



Board Highlights

Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors meeting June 13-16, 2016

ON THE HEELS OF A VERY SUCCESSFUL JUNE PROVINCIAL COORDINATORS MEETING (PCM), hosted by Region 1 in Sault Ste. Marie, the ONA Board of Directors was back in Toronto making key decisions to support our members in their professional and union lives.

The top three priorities identified by the Board were:

- ▶ **ONA Provincial Election Policy:** The Board approved significant amendments to this policy (formerly known as the Provincial Election Guidelines). Many changes were recommended by the Provincial Election Team. The new policy will be included in the Call for Nominations for Regional Vice-Presidents, which will go out at the end of June.
- ▶ **Constitutional Amendments:** A number of Constitutional Amendments discussed at the June PCM were reviewed. A document containing the amendments will be drafted for the September Board meeting in preparation for presentation at the Biennial Convention in November.
- ▶ **Cultural Research:** Results of our recent Cultural Research project for Local and provincial leaders were reviewed and will be discussed more in depth at the September Board meeting.

KEY MOTIONS

- ▶ ONA has donated \$10,000 to the Canadian Red Cross in support of the continuing relief and rebuilding efforts for residents of Fort McMurray, who are coping with the destruction caused by wild fires. If you would also like to donate, you can still do so online at www.redcross.ca/albertafires or by phone at 1-800-418-1111.

REGIONAL REPORTS

- ▶ **Region 1:** Following an Independent Assessment Committee (IAC) hearing on April 4-6, which examined the nursing practice and workload issues on the Sault Area Hospital's medical short stay unit, an unprecedented 91 recommendations were issued. They included the addition of a permanent RN with Additional Responsibility, and the need for RNs to take their scheduled breaks to help with the level of fatigue and low morale on the unit.
- ▶ **Region 2:** ONA has successfully appealed the Ministry of Labour's non-issuance of specific orders to improve the safety and security of RNs and other front-line health-care workers in the forensic treatment unit at Brockville Mental Health Centre. The Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre has been ordered by the Ontario Labour Relations Board to install a new electronic and alarm system to summon immediate assistance, provide better staff training, and hire properly trained security who must be present in the forensic treatment unit 24/7 at its Brockville site.
- ▶ **Region 3:** Recommendations from our third IAC hearing for Humber River Hospital, this time in the hemodialysis unit where 187 workload forms were submitted in the past five years, include an increase in the number of RNs on the unit and a formal process to discuss monthly workload complaints.
- ▶ **Region 4:** Nurse practitioners and RNs at the Grand River Community Health Centre, who provide primary care and health-care services to approximately 2,400 patients, will be heading to conciliation in their efforts to reach a new collective agreement and avoid a strike. The nurses have been without a contract since March 31, and the employer came to negotiations with cuts on the agenda and no intention of negotiating. A tentative settlement has just been reached.
- ▶ **Region 5:** Members at Windsor Regional Hospital have told the media the hospital is in chaos as 169 RN positions remain on the chopping block. Nursing schedules are posted late with gaps in schedules where base staffing needs are not being met, RNs are working excessive amounts of overtime, and the hospital has resorted to bringing back retired RNs to backfill empty positions – all at a time when RNs are already over-stretched.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? The full minutes from the June 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.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

► **Communications/Government Relations:**

Local action has been the key focus of the Nurses Know campaign this spring, as many Locals, workplaces and communities organized to stop RN cuts. You helped us gather 35,500 signatures on our petition for better care and reach more than 250,000 people through our virtual rally. You distributed 44,000 Local materials. You shared with us more than 55 personal stories of how front-line care is being impacted by cuts and underfunding of our health-care system. RN cuts were addressed in the Ontario legislature 16 times, thanks to you bringing this issue and your petitions to the attention of your MPPs. It is more important than ever to continue to educate the public about the value of RNs by way of Nurses Know now that Ontario has the very worst RN-to-population ratio in the country. The next step is to write letters to your MPPs (a template is available at www.morenurses.ca/email-your-mpp). Thank you for your continued support and great work!

► **Student Liaison:** After extensive lobbying by ONA, the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) Council approved a motion on June 9 to allow unlimited writes of the controversial NCLEX-RN exam for entry to practice, and will be moving out an expedited consultation process in the upcoming weeks. Great news for our nursing students!

► **Political Action:** ONA continues to vigorously pursue an amendment to have front-line RNs included in Bill 163 (post-traumatic stress disorder coverage for first responders), including

sending a letter to the Premier, engaging in discussions with the Labour Minister, and providing an expert opinion from a renowned forensic psychiatrist who is surprised nurses aren't covered. ONA is developing a broad campaign to continue these efforts.

► **Professional Practice:** ONA has written to the Ontario Renal Network regarding its support for several pilot projects implementing personal support workers (PSWs) in various home dialysis programs, emphasizing that they are not an appropriate care provider in that setting. As part of our CNO standards, RNs must be satisfied that PSWs are fully competent to provide home hemodialysis support. If you or your members are not satisfied, you should NOT sign off.

► **Human Rights and Equity:** Pride celebrations are taking place throughout Ontario this summer. ONA will coordinate and fund registration fees for Locals/Bargaining Units that plan to participate, and where there are more than 40 member participants, an appropriate float/vehicle. Locals can also apply for political action monies under Policy 26.11 to First Vice-President Vicki McKenna before the event. Log onto www.ona.org/pride for updates on events and a downloadable poster.

► **Labour Relations:** ONA is heading to mediation this fall after central bargaining talks on behalf of our 3,000 nursing

home members broke down on June 2. The employers, representing 179 provincial nursing homes, failed to table a monetary offer, instead pushing for concessions, including stripping away job security and reducing benefits. Our goal is to obtain equity with members in the hospital and homes for the aged sectors.

► **Health and Safety:** The reviews were very positive for our May interactive Health and Safety Caucuses, which focused on developing the skill base of our members with real life scenarios that will empower them to prepare and engage their units in dealing with health and safety concerns at their workplaces, and how to work effectively through Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings and present issues to the employer.

► **Local Finance:** All Locals have submitted their year-end audits and back-up files. Thank you!

► **Member Education:** ONA received 133 applications for our Leadership Conference, which will be held September 19-23 in Grand Bend. Sessions will run concurrently for each stream – activist, novice and advanced – with an opening and a closing plenary session for all delegates. Successful applicants are being advised.

The Next Board of Directors meeting will be held from September 19-22, 2016 at the ONA Provincial Office.

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 (#7753); 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.