



# Board Highlights

## Making Important Decisions for You!

*A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors Meeting, September 26, 27 and 28, 2023*

**WE ARE APPROACHING OUR BIENNIAL CONVENTION AND 50TH-YEAR ANNIVERSARY** in November. We are excited about celebrating this momentous occasion with our front-line leaders and members. There will also be lots of impressive guest speakers, important discussions throughout ONA Business, including Constitutional Amendments, and reports on the work of the Union, so stay tuned and stay involved.

### BOARD COMMITTEES

- ▶ The Board passed a motion to amend the terms of reference on Board Committees (Quality of Service to Member, Governance and Nominations and Finance and Risk Committees) to add one member from each of the five regions to serve on the committees.

### BOARD COMMITTEE SELECTIONS

- ▶ The Board reviewed the Expressions of Interest submitted by membership and selected the following members to Board Committees effective January 2024:

#### **Governance and Nominations Committee**

- Chair, Dawn Armstrong, Region 1 Vice-President
- Bernie Robinson, Region 2 Vice-President
- Andrea Smith, Region 1
- Lee Kelly, Region 2
- Joan McCollum, Region 3
- Region 4 TBD
- Nancy Downard, Region 5

#### **Enterprise Risk Management Committee**

- Chair, Karen McKay-Eden, Region 3 Vice-President
- Angela Preocanin, First Vice-President
- Monique Storozuk, Region 1
- Kelly Gagnon, Region 2
- Karen Muller, Region 3
- Sarah Martin, Region 4
- Jasen Richards, Region 5

#### **Quality of Service to Members Committee**

- Chair, Alan Warrington, Region 5 Vice-President
- Grace Pierias, Region 4 Vice-President

- Blythe Carota, Region 1
- Melissa Tilley, Region 2
- Duane Stockley, Region 3
- Allison McKellar, Region 4
- Laura Hanninen, Region 5

### BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### **Quality of Service to Members Committee**

- ▶ A membership survey is being launched at the Biennial Convention in November, "Share your voice!" More information will be provided about the survey when it is launched on November 9. It is Phase 1 of the Data Collection and Reporting Project. You will have an opportunity to fill out the survey during Biennial lunch breaks.

#### **Enterprise Risk Management and Finance Committee**

- ▶ The Board had a discussion about insurance coverage for Local events that were organized provincially but delivered by Locals. There is a need to make sure Locals have insurance coverage and the question arose as to whether they are covered through ONA's insurance or require their own insurance for Local events.

#### **Governance and Nominations Committee**

- ▶ Amendments to the rules of conduct for provincial meetings were supported by the Board and will be voted on by membership at the Biennial Convention.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The full minutes from the September 26, 27 and 28 Board of Directors meeting will be available at [www.ona.org](http://www.ona.org) once approved.

### Political Action Committee

- ▶ The Political Action Committee (PAC) is preparing to build a province-wide political campaign action plan for recommendation to the Board. Meeting the strategic planning priority "Telling Ontarians the Truth," this plan is part of PAC's mandate. When the Board meets in December, the action plan will be presented for Board approval.
- ▶ Discussions were held about building ONA's capacity to organize and mobilize in our regions so that leaders are ready to work with Regional Vice-Presidents, Local Coordinators and members who are committed to political action.

### Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions

- ▶ The Board reviewed the package of Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions that were sent to Local leaders on September 23, and they will be going to the Biennial Convention to be voted on. The Board agreed to additional amendments to Article 4.19 and an updated document will be sent to Local leaders in their Biennial package.

### Finance

- ▶ The Board approved the auditors Grant Thornton and that will go to the Biennial for a vote under the finance report. ONA is currently using Grant Thornton as our auditor.

### Policy Updates

- ▶ The Board continued to review the recommendations of the Governance and Nominations Committee for housekeeping changes to Sections 10 to 17 of the Policy Manual. In addition to the housekeeping changes, the following policies were approved by the Board:
  - Policy 3.4 – LEAP – Conflict of Interest
  - Policy 3.7 – ONA Bursaries
  - Policy 5.14 – Whistle-Blower Protection
  - Policy 5.15 – Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct
  - Policy 8.15 – Talking to the Media (New)
  - Policy 10.1 – Standing Board Committees Mandate
  - Policy 10.1 – HCCSS Group Negotiating Team Mandate (New)
  - Policy 11.1 – Constitution Distribution
  - Policy 14.10 – Union Representation in Critical Incident Meetings/Communications
  - Policy 23.1 – Administration

- Policy 26.3 – Approval Process for Expenses
- Policy 26.15 – Strike/Lockout Benefits

The revised policies will be provided to leaders in This Week @ ONA and can also be found under "Executive Content" in [Access ONA](#).

### DONATIONS/SPONSORSHIPS

The following were approved by the Board:

- ▶ Confirmed support of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) Ontario for 2023 and 2024 in the amount of \$22,000.
- ▶ \$500 donation to church facility used in Hastings and Prince Edward County Public Health Unit strike.
- ▶ Donation of a \$500 Nike gift card for the annual Birchway Niagara – Allied Against Abuse raffle.
- ▶ Donation of \$1,000 to support buses for the September 25 Rally at Queen's Park re privatization of health care.

### REGIONAL REPORTS

- ▶ The regional reports are contained in the Board materials. The following are just a sampling of what is going in the regions. The most significant challenge appears to be coping with staffing shortages.
- ▶ **Region 1:** There is high agency use across the region. Shifts are not offered to members, resulting in grievances. An employer has not responded to members regarding their separation allowance/ESA pay outs. A grievance was referred via Section 49 and has settled with the employer paying out all severance monies owed under the collective agreement. Additional professional responsibility complaint reps have been recruited to help with the increased volume of reporting forms. Multiple units have professional practice issues. The surgical unit is at the pre-complaint stage. The new payroll system continues to be a disaster. A significant number of grievances have been filed and many grievances are being forwarded to arbitration.
- ▶ **Region 2:** Significant RN shortages are being reported as well as heavy workloads. One home has hired eight full-time agency nurses, while layoff notices have been issued. An IAC is being prepared for emergency and medical/surgical at one facility. The Ministry of Labour,

Immigration, Training and Skills Development has been contacted to address violence in the ED. Agency staff usage has become a significant problem that ONA is pursuing at the labour board.

- ▶ **Region 3:** There are issues with collective agreement interpretation at one facility. A number of grievances related to human rights and scheduling violations have been filed. The employer is experiencing issues with 24/7 RN coverage and is contracting out RN work. Significant recruitment and retention concerns are occurring across the region. At one facility, complaints of harassment and violence from doctors and managers are being filed. There are mounting grievances regarding the denial of STD and accommodations. The relationship with the employer is starting to fray. There are 144 vacancies at a major hospital network. Professional practice is involved with four units.
- ▶ **Region 4:** A professional practice specialist is assigned to assist with issues in the Emergency Department at Brant Community Health Care System. An IAC is now scheduled for March 11-15, 2024. Medical Unit B7 and NICU have been referred to pre-IAC. Medicine issues are related to inadequate staffing. NICU issues include making nurses work alone with up to five NICU babies for at least three hours or more on a shift. Issues related to health and safety, staffing, shift cancellations, terminations and other contract violations are being addressed through the grievance/mediation/arbitration process. There are workload issues. There is active recruiting to address staffing issues and agency staff are deployed daily.
- ▶ **Region 5:** RN staffing challenges and above ad-hoc agency staff use continues. One emergency department, the Chelsea site of the South Bruce Grey Health Centre, remains closed evenings and weekends, and there are rolling closures at two other sites (Durham and Walkerton) due to staffing shortages. The employer has shared that they have lost funding for agency use at all sites but one. Both recruitment and retention remain problematic across the Bargaining Unit. The employer is providing a \$25,000 bonus to newly hired nurses who have not been working in Ontario. The employer is having trouble filling vacancies on multiple units.

## PORTFOLIO REPORTS

### Communications

- ▶ **ONA Rebranding:** The Board reviewed the status of ONA's rebranding efforts and the new brand will be unveiled to membership at the Biennial Convention in November.
- ▶ **Media:** ONA continues to field a great many media calls from across the province on a variety of topics. The most asked about was the hospital-sector arbitrations, resulting in massive media coverage. The most-read article in print media was an investigative piece in the Toronto Star, regarding the nursing shortage/health-care crisis and the use of agency nurses. Also receiving daily coverage from a robust group of Hastings and Prince Edward County journalists was the strike by 50 health nurses at the counties' health unit. ONA's efforts to keep media informed of the day's events through daily early-morning media briefings had a huge impact on media coverage.
- ▶ **Podcast:** ONA Provincial President Erin Ariss and First Vice-President Angela Preocanin recorded their most recent podcast in the third quarter in mid-September. This episode focused on the state of the province as we move through the second term of Doug Ford and his Progressive Conservatives, as well as a preview of Biennial Convention.
- ▶ **Website – [www.ona.org](http://www.ona.org):** We continue our efforts to modernize and update our website, streamlining our many pages and content to be more easily navigable and efficient. Important events and news pertaining to our members and our grassroots membership mobilizing activities are promoted on our home page.
- ▶ **Social Media:** Our social media pages on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are constantly hopping with members comments on issues impacting on their work and our union. Social media has proved an effective way to directly communicate with members and share their views not only within ONA but the public as well.
- ▶ **E-Bulletins:** We continue to keep our members informed about professional practice (Practice Matters), health and safety (On the Safe Side) and many other bulletins, generally important messages from the President's Office, through Action Network.

## NURSING WEEK

- ▶ The provincial Nursing Week Advisory Team has a new mandate approved by the Board in June and a new chair in Region 5 Vice-President Alan Warrington. The mandate calls for three short meetings a year using virtual technology. The first meeting was held on Sept. 29 and the team discussed its new mandate and brainstormed ideas for theme, poster and gifts. The team put forward a number of theme suggestions and the Board accepted the following: *We are not an option. We are a necessity. / Nous ne sommes pas une option. Nous sommes une nécessité.* Team members will be making presentations at their February Area Coordinators Conferences on various plans for Nursing Week, which will be held May 6-12.

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS/ ONA ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

- ▶ ONA continues to insert monthly ads in Hospital News for maximum industry coverage and selective ads in major daily newspapers like the Toronto Star. Our campaign ads (television, radio, print and social media) and other materials can be found here: [Nurses Talk Truth](#). The ads target the Ford government for understaffing of nurses and health-care professionals, underfunding of health care and its move towards privatization of health services.
- ▶ ONA joined with four other unions, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU-CUPE), Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), SEIU Healthcare and Unifor for an anti-privatization campaign over the summer months. Activities included petitions demanding the government stop privatization, invest in public hospitals and respect workers by providing substantial wage increases in all classifications to ensure safe staffing levels. Numerous rallies have been held around the province to promote the same messages.

## MEMBER MOBILIZING/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

- ▶ Following huge success in mobilizing members across the province to support hospital bargaining, we continue to expand on our outreach to encourage front-line

members to take part in rallies and actions promoting our key messages around privatization, health-care workers wages and staffing shortages. We also have marked success in various Locals, conducting campaigns for safe staffing and protecting RN jobs.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

- ▶ The Board approved the theme for the Health and Safety Caucus in May 2024: Preventing and Responding to Violence Related Incidents in the Workplace.
- ▶ Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) inspectors have begun conducting field visits as part of a year-long compliance initiative on musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) injuries. The Section 21 Committee will receive periodic updates on any concerns or trends from the initiative. Naloxone kit requirements have come into effect; under this legislation, workplaces with workers at risk of overdose must have naloxone kits.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY

- ▶ The Board is amending the term of office for members of the provincial Human Rights and Equity Team from three years to two years.
- ▶ The Board supported a proposal to add a communities of support (allies) position to the team, in addition to the regular equity groups.
- ▶ The team celebrated Toronto Pride on June 25 and attended a successful debrief meeting on June 26. Different to the Pride process this year was ordering t-shirts with the theme **Speaking up and Staying Proud**. Pink shirts were worn, creating a positive, visible presence for our members throughout the parade. We had record numbers both on our float and in our marching contingent.
- ▶ The team is planning for the upcoming HRE Caucus (November 6). An important part of last year's caucus was the reintroduction of the equity group or communities of support breakout sessions. We will continue with that this year. Team members will co-facilitate the communities of support group with a staff facilitator.

- ▶ The HRE Caucus subsidy process has been completed. In total, 46 subsidies were awarded to members from all equity groups, including allies, and from all five regions.

### PROVINCIAL SERVICES

- ▶ The Ask a Specialist professional practice webinars will be alternating each Tuesday with health and safety.

### NURSE PRACTITIONER FOCUS GROUP

- ▶ The Nurse Practitioner Focus Group (NP Focus Group) is a standing committee established by the ONA Board of Directors that is responsible for ensuring there is a consistent voice for ONA's NPs.
- ▶ The Board reviewed the EOIs submitted and selected the following members to the NP Focus Group effective January 2024:
  - Chair, Angela Preocanin, First Vice-President
  - Region 1 – Colleen Morrow
  - Region 2 – Julissa Edgar
  - Region 3 – Anne Healey
  - Region 4 – Jonathan Tel
  - Region 5 – Marie Greer-King

### FALL TREASURERS CONFERENCE

- ▶ The Board passed a motion to support Treasurers Conferences to be scheduled as follows:
  - October 2024: two-day conference (in person) that follows the election year.
  - October 2025: one-day conference (virtual or in person, as determined in mid-year 2026); one-day (virtual or in person, as determined in consultation with the Vice-President Education, the Vice-President Local Finance, and the Executive Lead Provincial Services) follow-up with new Treasurers that onboarded mid-term and high needs Treasurers (in consultation with V-P Education, V-P Local Finance and Executive Lead, Provincial Services) to address emerging trends.
  - Cycle to repeat beginning in 2027.

The next meeting for the Board of Directors will be held in December.

If you have any questions about this Board meeting, please contact ONA Provincial President Erin Ariss, First Vice-President Angela Preocanin or your regional Vice-President (contact information below). Current and past Board meeting highlights are available on our website here.

**Board members for 2023:** Erin Ariss, Provincial President, Communications and Government Relations/Student Liaison (#7755); Angela Preocanin, First Vice-President, Political Action/Professional Issues (#7707); Dawn Armstrong, Region 1, Education (#7706); Bernadette Robinson, Region 2, Local Finance (#7756); Karen McKay-Eden, Region 3, Human Rights and Equity (#7704); Grace Pierias, Region 4, Health and Safety (#7709); Alan Warrington, Region 5, Labour Relations (#7708). **To contact a Board member during regular business hours**, call (416) 964-8833 (Toronto) or toll-free 1-800-387-5580, hit "0" and ask the receptionist to put you through to the appropriate voicemail box (in brackets). **To leave a message for a Board member after hours**, call (416) 964-8833 (Toronto) or toll-free 1-800-387-5580 (if using the toll-free number, hit "0" immediately after dialing the number to be connected to the Toronto office), then dial her or his voicemail box. The Board also has an intake box for emergencies, monitored twice daily. To reach it, call the above numbers and dial voicemail box #7775.