



Board Highlights

Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors meeting April 18-21, 2016

THE ONA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APRIL MEETING WAS HELD IN KINGSTON TO COINCIDE WITH the *Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act* vote at Providence Care (St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital and Kingston Mental Health) between ONA (84 members) and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (133 members) for the RN Bargaining Unit. Thanks to the hard work of our Bargaining Unit leadership team, other members and staff, the nurses voted convincingly for ONA and we warmly welcome them to our strong, united union!

The top three priorities identified by the Board were:

- ▶ **ONA Local Elections and Constitutional Amendments:** A number of suggested amendments regarding provincial and Local elections, including the common Board term and the possibility of online voting for Locals, were highlighted and will be discussed further at the June Provincial Coordinators Meeting (PCM).
- ▶ **Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Activities:** Representatives from the OFL addressed the Board on where the organization is under its new executive (President Chris Buckley, Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied and Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates) and where it hopes to go in the future. The Board requested further documentation on the OFL's committee structures, accountabilities, constitutions, and membership, which it will review and present at a future PCM.
- ▶ **LEAP Guide for Members:** The Board accepted proposed amendments to ONA's *Legal Expense Assistance Plan (LEAP) Guide*, including the College of Nurses of Ontario requirement for nurses to self-report offences under the Criminal Code of Canada, the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* and other offences that could be relevant to practice. The LEAP Plan will be amended based on these changes.

NURSING WEEK

We hope you are busy planning Nursing Week events to show your members how much they are appreciated and valued (our *Nursing Week Planning Guide*, recently sent to Bargaining Unit leaders and available on the executive section of our website, can help!) Nursing Week runs from Monday, May 9 to Sunday, May 15, under the simple, but effective theme, *We are Ontario's nurses. Nurses know.* A video featuring ONA President Linda Haslam-Stroud's address to front-line members can be downloaded from our website. And when the week is over, don't forget to send your stories and photos to cgrintake@ona.org. Happy Nursing Week!

WEAR WHITE WEDNESDAYS

The Board is continuing with the Wear White on Wednesdays campaign and is asking for your help in spreading the word. The initiative, which has been wholeheartedly embraced by many ONA members, is all about trying to take back our work and be recognized as RNs. The ONA estore (www.ona.org/estore) has a wide array of Wear White apparel.

REGIONAL REPORTS

- ▶ **Region 1:** ONA filed a grievance and made a formal complaint to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care regarding the violation of Ministry standards at Hogarth Riverview Manor, as there have been multiple occasions when there were no RNs onsite.
- ▶ **Region 2:** Region 2 Vice-President Anne Clark, Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) Bargaining Unit President Cindy Sandercock, Local 105 Coordinator Melissa Tilley and a member from NHH's palliative care unit whose position has been eliminated, gathered at the Ontario Health Coalition's town hall in Cobourg to discuss devastating cuts to NHH staff and services, which will result in more than 60,000 hours of direct nursing care lost.
- ▶ **Region 3:** ONA successfully argued a Region 3 employer violated the collective agreement by awarding a position to an external candidate with no experience rather than to an RN with more than 20 years of clinical experience, which clearly sets out principles for all employers to ensure fairness in job selection processes.
- ▶ **Region 4:** Following extensive lobbying by ONA, including a media release and mass rally, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton has decided to "pause and reassess" its plan to replace RNs with practical nurses in its Level 2 NICU. In February, the hospital announced more

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The full minutes from the April 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.

than 60 front-line RN cuts to many units to help slash \$26 million from its \$550 million budget.

- ▶ **Region 5:** A strike was averted for nurse practitioners at Harrow Health Centre, a family health team, after a collective agreement was ratified that included increases to wages, vacation and sick days, and a reduction of the 40-hour work week.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

- ▶ **Communications/Government Relations:** Our *Nurses Know* campaign is picking up steam in our communities! Local campaigns are now moving from the collection of our petition for better care to presentation, as members are meeting with their MPPs to have them read in the legislature. Petitions will also be read in the legislature during Nursing Week and a question about RN cuts will be asked during Question Period. If your local campaign has not made arrangements to meet with your MPP (the legislation adjourns for the summer on June 10), contact cgrintake@ona.org and we can help you come up with a plan. We also encourage you to submit stories about how RN cuts are affecting you and your patients at nursesknow.ona.org or our hotline at 1-844-881-9462. Please keep up this good work; we are being heard!
- ▶ **Student Liaison:** After ONA President Linda Haslam-Stroud sent a letter to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care about our concerns with the controversial American National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), including the three-write exam limit, the government told us it is making amendments to the *Nursing Act*

Regulation. The College of Nurses of Ontario is also expected to make necessary amendments to its registration criteria at its June Council meeting.

- ▶ **Political Action:** ONA is calling for the immediate inclusion of all nurses in Bill 163, *Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act (Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, 2016)*. While this bill is positive news for certain designated first responders, ONA is extremely disappointed the government ignored evidence presented that the working environment nurses confront is just as psychologically challenging, if not more so, than that faced by those included in the bill. We sent a letter to the Minister of Labour and are continuing discussions, urging him to reconsider the inclusion of nurses.
- ▶ **Professional Practice:** ONA members have presented their serious workload concerns to two Independent Assessment Committee (IAC) hearings, which will issue recommendations in the upcoming weeks. From April 4-6, an IAC heard evidence from Sault Area Hospital RNs about the negative impact on patient care caused by inadequate RN staffing levels in the 3C medical short stay unit, which the hospital has refused to address. From April 20-22, RNs working in Humber River Hospital's hemodialysis unit detailed poor RN staffing and management's failure to act on their written concerns.
- ▶ **Human Rights and Equity:** Two additional members have been welcomed to the Human Rights and Equity Team: France

The Next Board of Directors meeting will be held from June 13-16, 2016 at the ONA Provincial Office.

O'Connell (Francophone group) and Colleen Taylor (Racialized group), who join Jackie Chesterman (LGBT group), Melissa Grenier (Disabilities group) and Brigitte Goar (Aboriginal group).

- ▶ **Labour Relations:** The Nursing Homes Central Negotiating Team has developed proposals for bargaining a new contract, based on priorities identified in our *Have a Say* bargaining questionnaire. Central bargaining takes place from May 16-20 and May 30-June 3, and while we anticipate a difficult round, the team is committed to achieving the best possible collective agreement. ONA First Vice-President Vicki McKenna is taking a lead on this bargaining.
- ▶ **Health and Safety:** The CEO of Guelph General Hospital has contacted ONA President Linda Haslam-Stroud and is willing to work with our union to improve the safety of hospital RNs after a string of serious recent incidents of workplace violence involving our members.
- ▶ **Local Finance:** Due to overwhelmingly positive feedback with the webinar format for the Treasurers' orientation to their laptops in January, ONA is looking at webinars as an alternative to some Treasurer teleconnects.
- ▶ **Member Education:** The Member Secondment Program will be running again this year with four positions available for highly experienced RN members for temporary work terms within ONA.

If you have any questions about this Board meeting, please contact ONA President Linda Haslam-Stroud, First Vice-President Vicki McKenna 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 #7775.