

NOTICE

To: Bargaining Unit Presidents, Hospital Sector
From: Cathryn Hoy, RN, Chair, Hospital Central Negotiating Team
Date: February 27, 2018
Re: **Hospital Central Negotiating Team (HCNT) Update**
C: Board of Directors, Local Coordinators, HCNT, Staff

ONA and the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) concluded their interest arbitration hearing before Arbitrator Kaplan and nominees Hughes and O'Byrne on Tuesday, February 27, 2018. The OHA made it very clear they have no interest whatsoever in maintaining the integrity of our registered nurse (RN) profession and seem more interested in achieving budgetary targets than providing quality patient care.

Without a doubt job security, wages and manageable workloads were the most contentious issues. We argued that the continuing introduction of inappropriate skill-mix changes, the unfilled vacancies within our units and excessive workloads are making it extremely difficult for us to do our jobs and provide quality patient care. ONA presented the "demonstrated need" for contract language to provide protection for our profession, stop the erosion of RN jobs and allow for quality patient care. We produced sample contract language from other provincial nursing contracts that maintains current RN staffing levels and preserves quality patient care. Ontario residents and RNs deserve the same.

The OHA continues to seek contract changes that would provide hospitals with unfettered flexibility to move RNs as they deemed fit, and would eliminate the protections and options that the current seniority provisions provide our members. To add insult to injury, the OHA further proposed contract changes that would eliminate the requirement to provide retirement packages to those senior members who are laid off, having no respect for the years of loyalty and service provided by our senior members.

They also proposed language that would allow hospitals to bypass job postings for "Special Projects" for up to 24 months. However, the language is so wide open, we are concerned that permanent jobs would likely never again be posted.

At the hearing, ONA argued for a proper general wage increase to match gains we made for RNs in our nursing home and LHIN sectors and as enjoyed by other professionals in Ontario, such as police and fire services, as well as teachers, which would keep pace with escalating inflation.

We were also looking to standardize the wage grids for nurse practitioners (NPs). The OHA has taken the position that we should follow the agreement reached by OPSEU for their members in the hospitals which is inferior to those negotiated by ONA. In addition, we proposed the normative increases to premiums, benefits and vacations. The OHA, on the other hand, offered no

improvements and insisted that our members' share of the premiums for their benefits be increased by an additional 25 per cent.

At this point, we now await the arbitration board's decision. We expect to receive the final and binding award from the board in late spring or early summer. Obviously we are hoping for a favourable result, but there are no guarantees. We will report back to you as soon as we receive the award.

In the interim, continue to get loud and ensure your employer is aware of your disgust for their lack of negotiations at the table for our 61,000 ONA RNs and health care professionals in the hospital sector.

If you have any questions for the HCNT, please send them to ONA President Vicki McKenna at vickim@ona.org. Vicki will see they are brought to my attention.