



Board Highlights

Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors meeting February 16-18, 2016

THE ONA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' FIRST MEETING OF THE YEAR WAS SET AGAINST A BACKDROP of continuing challenges for our profession, including the erosion of RN positions throughout the province and the breakdown of hospital negotiations. However, the Board made key decisions to help lead our members effectively through these difficult times.

CURRENT PRIORITIES

The top three priorities identified by the Board are:

- ▶ **Nurses Know Campaign:** Additional resources have been directed to ONA's *Nurses Know* campaign, including new radio, tv and transit shelter ads to further knowledge of the professionalism of nurses. Our latest figures show that more than 1,200 RN positions have been slashed since January 2015, resulting in a loss of approximately 2.5 million hours of RN care. The Board is looking to our Locals to move the campaign into communities. Please consider attending the education session at the March Provincial Coordinators Meeting (PCM) to learn how you and your members can get involved.
- ▶ **ONA Elections:** The feasibility of holding elections for ONA provincial officers in the same year, instead of a staggered-year schedule, was addressed. Information will be brought forward to the March PCM for discussion. Information will also be provided to the March PCM on conducting Local elections electronically (currently voting is in person), including the pros and cons, options available and costs. Further discussion on constitutional amendments is slated for the June PCM.
- ▶ **Strikebreaking:** The Board reviewed constitutional and policy amendments on strikebreaking and potential discipline or other consequences, which will be taken to the March PCM.

KEY DECISIONS

- ▶ Up to 10 (previously five) nursing students per year will be selected to receive a \$1,000 ONA scholarship, based on specific criteria and procedures, including that they must be an immediate relative of an ONA member and write an essay on the importance of our union to nurses. There is currently one additional Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions student scholarship.

REGIONAL REPORTS

- ▶ **Region 1:** Hogarth Riverview Manor management's failure to staff its new facility has resulted in a severe lack of RNs, risking the care and safety of its residents and violating legislated RN staffing levels. The St. Joseph's Care Group-owned facility in Thunder Bay had months to ensure a full staff complement. ONA filed a grievance, and made a formal complaint to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care regarding the violation of Ministry standards that require an RN onsite at all times, as there have been multiple occasions when there were none.
- ▶ **Region 2:** At Providence Care (St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital and Kingston Mental Health), a vote between ONA (84

members) and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (133 members) for the RN Bargaining Unit is scheduled for April 19 and 20. We continue to work with our Bargaining Unit leadership team to prepare for this important vote.

- ▶ **Region 3:** ONA President Linda Haslam-Stroud has written to Runnymede Healthcare Centre President and CEO Connie Dejak decrying the hospital's decision to remove a staggering 41,000 RN care hours per year, down from 81,000 hours, despite an 8.5 per cent budget surplus.
- ▶ **Region 4:** ONA is speaking out following five separate violent incidents against nurses at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton since mid-December. ONA attributes these incidents to a shortage of nurses and a faulty personal alarm system.
- ▶ **Region 5:** Local leaders, members and their supporters staged a very successful information picket at Windsor Regional Hospital on Family Day to protest the facility's decision to cut 169 RN positions.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

- ▶ **Communications/Government Relations:** Plans are underway for Nursing Week 2016, May 9 to 15. ONA's theme will build on *Nurses Know*, which encompasses respect for the value RNs provide to the health and well-being of our communities, a moratorium on RN cuts, and ensuring there are enough RNs in

WANT TO KNOW MORE? The full minutes from the February Board of Directors meeting will be available on the Executive Members' section of our website (www.ona.org) following approval at the next Board meeting.

our health-care system to provide safe, high quality patient care. The *Nursing Week Planning Guide* will soon be available by email to Bargaining Unit leaders and posted on the Executive Section of our website. In March, ONA will send you a bilingual poster with the “tear away” for posting. If you would like to invite a member of the ONA Board as a guest/guest speaker at your Nursing Week event or for a site visit, please fill out the request form in the guide as soon as possible. A video featuring the President’s address to front-line members can be downloaded from ONA’s website prior to Nursing Week.

- ▶ **Student Liaison:** ONA’s Legal Expense Assistance Plan (LEAP) Team is pursuing an appeal regarding the controversial American National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) after the College of Nurses of Ontario’s Registration Committee refused to allow a re-write for a nursing student who failed the exam three times. The result is that she must re-do her entire BScN if she wants to practice nursing.
- ▶ **Political Action:** The Board thanks ONA leaders and members who took part in recent Ontario Health Coalition-sponsored Days of Action in Trenton, North Bay, St. Catharines, Ottawa and London to protest cuts to local hospitals. Further Days of Action will be held in 2016; we ask members to participate where possible.
- ▶ **Professional Issues:** ONA has signed a Minutes of Settlement with the employer to address serious staffing issues in the emergency department of Kingston General Hospital. The settlement has

resulted in an increase of RN positions and improved security measures.

- ▶ **Human Rights and Equity:** Two new members were welcomed to the Human Rights and Equity Team in early February: Jackie Chesterman and Melissa Grenier, who will respectively represent the LGBT equity group and the Disabilities equity group. Returning for their final year on the team are Yue (Lucy) Zhao, representing the Racialized equity group and Brigitte Goar, representing the Aboriginal equity group.
- ▶ **Labour Relations:** After the Ontario Hospital Association proposed the gutting of wages, benefits and job security provisions for our 58,000 hospital members, talks for a renewed hospital central contract broke down on February 12. The dispute will head to arbitration on March 21-22 with Arbitrator Chris Albertyn. When the decision is released, a provincial hospital sector meeting for ONA leaders will be called. Your Hospital Central Negotiating Team remains committed to obtaining a contract that reflects the invaluable role of RNs. Check www.ona.org/bargaining for updates.
- ▶ **Health and Safety:** ONA’s violence prevention campaign (www.ona.org/violence) continues at the provincial and Bargaining Unit levels. The government’s Executive Team, comprised of the Deputy Ministers of Labour and Health, Presi-

dent Linda Haslam-Stroud and the CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association, is overseeing the Leadership Table and the groups working on violence initiatives for nurses in hospitals. The team expects to complete this work by the end of 2016, with a rollout for all hospital health-care workers, followed by homes and communities.

- ▶ **Local Finance:** ONA hosted a very successful Novice Treasurers Training Day on January 21 to guide newer Treasurers through the Local bookkeeping processes. A webinar was held for our seasoned Treasurers from January 26-28, including an orientation to their new computers and overview of the changes to the Sage 50 Accounting program.
- ▶ **Member Education:** The Health and Safety Caucuses will be held in May for Regions 2, 3, 4 and 5, with a webinar session for Region 1. Participants will learn how to value workplace inspections as a tool to mobilize/engage/educate members on how to handle health and safety issues; understand the importance and power of preparation in the worker caucus prior to Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) meetings; handle unresolved health and safety concerns; and identify best practices to follow during JHSC meetings and how to effectively present issues to the employer.

The Next Board of Directors meeting will be held from April 18-21, 2016 in ONA’s Kingston regional office.

If you have any questions about this Board meeting, please contact Linda, Vicki or your regional Vice-President (contact information below).

Board members for 2016: Linda Haslam-Stroud, President, Communications and Government Relations/Student Liaison (#2254); Vicki McKenna, First Vice-President, Political Action and Professional Issues (#2314); Pam Mancuso, Region 1, Human Rights and Equity (#7710); Anne Clark, Region 2, Education (#7758); Andy Summers, Region 3, Labour Relations (#7754); Laurie Brown, Region 4, Occupational Health and Safety (#7752); Karen Bertrand, Region 5, Local Finance (#7702). **To contact a Board member during regular business hours**, call (416) 964-8833 (Toronto) or toll-free 1-800-387-5580, hit “0” and ask the receptionist to put you through to the appropriate voicemail box (in brackets). **To leave a message for a Board member after hours**, call (416) 964-8833 (Toronto) or toll-free 1-800-387-5580 (if using the toll-free number, hit “0” immediately after dialing the number to be connected to the Toronto office), then dial her or his voicemail box. The Board also has an intake box for emergencies, monitored twice daily. To reach it, call the above numbers and dial voicemail box #775.