



Ontario Health atHome Provincial Negotiating Team Candidate Article

Name: Kelsey Farrow

Nominee For: Region 5 Full-Time Representative

I am honoured to submit my name in consideration for the Ontario Health atHome Provincial Negotiating Team. Over the last three years with Ontario Health atHome, I have developed a deep understanding of the challenges we face every day, and I believe it is important that our voices are represented by someone who is passionate, approachable, and committed to meaningful advocacy.

I have been a Registered Nurse since 2020, and worked in demanding healthcare environments, including medical floors, complex continuing care, and the operating room. Through those experiences, I have developed a broad understanding of the healthcare system, patient advocacy, multidisciplinary collaboration, and the harsh realities we face as healthcare professionals. Working alongside frontline staff, I have seen how healthcare workers consistently give mentally, emotionally, and physically to support patients in their most vulnerable moments.

Ontario Health atHome has shown me a different perspective of healthcare that is equally, but differently demanding. Our work requires incredible critical thinking skills, compassion, strong emotional resilience, and the ability to navigate increasingly complex patient circumstances, all while balancing the fine line between heavy workloads and immense system pressures. Despite this heavy responsibility, many of us continue to feel undervalued and underappreciated in comparison to our hospital counterparts. This must be addressed as we move forward.

My first primary goal as a member of the Negotiating Team would be advocating for wages that appropriately reflect the complexity and the value of the work we do every day. So many of us have extensive clinical knowledge, system knowledge, and manage a significant emotional and mental burden daily. Hospital staff have comparable work, yet they receive much higher financial compensation despite similar levels of responsibility, stress, and expertise. Competitive benefits and wages are critical for retention, recruitment, morale, and long-term sustainability within our organization.

My secondary goal is advocating for improved vacation, particularly for employees with less than 10 years of seniority. The burnout of healthcare workers is at all all-time high, and many staff members struggle to maintain healthy work-life balance while coordinating increasingly complex caseloads. Time off from work is not a luxury in healthcare -it is a necessity for mental health, physical health, and

longevity in the workforce. By supporting employees earlier in their careers, the organization would demonstrate that they value our wellbeing and recognize the demands of our work.

I am also passionate about improving Ontario Health atHome benefits so that they align with hospital industry standards. We should not have anxiety about inadequate health coverage while dedicating our lives to caring for others. Access to comprehensive benefits supports overall health and wellness, reduces stress, and fosters trust between employees and the organization.

Mental health coverage is a topic I am especially interested in discussing. We are exposed to grief, trauma, moral distress, and crisis situations on a regular basis at work. Staff are expected to continue functioning at a high level despite carrying significant emotional burdens associated with our careers. Unfortunately, our mental health coverage is inadequate, and leaves access to critical mental health services financially inaccessible once coverage maximums are reached. I believe that unlimited access to mental health coverage should be a priority in future bargaining discussions. Supporting the emotional wellbeing of healthcare workers is not a luxury. It is necessary for safe patient care, and staff retention.

Though I do not have direct prior bargaining experience, I bring multiple valuable qualities to this position. I am a strong communicator, an empathetic listener, and a person that genuinely wants to understand and represent the concerns of others. I bring a professional approach to difficult conversations, while maintaining firm in fair advocacy. My background as a Registered Nurse has given me a foundation for remaining calm under pressure, critical thinking, and working collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team. These skills are highly transferrable to a role as a negotiator.

I care deeply about the colleagues I work with. Firsthand, I have seen the compassion, dedication, and sacrifice that we make every day. I believe Ontario Health atHome deserves a strong advocate that reflects the reality of our work, and fights for meaningful improvements that will impact both new, experienced, and future employees.

It would be an honour and a privilege to represent my colleagues on the Provincial Bargaining Team. I am eager both to learn, and to contribute to the fair negotiation for compensation, improved vacation, better working conditions, and enhanced mental health support for all Ontario Health atHome employees. Thank you for your consideration.

Kelsey Farrow

Signature of Nominee