



Ontario Nurses' Association

85 Grenville Street, Suite 400, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3A2

TEL: (416) 964-8833 FAX: (416) 964-8864

To: Bargaining Unit Presidents, Victorian Order of Nurses (VON)
From: Lorna Thompson, RN, Chair, VON Central Negotiating Team
Date: March 5, 2021
Re: **VON Central Negotiating Team (VONCNT) Update**
C: Board of Directors, Local Coordinators, VONCNT, Staff

Our Victorian Order of Nurses Central Negotiating Team (VONCNT) completed its first three days of bargaining via Zoom video conferencing March 2-4, 2021. The team has worked diligently to ensure the priorities of our members are front and centre with VON Canada. We are keeping our bargaining focused on addressing your priorities as identified in our Have-Your-Say bargaining survey.

We rely on our collective agreement to support a working environment that enables us to provide quality care to our patients. This includes but is not limited to wages and benefits, job security, workload, staffing ratios, health and safety, violence prevention, and staff safety. That is why our collective agreement proposals in negotiations are so important to every one of us.

Our team made it very clear in opening statements that VON needs to be the leader in home care; to do that we have to address issues such as: increasing patient acuity, co-morbidities that are more complex, increasing community requirements for palliative and end-of-life care, the prevalence of violence, and safety issues regarding infectious disease.

As a result, we need a collective agreement that respects and supports nurses in the delivery of safe, high-quality patient care.

Negotiations this week have been challenging. We made it clear that our proposals are very personal to us and our members. We believe this collective agreement needs to close the gap with regard to compensation and working conditions in order to both retain and recruit nurses to this sector.

We are determined to do everything possible to reach a negotiated settlement on your behalf. Our team is cohesive, and our voices are strong as we advocate for you.

Mediation will occur via Zoom May 5-7, 2021, with the assistance of Matthew Wilson. Should we not settle at mediation, we have agreed to proceed to arbitration with William Kaplan as chair on June 25, 2021.

We will be communicating to ONA leadership on our progress through email with the VON Bargaining Unit Presidents, at Area Coordinators Conferences (ACCs), the Provincial Leadership Meeting (PLM) and Provincial Coordinators Meetings (PCMs). Our updates will also be available directly at www.ona.org/bargaining.

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Members of the team will, from time to time, contact Bargaining Unit Presidents for any feedback the team may need.

To assist the VONCNT in communicating to ONA members on our progress, we ask Bargaining Unit Presidents to add VONCNT updates to their meeting agendas, Local website and/or social media, and to provide hard copies where members do not have access to ONA's website.

If you have any questions for the VONCNT, please contact ONA Provincial President Vicki McKenna at vickim@ona.org. Vicki will see that any questions are brought to my attention.