



Board Highlights

Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors meeting | December 7-10, 2020

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONCLUDED THEIR LAST MEETING OF THE YEAR with a glimmer of hope for 2021 after the federal government announced that the first doses of a COVID-19 vaccine would arrive in mid-December and nurses, health-care professionals and long-term care residents would be among the first to receive it.

PRIORITIES

The following priorities were addressed:

- ▶ **Budget:** The ONA Budget discussed at the fall Area Coordinators Conferences and November Provincial Coordinators Meeting was approved.
- ▶ **Board Committees:** ONA's three new Board Committees – Governance and Nominations, Quality of Service to Members, and Finance and Organizational Risk – provided reports on their work so far. The Board approved three planning lines (Local, Bargaining Unit and Central Teams) from the Governance and Nominations Committee, which have been emailed to leaders.
- ▶ **Strategic Planning:** MASS LBP presented to the Board on strategic planning, including renewing the member experience, raising our game as a health-care union, and enhancing our performance as an organization, as ONA undergoes an exciting initiative. Our Strategic Planning process will provide the foundation to ensure our union remains viable and relevant to members during these difficult times and into the future. Stay tuned for further information on how you can get involved in this important work in the months to come.

NURSING WEEK 2021

The Board approved recommendations from the Nursing Week Team for Nursing Week 2021, celebrated from May 10-16.

Under the theme, *Still Strong – Still Standing – Still Proud*, Nursing Week events will be held virtually again this year due to probable ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. We will develop a tip sheet to help leaders plan a safe, fun-filled week, including Zoom events and social media activities. Please share your Nursing Week stories and photos with us!

POSITION STATEMENTS

Several updated documents greenlit by the Board are now available on our website, including position statements on the Image of Nurses, Hallway Nursing, and Nursing and Primary Health Care Reform. See ona.org/position-statement.

DONATIONS

ONA will provide the following donations:

- ▶ \$50,000 to the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) for 2021 (\$10,000 for sponsorship, \$30,000 for campaigns, and \$10,000 for special campaigns). The OHC's 2021 campaigns will focus on stopping privatization and further cuts to hospitals, and protecting long-term care and home care.

- ▶ \$3,500 to Operation Christmas Cheer, which ensures every Ontario worker walking the picket line during the holidays receives some much-needed cheer in the form of grocery store and other gift cards, Christmas hampers, and toys for their children.

REGIONAL REPORTS

- ▶ **Region 1:** Region 1 members staged a rally in Sudbury calling on the government to improve their working conditions. Local 2 Coordinator Kristy Johnston told the media many nurses and health-care professionals are still working short-staffed and also without the proper personal protective equipment.
- ▶ **Region 2:** Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital members are among those who are giving back this holiday season. Because the members were not able to celebrate Nursing Week in person, they decided instead to donate the funds to two local food banks desperately in need.
- ▶ **Region 3:** About 50 members, including RNs and respiratory therapists, wore black and lit candles outside of Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket in memory of women impacted by violence, including the 14 who were killed 31 years ago during a shooting at Montreal's École Polytechnique, as well as those who face violence daily in female-dominated professions.

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

► **Region 4:** Haldimand-Norfolk Public Health Unit members took to the streets in Simcoe to let their community know they have been short-staffed since before the COVID-19 pandemic began, and the community is suffering. There are currently eight RN vacancies at the health unit, and non-RNs are conducting COVID-19 symptom assessments and monitoring, as well as the infectious disease work.

► **Region 5:** Members spoke out in the media about their frustrations over London Health Sciences Centre's failure to properly prepare for the second wave of COVID-19, noting staff morale is very low. Among their concerns are inadequate and inappropriate personal protective equipment and break spaces.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

► **Communications:** In our latest podcast, ONA President Vicki McKenna and First Vice-President Cathryn Hoy review the unprecedented past year, highlighting the amazing work of our members, and look ahead with positivity to 2021. Listen at ona.org/podcast.

► **Government Relations:** ONA President Vicki McKenna sent a letter to Deputy Minister of Health Helen Angus regarding the rollout of Ontario's COVID-19 vaccination program. She wrote that ONA believes the vaccine needs to be part of an overall comprehensive COVID-19 infection prevention and control strategy and that we recommend health-care professionals receive it just as we have recommended many other vaccines in the past.

► **Student Liaison:** ONA participated in the recent Canadian Nursing Students'

Association's Ontario regional meeting, where students discussed their current pandemic-related hardships, including virtual labs instead of in-person, and fewer or cancelled clinical placements. We are advocating with the government on their behalf.

► **Political Action:** Members throughout the province called and emailed the Premier and their MPPs and sent more than 150 tweets during our Virtual Day of Action to demand immediate action to protect long-term care residents. ONA's social media feeds were also flooded with member selfies depicting their hopes for the sector, including more RNs and the end to privatization.

► **Professional Practice:** The three-year pilot project launched by ONA's Professional Practice (PP) Team in 2017, whereby each District Service Team was assigned a PP Specialist who worked from a regional office within that serving area (instead of just out of the Toronto office), will be implemented permanently. Pilot feedback shows the PP Specialists are better able to service members because they are nearer the issues and have a closer relationship with Servicing Labour Relations Officers.

► **Human Rights and Equity:** Several members of ONA's new Anti-Racism Advisory Committee, made up of three Black members, three Indigenous members and three members from other racialized communities, have been chosen via Expression of Interest. The Board approved the mandate of the committee,

The Next Board of Directors meeting will be held on February 8-11, 2021.

along with a request for proposal for a facilitator to work with the group.

► **Labour Relations:** Members of ONA's next hospital, nursing homes and Victorian Order of Nurses central negotiating teams have been named (via election or acclamation). Orientation for all three teams takes place early in the new year, with bargaining commencing in the spring. Read more ona.org/bargaining.

► **Health and Safety:** The Board reflected on our well-attended Health and Safety Caucuses, held this past October via Zoom, and approved the topic for the 2021 virtual Caucuses – "The Power of the Joint Health and Safety Committee in a Pandemic." The Caucuses will return to their regular May schedule.

► **Local Finance:** Our 2021 Treasurers and Local Coordinators Workshops will take place via Zoom from January 26-28. Please register prior to January 13 at ona.org/2021-lc-treasurers-workshops.

► **Member Education:** The Board debriefed on the November Provincial Coordinators Meeting and Human Rights and Equity Caucus, which were both well received. Planning is now underway for our virtual Provincial Leadership Meeting on March 30-31. Along with concurrent breakout sessions by sector and educational topics, keynote speaker Gerrard Murphy will present on *Constructive Workplace Conversations and the Union Leader*. Registration will go live in the weeks to come.

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 2021: 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.