining Unit leaders worked closely with ONA Professional Practice Specialists, Labour Relations Officers and other ONA staff to address these serious issues.

Over the next several months, the Specialists met with members and other stakeholders and assisted with developing specific actions with the employer to find solutions to improve patient care at KGH Emergency Department.

The Results

ONA representatives worked with the employer and, as a result, KGH Emergency Department receives:

- An increase of one RN 24/7.
- An increase of five permanent full-time and six permanent part-time positions achieved for baseline staffing in the Emergency Department.
- An RN float position increased to 11.25 hours from 10 hours per day.
- An increase of one Patient Care Assistant of 7.5 hours per day.
- Patient transportation resources available 24/7.
- Sixteen hours of additional security guard coverage, stationed in the ED.
- In addition, several policy changes regarding security measures were implemented to enhance safety and security.

Significance

This win is significant in that ONA members and ONA staff worked together to bring forward a solution that the employer agreed to and adopted. This is a major success for staffing and patient care and could be applied to other employers given that workload and patient care issues seem to be a chronic problem in Ontario's health-care system.

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