



PCM Highlights

JUNE 14, 15 AND 16, 2022 } IN-PERSON IN WINDSOR; ONLINE VIA ZOOM



ONA to meet with new government before long, says ONA President Cathryn Hoy

WHILE THE RESULTS OF THE PROVINCIAL ELECTION were not what ONA was hoping for, **ONA President Cathryn Hoy** remains optimistic that ONA will be able to enact positive changes to improve patient, resident and client care and in members' workplaces.

This crystal-clear message was delivered at June's Provincial Coordinators Meeting (PCM) held in person at Caesars Windsor and virtually via Zoom.

"Although the election is over, it does not mean that we will stop the fight. What came out of this election was the power of our health-care collective, and we are going to continue to tap that power," noted Cathryn.

In her first *Work of the Union* address as Provincial President – which was livestreamed on ONA's members-only Facebook group – Cathryn emphasized that, leading up to the election our health-care messages were front-and-centre. "No other public sector workers received as much attention as nurses and health-care professionals did during this election. This is because our message broke through the noise. We owned the narrative."

Nurses Vote campaign delivers

Highlighting the phenomenal numbers (see sidebar) from the Nurses Vote campaign, Cathryn underscored the importance of having member-to-member conversations by phone and

text. In fact, Cathryn said, more than 6,000 calls and texts were meaningful and informative. Additionally, our members rallied in front of candidates' offices, published letters to the editor, used social media as a tool to spread the word to their social groups, and more.

"All of this together – the phone calls, the texts, the meetings, rallies, chats, media coverage, advertising, social media, *Front Lines* – all of it together, makes us stronger. Makes us better and more organized. Makes us bolder leaders and members and gives us bigger capacity than ever before. We have power, and lots of it and we did it together," Cathryn said.

Next steps with the new provincial government

After the results of the election were final, Cathryn informed the PCM audience that she has already spoken with Mr. Ford and members of his staff.

"I spoke with Mr. Ford and he said he wasn't happy with ONA's tone during the election. I told him I'm here to support health

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Nurses Vote campaign rocks!

Our Nurses Vote Campaign was the most member-engaged initiative, ever! Twenty dedicated front-line secondee-members and many volunteers took up the challenge to meet, talk, text and rally with thousands of members.

By the numbers:

- 40,000+ calls made
- 6,800+ conversations
- 5,000+ voicemails
- 190+ volunteer shifts
- 3,000+ text conversations
- 18,100+ page views on Nurses Vote webpages

care, regardless of which politician takes on that priority: red, green, orange or blue. I told him I'm waiting for his invitation."

Cathryn informed the PCM audience that she will wait for Mr. Ford to appoint his cabinet before she reaches out to set up a meeting. "I will be on the phone with Mr. Ford very soon to arrange a meeting. It is time for the government to address nurses' and health-care professionals' issues, including Bill 124."

We need to "stay united in our fight"

Although Cathryn noted that "our climb is steep" to make inroads with the new government, she emphasized that we must "stay united in our fight for what is right and fair. We will continue to build our power, to rally, to lobby, and to continue to engage the public and tell the truth about what is really happening. Together, we have the power and the inspiration to move forward."

Professional practice wins and local action galore!

IN HER SPEECH TO ATTENDEES, ONA First Vice-President Angela Preocanin highlighted some of ONA's amazing wins in professional practice and local political action.

"I am so proud of our members who have advocated and taken action to demand positive change," noted Angela. "From attending rallies during the election period, to sending emails in support of repealing Bill 124, every single action counts!"

Through one-on-one organizing conversations, members mobilized hundreds to participate in rallies across the province. Regional rallies led to May 1, the **Ontario Federation of Labour** province-wide day of action. "Thousands participated in more than 15 rallies held across Ontario to make sure everyone hears the issues that matter to us," emphasized Angela. "Plus, we were proud to have hundreds of members marching in unity to Queen's Park."

More wins

Nurses and Registered Respiratory Therapists at **Southlake Regional Health Centre** achieved huge wins in the Intensive Care Units. "After six months of organizing, they made a breakthrough and won on one of their key demands to stop pre-processorships," said Angela. "Plus, their second demand was to stop team-based nursing in the Intensive Care Units and they have succeeded."

At **Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance**, RNs in the Emergency Departments are fighting for their employer to post casual positions. A majority of nurses signed a letter demanding that this policy be reversed. An Action Committee has come together and are continuing to organize their next action. During the meeting, Angela announced some late-breaking news: "Thanks to their very diligent work, ONA members have arranged to meet



with the CEO to discuss this very troubling issue. This is an amazing achievement."

Angela continued her update with an issue at **Hamilton Health Sciences** in which Operating Room Assistants – who are unregulated – are being hired to replace the scrub nurse role. "The majority of nurses in the OR signed a letter to their Chief Nursing Executive urging to reverse the decision. I'm pleased to report that they will be meeting with the CNE to try to resolve this issue once and for all."

Professional Practice (PP) achievements

Angela notes that since January, our PP achievements combined include:

- An increase of 70,887 ONA member hours.
- An increase of 20,462 hours for registered staff.
- An increase of 13,128 hours for non-registered staff.
- Many equipment improvements.
- Educational needs assessments added on an annual basis.
- Health and safety improvements.
- Leadership and communications improvements.

ONA



Regional Vice-President Portfolio Reports

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY

Dawn Armstrong
Region 1 Vice-President

"WE CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE with the Communications and Government Relations Team to ensure that we are proactively and appropriately representing our historically marginalized members as we recognize commemorative dates throughout the year. ONA's planning for the Toronto Pride Parade, which will be celebrated on June 26, is well underway. The team is looking forward to planning for this in-person event with the theme, Together in Person. Together in Pride. #OutAgain. We conducted a book club meeting on April 19 where we discussed *The Boat People* by Sharon Bala. We also discussed the difference in the way these refugees were treated compared to how Ukrainian refugees are being treated. The difference is vast. We have started to plan for this year's Caucus on October 31. The focus will be on the Indigenous members equity group. We have been



successful in reaching out to various speakers and are excited that we will have lots of informative content for our members. The agenda, in draft format, will include education regarding land recognition and acknowledgements, Indigenous health-care issues and more."

EDUCATION

Bernie Robinson
Region 2 Vice-President

"I THANK OUR ONA STAFF for their expertise and dedication to ensure that our members – whether leaders or grassroots participants – receive quality education that they need to enhance their skills and knowledge. We deliver our education through the Responsive Education Model that identifies and tailors members' needs and presents education, as required. We listened to our members about the need to have workshops available in a digital format so that members can save time, and to ensure flexibility. However, if there is a special circumstance and a Local may wish to receive in-person delivery, we would be happy to review the request. From January 1 until April 30, 76 workshops were delivered to our members. Of those, 19 were full-day workshops, 48 were half-day workshops and nine were lecturettes. Our eLearning Platform workshops were



attended by 121 members. We continue to implement upgrades to our eLearning platform, with revisions to about 28 programs currently underway. Workshop registration now takes place via our new portal Access ONA."



**HAPPY 50TH
ANNIVERSARY
TO ONA!**

NEXT YEAR – on October 19, 2023 to be exact – is ONA's 50th anniversary and we are already planning a year-long celebration! PCM delegates eagerly brainstormed ideas about how we can all make this an amazing and eventful year for all. Stay tuned for all the details, coming soon!

Regional Vice-President Portfolio Reports

LABOUR RELATIONS

DJ Sanderson

Region 3 Vice-President

“**ONE OVERARCHING TEAM** that provides labour relations direction for members and staff is the All-Sector Strategic Bargaining Project Team (ASSBPT). I can report that we have been developing key direction and statements related to many issues at hand for our members, including initial discussions regarding Internationally Educated Nurses and the College of Nurses of Ontario process; developing a risk statement addressing the hazards of working night shifts; and a review of the short- and long-term bargaining goals to ensure they are aligned with the strategic plan.

“A major theme of work for the ASSBPT is ONA’s Staff Work Processes, which continue to be revised, updated, and shared with staff to provide the best service to members, including:

- Organizing and Certification.
- *Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act* or *PSLRTA*.
- Pay Equity.



- Contract Administration, specifically revised to ensure GEL information is kept up to date.
- Enforcement of PRW Settlements.

“The ASSBPT continues to review staff policies and work processes and will now review policies and direction on a continuous two-year cycle.”

LOCAL FINANCE

Erin Ariss

Region 4 Vice-President

“**IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY**, I met virtually with many Locals helping executives develop a budget that met their members’ priorities. In several Locals, increasing Bargaining Unit President paid time was a priority. One strategy used in the past is to budget a contingency fund for unexpected escalations. This money allows Locals the ability to be responsive to the needs of our members. Eleven Locals have been approved for Supplemental Funding (SF). We reconciled the 2021 SF funds to the Locals and calculated any money owing back to ONA. On the audit front this year, we had 43 of the 60 audits submitted on time, which is significantly worse over last year. Two were submitted beyond the 60-day mark, and four are still outstanding due to several issues. I cannot stress enough the importance of timely expense submissions and reimbursements. Otherwise, your executive cannot know the true picture of the Locals’ financial status and make



strategic decisions based on that. Policies are part of the Treasurers’ content connect for the fall ACCs. We can share past experiences and assist in how to tighten up policies that have caused issues. We have onboarded five new treasurers this year and we are seeing more Locals using Electronic Fund Transfers through Sage 50 to pay many of their expenses. Now might be the time for those Locals to explore this as an option.”

Regional Vice-President Portfolio Reports

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Alan Warrington
Region 5 Vice-President

"MORE THAN 400 LEADERS attended our Health and Safety Caucus titled, *Pandemic Planning and Respiratory Protection: A Worker's Right to Participate and an Employer's Duty*. Attendees commented that the new tools created by our Health and Safety Specialists, the *Pandemic Plan Checklist* and the *Respiratory Protection Plan Component Checklist*, would support their work on the Joint Health and Safety Committee. As a London ICU nurse working on the front line during the deadly Delta variant wave, I went to work in May 2021 and was unable to complete my shift, overwhelmed by the traumatic events I witnessed. I was diagnosed with PTSD and it took me almost three months to return to the work I love. I want to thank my family and friends, many of whom are in this room today, for all the love and support afforded to me during that devastating time. The pandemic has brought about a host of challenges to our practice environments



that have placed impossible demands on our members. We need to be attuned to prevent psychological injuries. If you or your members believe that they are suffering a psychological injury due to work-related COVID-19 trauma or stress, it's important they seek medical attention immediately, notify their employer, and file a WSIB Form 6 within six months of the date of illness."

Senior Staff Updates

AS USUAL, ONA SENIOR STAFF were a big part of the PCM, with Chief Financial Officer Nina Sinopoli providing an update on budget planning and finance; Executive Lead, Administration Matthew Stout highlighting our labour relations and grievance work; Chief Legal Officer and Legal Counsel Sharan Basran discussing ONA's recent legal challenges to address members' concerns, particularly over the wage-suppressing Bill 124; and Chief Negotiator Steve Lobsinger going over the status of bargaining in all sectors.



Interim CEO/CAO Report

INTERIM CEO CATHRYN HOY AND CAO ANDREA KAY provided several key updates in ONA operations. Before Cathryn discussed the updates, she thanked the staff for their dedication and support. “ONA staff members’ professional commitment to our members has not wavered. Our staff has remained committed to providing the services our members need, and I thank them for their dedicated work.”

Cathryn explained that ONA has re-aligned the labour relations structure to map with the regions more closely, meaning that each region now has one dedicated labour relations manager with labour relations staff who are solely working on their region’s files. Additionally, specialists are also primarily region-specific. Given that there are about 75 Bargaining Units without leaders, ONA has committed to hiring three Labour Relations Officers to shepherd these Bargaining Units and recruit prospective leaders. ONA is moving ahead with hiring an additional three Labour Relations Officers who are dedicated to helping our members with long-term disability cases. “This line of work is very time-consuming and tough. We listened to our leaders and members and we are recruiting three full-time Long-Term Disability Specialists to help our members who need support,” she noted.

Andrea announced that ONA will open up a new office located in Port Hope, which will further support our members’ needs. Expected to be ready in the fall, additional details will be made



available soon, including contact information. Additionally, Andrea provided staff updates to our Human Resources Team and how ONA will internally support its Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Action Plan, which includes a strong staff and management focus. “The plan – which has been approved by the Board and will involve many stakeholders – has a specific lens for staff,” Andrea noted.

“After a two-year hiatus, we are bringing back our September Labour School, which offers a ‘back-to-the-basics’ lens to learn about the fundamentals of grievances, mediation and collective bargaining,” announced Andrea.

COMING SOON:

Have YOUR Say Bargaining Survey launches this fall! ONA will release its major bargaining survey for ALL members. This is your opportunity to tell ONA what you want to see in your next contract! Visit ona.org/bargaining in the fall for updates and to access your survey



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