



Ontario Nurses' Association

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To: Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) Bargaining Unit Presidents
From: Lorna Thompson, RN, Chair, VON Central Negotiating Team
Date: June 28, 2023
Re: **VON Central Negotiating Team (VONCNT) Update**
C: Board of Directors, Local Coordinators, VONCNT, Staff

ONA and the VON Canada – Ontario Branch concluded their interest arbitration hearing before Arbitrator John Stout and nominees Philip Abbink (ONA) and Irv Kleiner (VON) on June 26, 2023. There is outstanding disclosure of financial information that is expected in July.

Without a doubt, it was made clear to the Board of Arbitration that better wages, better staffing and better care were our members' top priorities in this round of bargaining.

ONA presented an overwhelming amount of “demonstrated need” for substantial wage increases that prioritized the need to retain experienced nurses, as well as to recruit new nurses. We highlighted the devastating impact of years of below cost-of-living wage increases to nurses and to quality patient care. The Board heard from ONA and the bargaining team that nurses are leaving VON in droves due to non-competitive wages, increased workload, and frustration with the disrespect they have received from this government.

ONA also went forward to arbitration seeking premiums and benefit improvements. ONA's compensation proposals focused on the negative impact of gender inequality on ONA members.

VON continues to seek contract changes that would provide the employer with flexibility to move RNs as they deem fit, through reassignment and elimination of some of the protections and options that the current seniority provisions provide to our members.

Once the outstanding disclosure is received and reviewed, we expect to receive the final and binding award from the Board shortly thereafter.

We are hoping for a favourable result, but there are no guarantees. In the interim, we will be planning our Sector meeting to be held via Zoom after the award is released.

If you have any questions for the VONCNT, please contact ONA President Erin Ariss at erina@ona.org, who will see that any questions are brought to my attention.