

ONA WINS



SUMMARY OF ANOTHER SUCCESS AS YOUR UNION STRIVES TO IMPROVE YOUR WORKING CONDITIONS

Workload Settlement will See Positive Changes in Sault Hospital Labour and Delivery Unit

Despite the flurry of Independent Assessment Committee (IAC) hearings of late, ONA has had yet another successful professional practice complaint settlement that has not had to reach that stage, this time at Sault Area Hospital's (SAH) labour and delivery unit.

Workload and practice concerns in this unit were brought to the forefront in April 2013. The unit used to participate in the Managing Obstetrical Risk Efficiently Program (MOREOB), a comprehensive performance improvement program that creates a culture of patient safety in obstetrical units, but ceased to do so in 2009 as a cost-cutting measure by the hospital. In addition, in 2011, the dedicated nurse educator was replaced by a "corporate" educator, who was split between corporate initiatives and supporting both the maternal/child and surgical programs. The unit was also experiencing significant workload and practice issues on shifts where either one or more caesarian section(s) was scheduled and/or two inductions of labour. Furthermore, the unit's policies were outdated and not supportive of best practices.

"The nurses were very concerned and had some concrete ideas about what they wanted to happen on this unit," noted Professional Practice Specialist Jo Anne Shannon. "The employer was committed to working with us to resolve the issues and avoid an IAC."

As a result, ONA and the employer signed a binding Minutes of Settlement this past May, which includes the following significant achievements: the MOREOB Program will be re-instituted; the nurse educator will be solely dedicated to the maternal/child program for two days per week; the hospital will do everything reasonably possible to have one additional RN scheduled when there is one c-section or two inductions of labour; and a large number of policies will be developed/updated to deal with workload/practice concerns. The parties will evaluate the implementation of the resolutions in six months for completion and in 12 months for effectiveness and sustainability.

"This settlement is another example of working with our SAH employer to improve workload, working conditions and quality patient care," said ONA President Linda Haslam-Stroud.

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