



# Board Highlights

## Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors meeting | SEPTEMBER 13-16, 2021

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS DISCUSSED A HOST OF ISSUES** that will lead our members in our very busy autumn. ONA's upcoming November virtual Biennial Convention, strategic planning, and our continued efforts around workplace vaccine policies were reviewed with several actions stemming from each.

### PRIORITIES

The following priorities were addressed:

- ▶ **2022 Budget Planning:** The Board supported the 2022 proposed Annual Budget and the 2023-24 multi-year financial plan. The plan continues ONA's commitment to update our resources ensuring that our strategic plan encourages and supports member engagement using technology and communication tools. This will be discussed with leaders at the October Area Coordinator Conferences (ACCs) and at the Biennial Convention.
- ▶ **Constitutional Amendments:** The Board reviewed the Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions submitted and the discussion held at the June Provincial Coordinators Meeting (PCM). These amendments will be discussed at the October ACCs and voted upon at the Biennial Convention.
- ▶ **Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Action Plan:** ONA has initiated and retained a consultant to help lead ONA's work in developing and implementing a detailed action plan. ONA continues to move its anti-racism and anti-oppression commitment forward to fruition.
- ▶ **Strategic Planning:** MASS LBP will help to begin to implement ONA's strategic plan beginning in 2022. The Board has approved the implementation component, which includes ensuring ONA remains viable and relevant to our members into the future.

### GUIDES, GUIDELINES, TIP SHEETS, POLICIES

Several updated documents approved by the Board will soon be available on our website, including Human Rights and Equity: A Guide for ONA Members; Service Delivery Guidelines – Long-Term Disability; and several tip sheets including How to Conduct a Ratification Meeting in the Right to Strike; Representing ONA Members in Attendance Management Meetings; Demonstrated Need; Developing Bargaining Proposals at Your Bargaining Unit; and more. The Board also completed its housekeeping review of Member Policies. The amended policies are being sent to Local Leaders and posted on our website.

### DONATIONS

ONA will provide the following donation:

- ▶ \$7,500 for the Women's Legal Education & Action Fund (LEAF) Annual Sponsorship: Was this House Built for Us? A Conversation with Former Parliamentarians. Thursday, October 21 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. ET.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The full minutes from the September Board of Directors meeting will be available on the Executive Members' section of our website ([ona.org](http://ona.org)) following approval at the next Board meeting.



## REGIONAL REPORTS

- ▶ **Region 1:** Public health nurses and nurse practitioners at Algoma Public Health Unit entered into mandatory conciliation in September with their employer as they seek to negotiate a new collective agreement that respects their value. The 85 members had been working without a contract since April 1, 2021.
- ▶ **Region 2:** Kingston Health Sciences Centre's medicine unit members have consistently completed their workload report forms due to the number of complex issues that affect patient care. Professional practice specialists, labour relations officers and bargaining unit leaders worked together to present a united front to the employer resulting in the employer beginning to understand the issues and how our members' recommendations would address them.
- ▶ **Region 3:** More than 100 members rallied outside of Minister of Health Christine Elliott's office in August. They requested to meet with the Minister and delivered postcards that call for an immediate end to Southlake Regional Health Centre's plan to introduce an unsafe model of care to its intensive care unit. Members delivered the postcards, signed by 95 per cent of the workers who say that the 'team-based nursing care' model must be stopped.
- ▶ **Region 4:** An independent panel of nursing experts, called in by ONA to look at care, professional practice issues and the environment at St. Mary's General Hospital emergency department recommended the hospital recruit more registered nurses. The Independent Assessment Committee (IAC) made 79 recommendations include many of the same measures that were proposed by our ONA members.
- ▶ **Region 5:** The Windsor Star reported at length on a new study that shows how burned out and "beaten down" are nurses are. The report quoted ONA at length about the impact of the pandemic, and the feelings of nurses province-wide during the pandemic and the numerous challenges it presents.

## PORTFOLIO REPORTS

- ▶ **Communications:** Our social media accounts have hit several milestones. Our Facebook page recently welcomed its 35,000 follower and our burgeoning Instagram account achieved 4,000 followers. Our digital landscape continues to grow every month! In our latest podcast, ONA President Vicki McKenna and First Vice-President Cathryn Hoy discuss the status of ONA member contracts, COVID-19 and vaccination policies, ONA elections and the 2021 Biennial Convention. Listen at [ona.org/podcast](https://ona.org/podcast).
- ▶ **Government Relations:** ONA President Vicki McKenna sent a letter to Minister of Health Christine Elliott regarding Haldimand-Norfolk Board of Health's unanimous appointment of Dr. Matt Strauss as Acting Medical Officer of Health. Given that Dr. Strauss has no formal public health experience or training, and he holds views that directly contradict sound public health measures that are used to limit exposures and infections during COVID-19, ONA raised many concerns about this appointment. ONA awaits for a response from government officials.
- ▶ **Student Liaison:** ONA is supporting nursing programs' welcome week activities at several universities including McMaster University and Queen's University. Additionally, ONA wrote to the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) regarding the many delays that nursing students were experiencing in scheduling appointments for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). Thanks to ONA's advocacy, the CNO has opened additional spots for nursing students.
- ▶ **Political Action:** Given the release of the hospital decision, ONA launched its #BlameFord social media campaign to continue to put pressure on the Ford government to repeal Bill 124. Many ONA members have submitted their selfies for this excellent campaign that also aims to educate the public on how Bill 124 negatively affects Ontario's health-care system.
- ▶ **Professional Practice:** Several significant wins involving our professional practice specialists were



achieved over the past couple of months. In addition to two significant IAC reports and wins, Grand River Hospital's surgery unit achieved a huge settlement that includes an increase of baseline staffing of one RN, one RPN 24/7 and two clinical aides on the 12-hour night shift. This team continues to work on many files to resolve workload issues and improve patient care.

- ▶ **Human Rights and Equity:** The important work of ONA's Anti-Racism Advisory Committee continues with the approval to move forward with implementing the Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Action Plan. An external facilitator has been brought on board to assist ONA with this work. In addition, the HRE Team has been busy building the many pieces required for a successful Human Rights and Equity Caucus.
- ▶ **Labour Relations:** The hospital decision was released and, in the new contract, our members receive a one-per-cent wage increase due to the constraints within Bill 124. ONA did achieve strong language related to human rights and equity and health and safety, foundational issues that we have been advocating for over the past while. We continue to await the arbitration decision for our nursing homes' members.

- ▶ **Health and Safety:** Given that Ontario is in the fourth wave of the pandemic and our members continue to experience health and safety issues in their workplaces, the Board approved the theme of 2022 Health and Safety Caucus, "*Pandemic planning and respiratory protection: An employer's duty and workers' right to participate.*" ONA's tailored OHS eBulletin, *On the Safe Side*, continues to garner additional readers every month. In less than one year, more than 2,500 people have subscribed to this quarterly ePublication.
- ▶ **Local Finance:** ONA's popular Local Financial Policy Guide has been updated and was approved by the Board. The revised guide will be posted on the website shortly. In addition, a new *Dollars and Sense* eNewsletter was recently published, and it is the final edition that Region 5 Vice-President Karen Bertrand, who holds the local finance portfolio, will be featured in as she is retiring at the end of 2021. Best wishes, Karen!
- ▶ **Member Education:** The Board was given an overview of the upcoming Biennial Convention, Human Rights and Equity Caucus and Education Day, which will take place Nov. 15-19. The theme – *Your Union. Your Future.* – will be prominent throughout the virtual event, including members' actions that will take place throughout the five days. Registration will go live in the weeks to come.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held November 24, 25, and 26, 2021.

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.