



Board Highlights

Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors meeting | June 22-24, 2020

APART FROM THE USE OF ZOOM TECHNOLOGY due to provincial emergency orders surrounding COVID-19, it was business as usual when the Board of Directors held their June meeting, addressing a number of our members' key issues.

COVID-19

Several months into the pandemic and the Board continues to be in awe of and full of gratitude for your resilience against this deadly virus and your steadfast dedication to your patients, residents and clients. We have not faltered in supporting you on the front lines by monitoring the situation daily, providing frequent communications through a variety of channels, lobbying the government to ensure you have the protections you need, and using the media, courts, grievance arbitration system, and occupational health and safety laws where we see deficiencies. Our focus of late has been on our long-term care homes, where we are experiencing the greatest challenges. While we have had successes, there is still work to do. Find out how you can help at action.ona.org. Read the very latest on COVID-19 at ona.org/coronavirus.

KEY MOTIONS

- ▶ A \$5-million aggregate limit will be added to ONA's insurance protection program under cyber/privacy insurance coverage. The ONA Directors and Officers Liability Insurance plan has been increased to a \$10-million aggregate limit, effective April 14, 2020. The Board will undertake an annual review of ONA's insurance programs.
- ▶ The Member Secondment Program will be delayed until January 2021.

DONATIONS

- The following donations were approved:
- ▶ \$52,500 to Feed Ontario, \$2,000 for 2020 to Hamilton's Workers Arts and Heritage Centre, and \$600 for 2021-23 to the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers.
 - ▶ COVID-19 pandemic donations to ONA will be used to augment our bursary funds for member education.

REGIONAL REPORTS

- ▶ **Region 1:** Local 10 recruited and filled three Bargaining Unit President positions and Local 2 has filled its one empty Bargaining Unit President position.
- ▶ **Region 2:** A court-appointed arbitrator ruled that Madonna Care Community in Ottawa failed to comply with an order to ensure nurses had better protection against infection. Provincial arbitrator John Stout found the long-term care home had insufficient supplies of N95 masks for nurses conducting high-risk procedures during COVID-19 and that a proportion of those masks had expired.
- ▶ **Region 3:** ONA spoke out about the decision of Runnymede Healthcare Centre in Toronto to lay off or accept retirement packages for seven full-

time RNs during the pandemic. "I am seriously taken aback at the dubious decisions of some employers as they continue to cut their ranks of RNs," ONA President Vicki McKenna told the media. "Cutting RN care is bad for patients at any time, but during a global pandemic, it is particularly foolish."

- ▶ **Region 4:** A Professional Responsibility Clause settlement was reached for members in the emergency department of Grand River Hospital in Kitchener, who expressed concerns over staffing, coverage for shift vacancies, in-unit patient flow, triage support, inappropriate patient spaces and resource availability. The employer agreed to a pilot project triage float RN, and to cover all RN vacant shifts prior to the posting of the schedule, follow a break/rest period assignment procedure with RN input, implement reasonable measures to ensure patient privacy, and adhere to infection control when services are provided in open areas.
- ▶ **Region 5:** In an open letter to London Health Sciences Centre CEO Paul Woods and hospital Foundation CEO John MacFarlane, leaders of five union locals, including ONA Local 100, called for money raised in the foundation's COVID-19 campaign to go to top up pay for staff who don't qualify for the government's temporary \$4 pandemic pay increase.

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 (ona.org) following approval at the next Board meeting.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

► **Communications:** During the Board meeting, we learned that *Front Lines* received the Katie FitzRandolph Award for best overall regular print publication (staff produced) from the Canadian Association of Labour Media. Since then, we also received Apex Awards of Excellence in the categories of Feature Writing for the *Front Lines* insert, *Long-anticipated Nurses' Health Program Launches*, and Campaigns, Programs, and Plans/Health and Medical for our 2019 campaign, *RNs in Long-Term Care: A Portrait*. Congratulations to our Communications and Government Relations Team!

► **Government Relations:** ONA President Vicki McKenna recently appeared before the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly and we provided a written submission to highlight our concerns with Bill 175, *Connecting People to Home and Community Care Act, 2020* (ona.org/submissions). The recently-passed legislation purports to be the path to more flexible, integrated and responsive home and community care, yet suggests that a significant amount of care coordination work will be transferred to health-service providers, including public and private hospitals and primary and community care clinics. It also permits the continued contracting out of home care services to for-profit home care companies and avoids the issues of underfunding and understaffing in the sector. Please consider talking to your MPP about our concerns with this bill; we can help!

► **Student Liaison:** The "Nursing Students: ONA is Here for You!" brochure, full of information about the benefits of

our student affiliate-membership and contact information for members of the Board, has been updated. We urge you to liaise with students in your area and encourage them to read the brochure at ona.org/students.

► **Political Action:** On the heels of the hospital arbitration award, ONA launched a campaign to continue our fight back against the unconstitutional and discriminatory Bill 124, which caps wage increases for some public sector workers, including ONA members, but not others, such as municipal police and firefighters. As we continue to lobby the government provincially, we encourage members to learn about the bill and what you can do to help push back at action.ona.org.

► **Professional Practice:** Thanks to those of you who heeded our call on social media to tell us why nursing is so important to you, as a different way to celebrate Nursing Week this May. Echoing the theme of Nursing Week, *Our Calling: Care, Compassion, Comfort*, those stories will be featured in *Front Lines*, starting with the summer issue.

► **Human Rights and Equity:** The Board approved an anti-racism position statement that unequivocally expresses ONA's rejection of racism and discrimination, both within our ranks and globally. The position statement, currently being refined, will be released in the coming months and posted on our website. ONA will also be establishing an Anti-Racism Caucus Group to deal with issues of anti-Black racism and discrimination, comprised of at

The Next Board of Directors meeting will be held on September 14-16.

least three Black members, at least three Indigenous members, and up to three members from other racialized communities, plus staff support.

► **Labour Relations:** ONA will be holding a concurrent election for our next hospital, nursing home and Victorian Order of Nurses central negotiating teams this fall. If you are interested in putting your name forward, the call for nominations will go out in August. See ona.org/bargaining for more in the weeks to come.

► **Health and Safety:** The Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario Workers, along with help from researchers at the Institute of Work & Health and Duke University in North Carolina, have designed a survey to collect information about health-care workers' experiences during COVID-19. Please ask your members to complete the survey, available throughout the pandemic at ona.org/news-posts/pandemic-survey/.

► **Member Education:** Due to COVID-19, ONA is suspending in-person provincial meetings this fall, including the September Board meeting, the Leadership Summit, the Health and Safety Caucuses, and the November Provincial Coordinators Meeting (PCM). Instead, we will utilize the same virtual meeting technology successfully employed for the June PCM. For regular updates, visit ona.org/news-posts/status-of-meetings/. Videoconference technology will also be used for Local annual meetings.

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

Board members for 2020: Vicki McKenna, President, Communications and Government Relations/Student Liaison (#2314); Cathryn Hoy, First Vice-President, Political Action and Professional Issues (#7755); Dawn Armstrong, Region 1, Human Rights and Equity (#7703); Bernadette Robinson, Region 2, Education (#7756); DJ Sanderson, Region 3, Labour Relations (#7754); Angela Preocanin, 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.