

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Making Important Decisions for You!

A summary of discussions and decisions from the ONA Board of Directors Meeting, September 15-17, 2026

WITH A BUSY FALL APPROACHING, THE BOARD

discussed several issues affecting our members, including ensuring supports are in place for provincial bargaining for our hospital and Ontario Health atHome members. The Board also addressed our advocacy efforts to speak out against the significant nurse and health-care professional cuts occurring across the province, as well as the launch of ONA's Charter challenge to strike down the *Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act* (HLDA).

BOARD COMMITTEES

Quality of Service to Members

► The Committee presented Members' Survey highlights at our June Provincial Coordinators Meeting, including engagement methods, key findings, and areas for further exploration. The current priority is member orientation at the Bargaining Unit level. While members found recent orientation effective, only slightly more than half of surveyed leaders felt confident members were receiving it. Leaders were invited to provide feedback on a tailored toolkit and share orientation resources.

Governance and Nominations

► The Committee provided feedback on updated guides covering grievances, whistleblower protection, and job action. Members emphasized the practical importance of the Whistleblower Protection Guide. Several policies were approved including monthly dues deduction, retired members, and communicating diversity. A new policy supporting grassroots board committee members participating in provincial meetings was reviewed and approved.

Enterprise Risk Management Committee (ERMC)

► The Committee reviewed risks including privacy, workload sustainability, succession, cybersecurity, data governance, and institutional memory. Five priorities emerged including formal information governance, information protection, storage, leadership succession, and access standards. ONA's Enterprise Risk

Framework identified several potential risks, with board stewards and staff leads assigned to monitor them. The Committee will examine strengthening privacy safeguards and Local-level governance practices in future.

Political Action Committee (PAC)

► PAC members held Regional Political Action Committee (RPAC) meetings, which focused on preparing petition actions, reviewing talking points, huddles and post-petition debriefs. The Committee reflected on the work done by RPAC members to promote videos of opposition MPPs presenting petitions in the legislature and discussed next steps. Several province-wide actions took place as part of the Community Month of Action.

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

► At its July meeting, the Committee focused on workplace issues, action team priorities, preparations for the November AREHR Summit, and opportunities to strengthen member engagement and support. The committee discussed the shift from broad priority setting to more focused work plans, member-informed recommendations and accountable follow-up. The next phase will focus on translating insights into practical supports, stronger member engagement and coordinated action team activity.

Provincial Treasurer

► The Provincial Treasurer discussed supplementary funding and reconciliation. A total of 54 Locals has submitted at least one draft audited financial statement. Of those, 14 Locals have submitted multiple drafts in efforts to work through any inconsistencies that need

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

to be resolved prior to finalizing financial statements. Forty-five Locals have finalized and submitted their 2025 audited financial statements. Since January, nine new Treasurers have been onboarded.

Policy Updates

- Policy updates approved by the Board include:
 - Policy 25.1 Expenses for Provincial Negotiating Teams and Pay Equity Teams
 - Policy 25.2 Expense Account Forms and Direction
 - Policy 26.9 Educational Support Grant
 - Policy 26.22 Funding for Parades
 - Policy 26.18 Reimbursement for ONA Work

Donations

- The Board approved the following donations:
 - Donation of \$1,500 to the Toronto and York Region Labour Council for ONA's participation in the Toronto Labour Day Parade as a parade host.
 - Diamond-Level (\$12,500) Sponsorship of the 2027 Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) National Conference. – ONA is co-funding promotional items with the CFNU, with ONA's contribution totaling \$11,000.

REGIONAL REPORTS

- **Region 1:** At Notre Dame Hospital in Hearst, there were two recent critical incidents involving mental health patients leaving the hospital resulting in significant negative outcomes. No debriefing was completed with either incident. The Bargaining Unit President and Labour Relations Officer are working with the health and safety specialists on next steps.
- **Region 2:** Campbellford Memorial Hospital is experiencing significant staffing shortages which has resulted in reports that some managers are offering incentives to work without agreement from ONA. This issue is being monitored, and grievances will be filed if violations are confirmed. Internationally trained nurses were hired but are being terminated from probation due to practice issues. The union is having ongoing conversations with the employer on how the hospital can support inexperienced staff with a more robust orientation.

► **Region 3:** Victorian Order of Nurses Toronto/York-Peel site continues to have recruitment and retention issues. One team is using agency staff. The Bargaining Unit President, Labour Relations Officer and Health and Safety Specialist are working together to improve the Joint Health and Safety Committee, with the members continuing to experience many issues without a multisite agreement.

► **Region 4:** Guelph General Hospital challenges persist with return-to-work and accommodation processes. The occupational health department is not nurse-led. There is repeated turnover in the Chief Nursing Executive role that has affected continuity and relationship building with nurse leadership. Repeated turnover of HR consultants has also affected continuity of grievance handling.

► **Region 5:** Erie St. Clair Ontario Health atHome continues to be a difficult employer. Vacation denial grievances have been filed and referred to arbitration. The employer inconsistently approves and denies requests on the same team and throughout the organization. Grievances have been filed for not posting vacant positions on teams where professional practice issues have been reported. The Windsor office is experiencing cockroaches again. ONA is providing guidance regarding the infestation.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

- **Communications:** Our spring Code Black & Blue campaign, with a focus on RN cuts and violence, had strong results. F-Word celebrated its first anniversary, and members continue to embrace it with many Vent submissions. Our media and social media analytics have been steady and include heavily covered nursing cuts and our launch of striking down HLDAA. Across-the-board increases in website analytics were achieved due to trending topics, including nursing homes bargaining and negotiating team elections/bargaining surveys.
- **Political Action:** Provincial President Erin Ariss attended the Council of the Federation policy breakfast hosted by the CFNU. Erin spoke with Premier Ford about the increasing number of RN cuts we are seeing across Ontario and more broadly about the importance of RN care, workplace violence, and hospital CEO salaries.

- ▶ **Nursing Students:** In July, nursing student concerns about financial pressures, parking fees, OSAP changes, and limited access to the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant were shared with Premier Ford and Minister Jones. Region 4 Vice-President P Grace Pierias mentored York University nursing students on leadership, transition-to-practice, and career decisions to support new nurses. ONA supported nursing students through a sponsorship at St. Lawrence College and an advertisement in the University of Ottawa Nursing Student Association's yearbook, promoting education, networking, advocacy, and awareness of union services.
- ▶ **Member Recognition Advisory Team (MRAT):** The MRAT met on June 8 and discussed issues related to the many professions in which ONA represents. Members decided on a theme for Labour Day – *Defend Members. Demand Respect* – which was approved by the Board. The Team discussed options for the 2027 all-member gift and reached a consensus and chose the screwdriver pen. This gift will be mailed out to members in early 2027.
- ▶ **Retiree Network Advisory Team (RNAT):** RNAT members supported the Ontario Health Coalition's march at Queen's Park on May 28 to protest Doug Ford's health-care privatization agenda. RNAT member Anne Clark shared about participating in the petition action at the Glebe Garage Sale in Ottawa where volunteers had hundreds of conversations with community members on ONA's demands for safe staffing ratios and to stop privatization. RNAT members participated in the nursing homes information pickets on June 4.
- ▶ **Member Education:** Increased workshop activity, strong participation, and continued demand for both planned and Local-requested education highlights this quarter. About 103 education opportunities were scheduled including 72 workshops, six health and safety caucus sessions, nine Ask a Specialist sessions, and 16 Preparing Your Team for Negotiations sessions. Across education files, there were 1,115 registration records and 963 attendance or completion records. This represents an overall attendance rate of 86 per cent.
- ▶ **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 with merchandise rotated regularly so members always have access to new merchandise options. Second quarter sales totalled about \$498.92.
- ▶ **Professional Practice:** The team managed a total of 767 files including 695 at intake, 67 at pre-complaint and five at the Independent Assessment Committee (IAC) stage. ONA achieved more than 30,160 RN hours, 2,825 regulated/unregulated hours, and equipment including bladder scanner, ECG machine, medical fridge, and additional workstations which include mobile stations and additional computers. The team delivered eight workshops this quarter through a mix of virtual and in-person formats. An attendance rate of 88 per cent was achieved.
- ▶ **Legal Expense Assistance Plan (LEAP):** The LEAP Team is managing more than 950 active cases. Cases include Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee complaints from the public and employers, health inquiries, and discipline committee. The LEAP Advisory Team met to review the recent LEAP Plan increase to hourly rate, the quarterly Regulatory College Outcome Report, Member Satisfaction Survey results for 2025, as well as the recent changes to CNO Public Registry, Find a Nurse.
- ▶ **Nurses' Health Program (NHP) Update:** Trillium Health Partners has now taken over as the new service provider of the NHP from Lifemark Health. Notice has been sent to participants in the program, including former participants. Current participants have been provided with a consent form to complete to allow their file to be transferred. A transition group of partner organizations, (ONA, CNO, RNAO and WeRPN) have been working with both Trillium and Lifemark to facilitate the transition. All services ceased with Lifemark on August 28, 2026.

HEALTH CARE RESTRUCTURING / PUBLIC SECTOR LABOUR RELATIONS TRANSITION ACT (PSLRTA)

- ▶ **Ontario Health atHome (OHatH):** Negotiations for the transition agreement continue along with preparations for negotiations for a first collective agreement. Elections for regional representatives are complete. Team orientation was held at the end of August.
- ▶ **Hospital@Home:** Monitoring this initiative continues as there is little consistency across the province.
- ▶ **Public Health Units:** The province continues to refine, refocus, and relevel the roles and responsibilities of local public health units to reduce services from overlapping. We continue to wait for details regarding the PSLRTA decision for the Southeast Public Health Unit. The decision regarding scope and the number of Bargaining Units will be determined by the conciliator. No date has been set for representation votes.

NEGOTIATIONS

Long-Term Care Sector

- ▶ **Participating Nursing Homes:** The decision was released by Arbitrator William Kaplan on August 18. A sector meeting was held with the members to review the decision.

- ▶ **Non-Participating Nursing Homes:** Negotiations for renewal collective agreements continue. The remaining homes for the aged are settling based on the amended position of mental health at \$3,000. Negotiations for 2025 expiries have started with direction not to agree to a me-too Price hospital award.
- ▶ **Retirement Homes:** Settlement discussions continue for expired retirement home agreements, applying the percentage increases obtained in other sectors as guidance for wage increases. HLDAA dates are set where settlements have not been achieved.
- ▶ **Homes for the Aged:** A first settlement for the renewal of a 2025 expiry has been achieved with higher than the Price rates, benefits and premiums.

Hospital Sector

- ▶ **Provincial Hospital Bargaining 2027:** The Hospital Provincial Negotiating Team (HPNT) is in place, the bargaining survey has closed, and HPNT orientation begins in September.
- ▶ **Organizing:** ONA continues to receive queries from non-unionized health-care staff about joining ONA. Two successful campaigns were achieved by ONA during this last quarter.

The Board's next meeting in
2026 is December 8-10.

If you have any questions about this Board meeting, please contact ONA Provincial President Erin Ariss or your regional Vice-President. 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.

Provincial Office • 85 Grenville St. • Toronto ON M5S 3A2
Toll-free: 1-800-387-5580 • Website: ona.org

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