**Happenings of OPHNL – Issue #1, 2019**

I would like to wish you a very prosperous and happy 2019! I am pleased to provide an update on the progress OPHNL has made on our strategic priorities to-date:

 **Relationships:**

As you may be aware, in fall of 2018, OPHNL executive met with Dr. Michelle Acorn, the Provincial Chief Nursing Officer to discuss the priorities of OPHNL. In this meeting, Dr. Acorn identified the new mandate of her office, which no longer constitutes the Nursing Secretariat and instead is now the Office of the Provincial Chief Nursing Officer (PCNO). In this new mandate, the PCNO:

* Provides strategic, clinical, and technical expertise and advise on policy;
* Does not engage in advocacy issues; and
* Develops relationships with every Ministry that touches nursing practice.

The PCNO is very committed to interprofessional integration including RPNs and is looking to ensure that professional roles are utilized to their full capacity in the health system. She also aims to focus on conducting nursing workforce analysis and the need to build capacity in each sector. We will continue to maintain our relationship with the PCNO and aim to meet with her again in 2019 to discuss matters of mutual interest!

**Systems Levels Impact:**

At the end of last year, OPHNL was introduced to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Christine Elliott, as part of an alPHa board meeting. The Minister spoke to a wide variety of priorities for the new provincial government, including a well-connected system for mental health and addictions prevention and treatment services.

The province is currently conducting consultations with the public on the 2019 budget, which are being led by the Minister of Finance, Victor Fedeli. As part of this exercise, we anticipate changes being proposed to the healthcare system, including public health. In response, alPHa has developed a pre-budget submission to the province as well as a public health communique. In alignment with alPHa’s approach, we are in the process of developing key messages for our members to help us inform our local communities including MPPs on the functions and strong return on investment of public health, the importance of local public health, and ways in which public health nurses support disease prevention and promote health. Stay tuned for key messages to arrive via email along with an opportunity to participate in a webinar discussion for members.

We are extremely pleased to inform you that as a result of the passing of a resolution at the 2018 AGM, the RN Prescribing Workgroup has been formed. Many of our members expressed interest in participating in this workgroup and I would like to thank you for your engagement. The objectives of this workgroup include the following:

* To provide expert advice for better client outcomes through RN Prescribing in public health nursing practice.
* To provide public health input into the development of training, implementation and evaluation.
* To identify common practice issues or concerns for OPHNL to address with the College of Nurses of Ontario.
* To identify stakeholders who could positively influence RN Prescribing in public health including those who could assist with capacity building.

We continue to remain engaged with the College of Nurses of Ontario and have been invited to a stakeholder consultation meeting on the draft RN prescribing regulation in late January. You can also provide input on the draft regulations by February 18 at the following link: <http://www.cno.org/en/consultations/comment-on-proposed-rn-prescribing-and-other-regulation-changes/>

**Foster a Highly Competent and Innovative Workforce:**

Our Highly Competent Workforce workgroup is exploring the development of an online interactive module on the ***Orientation: Transition to Public Health Nursing*** document. Last year, the development of this online module was identified as a priority by members of OPHNL. We have also partnered with the LEADS Collaborative and the Canadian College of Health Leaders to implement a joint workforce development day entitled “LEADS Exchange” which aims to exchange best practices among the different health care sectors on leadership development. The day will be open to Chief Nursing Officers to attend and bring back new ideas to their respective organizations on public health nursing workforce development.

**Marketing and Memberships**

To date, we have 142 registered members of OPHNL, of which only 77 members have renewed their membership for the 2019 year. I would like to request members with pending membership to consider renewal and take advantage of the various opportunities and initiatives that are offered through the association. The link to membership renewal is: <http://ophnl.wildapricot.org/Sys/Login>. Please be aware that lapsed members will no longer receive communication about updates and events from OPHNL following February 1.

We are very excited to inform you that we are in the initial stages of planning a communications video on the “value of public health nursing”. This is another priority area for members of our association. Stay tuned for additional details since we will require participation of public health nurses from your organizations to engage in this initiative.

Last but not least, I would like to welcome Darrell Jutzi, Patti Gauley, and Chantal Riopel to the OPHNL Executive. They bring excellent expertise, knowledge and passion and add to the complement of our current executive team.

I want to express my sincere gratitude for your support and leadership. OPHNL members are having a positive impact working collectively regionally, in our workgroups and on our executive and with stakeholders across the province. Thank you to the entire executive and our members for your contributions in helping shape and propel our association forward!

Sincerely,

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