

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors Meeting, March 3-5, 2026

THE BOARD DISCUSSED THE MANY ISSUES IMPACTING our members at its first meeting of the year, March 3-5. The list of issues included *Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act (PSLRTA)* votes, plans to support our members in provincial nursing homes bargaining, staffing ratios and advocacy for our primary care members. We also continue our fight for safe workplaces.

BOARD COMMITTEES

Quality of Service to Members

► The Members' Survey Report 2025-2026 and the Subgroup Analysis Report include the data collected from the second launch of the Members' Survey, undertaken from November 4, 2025 to January 9, 2026. The reports include feedback from over 10,500 grassroots members, more than 580 leaders and over 180 retirees, totaling 11,290 responses. You can view the report in the Access ONA Resource Centre by logging into [Access ONA](#).

Governance and Nominations

- The committee reviews member policies and makes recommendations to the Board. The Board approved the following policy updates:
- Policy 3.7 Bursaries was updated to reflect the Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Board Committee.
 - Policy 8.10 Threats Against ONA Leaders has been updated to include that this policy also applies to Bargaining Unit leaders.
 - Policy 10.1 Board Common Mandate
 - Policy 10.1 Provincial Public Health Network Mandate
 - Policy 14.6 Confidentiality – A clause regarding the use of ONA email addresses was added to this policy.
 - Policy 17.3 Ratification of a Negotiated Settlement – Provincial
 - Policy 10.1 Hospital Provincial Negotiating Team Mandate
 - Policy 10.1 Election Team Mandate
 - Policy 18.6 ONA Provincial Election Policy

Enterprise Risk Management Committee

► MASS LBP updated the committee on development of ONA's Risk Framework. To ensure risks are identified and assessed consistently, a guide was developed to help manage the process moving forward for this committee. This committee is also reviewing risks involved with Artificial Intelligence (AI). Some employers are using AI in labour relations such as labour-management meetings, grievance and investigation meetings.

Political Action Committee (PAC)

► The team welcomed a new Region 1 member, replacing a recently retired member. At the time of writing this report, the legislative petition to stop privatization and support staffing ratios had a total of 8,221 signatures. Supportive MPPs will begin presenting the petition in the Legislature when the session resumes March 23, 2026. Presentations are recorded in the Hansard (official transcript) and the official record of Votes and Proceedings. The committee extended the deadline for acquiring petition signatures until the end of October 2026.

Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights (AREHR) Committee

► The Board received an overview of the new AREHR Board Committee, including the composition of the Committee and its four action teams. They are currently exploring what further support ONA could offer our members who are internationally educated nurses (IENs) and health-care professionals, and how to support the new Human Rights and Equity position on Local Executives.

Provincial Treasurer

► The Provincial Treasurer has taken on a new initiative to better understand the financial health of all 60 Locals. This initiative will support ONA in being able to better serve Locals as we plan for the implementation of a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The full minutes of the March 2026 Board meeting will be available at ona.org once approved.

The SimplyHelp Team prepared summary notes on the individual 60 Locals and their 2024 audit findings. These findings highlighted inconsistencies in practice and noted any adjustments that should take place to ensure Locals are following best practices.

Tip Sheets and Documents

- ▶ The following were approved by the Board:
 - Tip Sheet: Workplace Violence Risks and Risk Assessments for Community Health-Care Workers
 - Tip Sheet: Working Alone in the Community
 - ONA Guidance: Duty to Report When Acting in the Role of a Union Representative
 - Tip Sheet: Hospital Fiscal Advisory Committees.

Donations

- ▶ The Board reviewed and approved the following donations for 2026:
 - Wellness Sponsorship of \$10,000 for the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable EDI Leadership Conference being held in 2026.
 - \$1,000 donation to the 2026 Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts.
 - Sponsorship of \$5,000 for the 2026 Yellow Brick House “Break the Silence Walk.”

REGIONAL REPORTS

REGION 1: The Attawapiskat site has seen a few incidents of workplace violence related to aggressive patients. These incidents were brought forward to the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) with a plan of action. A preliminary Violence Risk Assessment was completed. The hospital will be providing Non-Violent Crisis Intervention education.

REGION 2: A hospital is experiencing significant staffing shortages. Some managers are offering incentives to work without agreement from the union. This issue is being monitored and grievances will be filed if violations are confirmed. Internationally educated nurses were hired but are being terminated during probation due to practice issues.

REGION 3: This region experienced a 13-week strike at a new Bargaining Unit, North York Family Health Team. The members reached a settlement that was ratified on January 13, 2026. At an Ontario Health atHome unit, members were required to begin working in-office five days per week starting January 5, 2026. The members do not know yet how this will impact their home visits.

REGION 4: An employer has moved RPNs to lower acuity units and RNs to higher acuity units. The BUP says they are doing well now that they have learned their routines on the new unit. The employer has faced significant turnover, with three HR Directors in the past three years, but is collaborating with the union to improve labour relations.

REGION 5: An employer has agreed to settlement discussions for the COVID-19 grievances. The employer does not plan to rescind the policy. There has been no improvement in the relationships between managers, directors and our members. The LRO attended the last Hospital-Association Committee meeting to support the BUP and committee members and will continue to attend future meetings where possible.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

▶ **Communications:** ONA advertising in this period focused on Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) members’ fight for a new fair contract, and a very successful fall workplace violence campaign – Code Black & Blue – on the crucial need for safe staffing to protect nurses and improve care. This campaign garnered a lot of media and social media activity. The Communications Team has begun work on deliverables for Nursing Week 2026, including theme and poster development.

▶ **Political Action:** On December 15, 2025, ONA President Erin Ariss and Chief Executive Officer Andrea Kay briefed Health Minister and Deputy Premier Sylvia Jones on the concerning increase in ONA layoffs across the province, and spoke about instances where hospital funding for RNs is used for other purposes. They also talked about the violence ONA members experience at work, and while other provinces are moving ahead with staffing ratios, Ontario is falling further behind.

▶ **Nursing Students:** In 2025, ONA staff worked with the Canadian Nursing Students’ Association (CNSA) to survey a small sample of nursing students to understand their experiences with, and exposure to, the primary care sector in their nursing education. Results of the survey indicate that for many, primary care is presented more as a theoretical concept in the classroom rather than as a practical, career-oriented pathway. Nineteen out of 28 respondents reported that primary care is discussed in classroom settings and just nine respondents shared that they have been exposed to primary care through clinicals, practicums, internships or curriculum-based experiences. This limits students’ ability to understand

the scope and professional viability of primary care in Ontario. The students also identified that low pay is a barrier to entering the nursing field.

- ▶ **Member Recognition Advisory Team (MRAT):** In May 2025, the Board approved the implementation of the MRAT, whose mandate is to recognize members of various professions to a greater extent, as ONA has done with nurses. The 10-member MRAT, including members from the five regions and several health-care professions (nursing, physiotherapy, social work and more), helps guide communications related to professional and worker recognition and encourages Locals to celebrate the diverse professions among our union membership. The MRAT met for the first time in January. The team was asked to come to a consensus regarding a Nursing Week theme for 2026 and make recommendations to the Board. For Nursing Week this year, May 11-17, the Board decided on Experts in Care, Fighting for Change / Des spécialistes en soins, qui luttent pour le changement.
- ▶ **Retiree Network Advisory Team (RNAT):** RNAT members met on November 27, 2025. The major focus was on the ONA Members' Survey and the upcoming Ontario Health atHome *PSLRTA* campaigns. All RNAT members agreed to do phone outreach to retired members in their regions to promote these opportunities. RNAT members recruited 50 retiree members to volunteer on phone banks for the *PSLRTA* campaigns. In addition, over 180 retiree members completed the ONA Members' Survey.
- ▶ **Member Education (ME):** The ME Team is currently undertaking a comprehensive review and refresh of its education-related processes to strengthen clarity, consistency and accountability across service delivery. This work includes updating the *ME Work Process and Policy* (staff) and the *Service Delivery Accountability* document (members) to ensure alignment with current practices, operational realities and ONA's Strategic Plan. In addition, the ME Team is developing a new internal *Supporting Practices Guide* to provide detailed, practical guidance for team members on workshop development, scheduling, delivery and additional workshop requests. This ensures that ME processes remain responsive to evolving member needs while supporting sustainable, high-quality education delivery across the organization. High attendance rates, strong digital engagement, proactive scheduling for 2026 and successful eLearning outcomes reflect a stable and responsive education system that supports members in

their leadership and advocacy roles.

- ▶ **Premiums and ONA Merch Shop:** The ONA Merch Shop offers a curated selection of branded merchandise for members, Locals and staff, all designed to align with ONA's brand standards. Our inventory strategy ensures variety and freshness—stock-keeping units (SKUs) are rotated regularly so members always have access to new and relevant merchandise options. Nursing Week products are available, and Locals can arrange their own merch shops.
- ▶ **Professional Practice:** As of December 31, 2025, there were a total of 739 files supported by the Professional Practice Team. There were 666 files at intake, 68 at the pre-complaint stage and five files at Independent Assessment Committee. Ninety-one per cent of these files are from the hospital sector. Additional membership education remains an identified need. The team continues to support the education needs of individual Bargaining Units and remains committed to ensuring members and leaders possess a strong understanding of the professional responsibility workload (PRW) process and the importance of filing PRW forms.
- ▶ **Legal Expense Assistance Plan (LEAP):** The LEAP Team was the busiest it has ever been in 2025, opening a record 729 files. Even with this increased workload, the team achieved impressive results, as demonstrated on the Regulatory College Outcome Report for reports or complaints regarding members' conduct: 90 per cent resulted in no notation on the public register (i.e., outcomes of take no action or advice, informal resolutions, and withdrawals); eight per cent of cases involved members receiving a caution and/or a remedial order; two per cent resulted in findings of misconduct at the Discipline Committee.

Health Care Restructuring / Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act (PSLRTA)

- ▶ **Ontario Health atHome (OHaH):** On February 13, 2026, thousands of health-care professionals working for OHaH voted to be represented by ONA, confirming ONA as the best choice to advocate for their interests. Following the Ontario government's merger of the 14 OHaH branches into a single entity under Ontario Health in 2024, the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that the more than 8,000 workers would be divided into two Bargaining Units, a "professional" unit of 6,000 workers and a "clerical/support" unit of 2,000 workers. This necessitated the *PSLRTA* vote to determine which union

would represent the workers. ONA won the support of the health-care professionals, while OPSEU won the vote for the clerical/support workers. Throughout the campaign, ONA connected with thousands of OHaH staff through workplace meetings, town halls, phone calls, and texts to convince them that we were the best choice.

- ▶ **Hospital@Home:** Monitoring this initiative continues as there is little consistency across the province.
- ▶ **Public Health Units:** PSLRTA campaigns are being undertaken at four health units. Thus far, nurses voted overwhelmingly to be represented by ONA at Northeastern Public Health but lost a vote at Grand Erie Public Health.

NEGOTIATIONS

Long-Term Care Sector

- ▶ **Participating Nursing Homes:** Preparation for the next round of provincial bargaining is underway. Part II of orientation was held January 19-21, 2026. An additional four hours were scheduled for March 16, to complete the proposal preparation. Regarding pay equity, the Review Officer is working on concluding the investigation. ONA is awaiting the response.
- ▶ **Non-Participating Nursing Homes:** Negotiations for settlements of renewal collective agreements continue.
- ▶ **Retirement Homes:** Bargaining continues in this sector, and settlements are achieving percentage increases obtained in other sectors.
- ▶ **Homes for the Aged:** Settlements have been achieved with some Bargaining Units achieving parity with

hospitals on wages, isolation pay and unlimited mental health. Arbitration decisions received are awarding hospital parity on wages and isolation pay and mental health is being awarded at \$3,000 annually. Regarding pay equity, there are several ongoing files.

HOSPITAL SECTOR

- ▶ **Provincial Hospital Bargaining 2025:** The Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) and ONA are negotiating the application of the Transfer of Accountability (TOA) language and the placement of Nurse Practitioners (NP) on the new minimum wage grid in the Price decision. The parties were to return to the Price Board on March 6, 2026. Local issues bargaining is complete, including all local issues arbitration hearings.
- ▶ **Provincial Hospital Bargaining 2027:** The 2027 round of provincial hospital bargaining will begin in April 2026 with a call for nominations and launch of the *Have Your Say* survey. ONA has received the decision from Review Services and is waiting for the response from the OHA.
- ▶ **Non-Participating Hospitals:** Bargaining has begun for 18 non-participating hospital Bargaining Units.

ORGANIZING:

- ▶ There were five successful campaigns achieved and five groups working towards applications. There are 11 first collective agreements being negotiated across the province.

The Board's next meeting in 2026 is June 9-11.

If you have any questions about this Board meeting, please contact ONA Provincial President Erin Ariss or your regional Vice-President (contact information below). Current and past Board meeting highlights are available in [Access ONA](#).

Board of Directors: Erin Ariss, Provincial President, Communications and Government Relations/Student Liaison/Provincial Negotiations/Constitutional Meetings; Alan Warrington, First Vice-President, Local Campaigns; Monique Storozuk, Region 1, Professional Issues; Rachel Muir, Region 2, Occupational Health and Safety; Karen McKay-Eden, Region 3, Anti- Racism, Equity and Human Rights; Grace Pierias, Region 4, Education and Events; John Lowe, Region 5, Contract Administration; Bernadette Robinson, Treasurer/Local Finance; Andrea Kay, Chief Executive Officer/Board Secretary. **To contact a Board member during regular business hours**, use our toll-free number at 1-800-387-5580. **To leave a message after hours in an emergency**, use the Board intake box, which is monitored twice daily. Call toll-free 1-800-387-5580, select preferred language (1 for English, 2 for French), press 4 for the Board intake line and leave your message.

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