

# The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders

## Leading the Way for Public Health Nursing

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# Member Newsletter

May 2023



*Jennifer Vickers-Manzin*  
*OPHNL President*

## Inside This Issue

- 1 [Message from the President](#)
- 2 [OPHNL Executive Committee](#)
- 3 [School Focused Initiative Evaluation](#)
- 3 [OPHNL Mission and Strategic Planning](#)
- 3 [Recovery Project](#)
- 3 [Website & Membership/Training](#)
- 4 [Relationships](#)
- 4 [Fostering a Competent Workforce](#)
- 5 [Systems Level Impact](#)
- 5 [Marketing and Memberships](#)
- 6 [Looking Ahead](#)

## Message from the President

Nursing week is an opportunity to celebrate the important work that nurses do. I would like to take this opportunity to wish OPHNL members a happy nursing week.

The national theme this year, **Our Nurses: Our Future**, showcases and celebrates the many roles that nurses play in a patient's health-care journey. In public health, that means celebrating the often-hidden roles that our nursing workforce plays in protecting and promoting health. Nurses working in public health have a critical and unique upstream mandate to change the causes of the causes of disease.

In line with the **Our Nurses: Our Future** nursing week theme, and the values of OPHNL (Accountable, Collaborative, Innovative, and Responsive), OPHNL is reinstating the quarterly newsletter to keep you informed and engaged in the activities of the Association.

As we emerge from the prolonged public health response to COVID-19, OPHNL has been engaged in recovery work. This recovery work has involved reflection on lessons learned during the pandemic, the unique and broad role of public health nurses, the full mandate of public health, innovative solutions to address service delivery backlogs, and planning for the future. This newsletter provides you with an overview of that work.

I look forward to working with all of you in my role as OPHNL President through this exciting time of opportunity for public health nursing.

*Jen Vickers-Manzin, RN*

President

Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders

## OPHNL Executive Committee Members

OPHNL Executive Committee includes elected and non-elected positions. The OPHNL Executive Committee currently has one vacancy to fill:









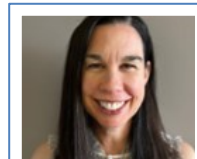
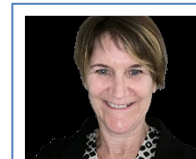

- **Treasurer** (Elected)

Consistent with the Constitution, the OPHNL Executive Committee will appoint a temporary Treasurer until the 2023 OPHNL Annual General Meeting in November. We are hoping to fill this vacancy as soon as possible. If you are interested in the Treasurer position email OPHNL President [jennifer.vickers-manzin@hamilton.ca](mailto:jennifer.vickers-manzin@hamilton.ca).

At the fall 2023 OPHNL Annual General Meeting we will return to our regular nomination and election process for the positions of President-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary. More information will be disseminated later this spring.

As nursing leaders, we are in an unprecedented position of leading and supporting the public health nursing workforce while they resume public health programs and services that protect health and promote community recovery, health and wellbeing. During this unique time, OPHNL has a window of opportunity to provide a coordinated voice and innovative solutions related to the future role, scope and focus of public health nursing; health systems integration; and models of care that best protect, promote, and enhance population health.

We encourage you to consider joining the OPHNL Executive Committee at this exciting time.

 <p>President Jen Vickers-Manzin, RN</p>	 <p>Past-President David Groulx, RN</p>	 <p>Treasurer Vacant</p>	 <p>Secretary Jennifer Mitton, RN</p>	 <p>CNO Network Chair Natalie Riewe, RN</p>	 <p>NPL Network Chair Allison Kern, RN</p>
 <p>Central East Chair Vacant</p>	 <p>Central West Chair Rita Isley, RN</p>	 <p>Northern Chair Chantal Riopel, RN</p>	 <p>Eastern Chair Patti Smith</p>	 <p>Southwestern Chair Darrell Jutzi</p>	

## Special Project Update

### School Focused Nursing Initiative Evaluation

OPHNL, in consultation with representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Post-Secondary institutions and the Ontario Public Health Epidemiologist Network, conducted an evaluation of the School Focused Nurse Initiative. This evaluation documents lessons learned during the implementation of this program during the COVID-19 pandemic response. Based on the School Focused Nursing Initiative Evaluation, OPHNL has released recommendations which were received by the aLPHa Board of Directors on November 10, 2022. To access the full report and recommendations [click here](#).



## Special Project Update

### Renewal of OPHNL Mission and Strategic Planning

At the OPHNL AGM held on June 20, 2022, members discussed the OPHNL mission. Attending members voted unanimously that the mission *“To promote and protect the health of Ontarians through excellence in public health nursing leadership”* still resonates with members and should form the basis of OPHNL strategic planning and work going forward.

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*To promote and protect the health of Ontarians through excellence in public health nursing leadership.*

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## Special Project Update

### Recovery Project

The OPHNL CNO Network Group initiated recovery planning in 2021. This began with a Health Unit Recovery Survey followed by facilitated discussions with Chief Nursing Officers to identify key areas of collaboration between health units. The information will be used to inform action and OPHNL strategic planning. The OPHNL Executive Committee and Chief Nursing Officers Network Group have begun initial strategic planning work, which will include a plan for engaging OPHNL members at the 2023 Fall OPHNL AGM.



## Special Project Update

### Website and Membership and Training and Education

Public health leaders continue to experience a high volume of work as we reopen mandated public health programs and services. Two important special projects have been put on hold due to lack of capacity. These include (a) Updating the OPHNL Website and Increasing OPHNL Membership, and (b) Training and Education for OPHNL Members.



## Strategic Plan Update

### Relationships



**Provincial Chief Nursing Officer:** The OPHNL Executive Committee and the OPHNL Chief Nursing Officers Network Group met with the Provincial Chief Nursing Officer in November 2022. The purpose of this meeting was to establish a relationship with Dr. Karima Velji with a goal that these groups will provide consultation related to public health nursing and possible solutions to health human resource issues. Dr. Velji has been tasked with the development of a health human resource strategy and capacity building plan with 10 year horizon for Ontario. During our meeting, Dr. Velji was direct, passionate, and inspiring with a strong call to action for nurses and nursing leaders to provide innovative solutions to the current pressures faced by the health care system. Dr. Velji has a strong interest in operationalizing lessons learned during COVID-19 response as it pertains to best practices, integrated models of care, and leveraging nurses to work at full scope of practice.

**Association of Local Public Health Agencies:** As an affiliate group, the President of OPHNL is on the aLPHa Board of Directors and provides quarterly updates that can be found [here](#). The OPHNL Executive Committee has been working with aLPHa to ensure alignment of messaging related to public health and public health nursing.

**Registered Nurses Association of Ontario:** In January 2023, OPHNL Executive Committee met with the RNAO to discuss the needs and perspectives of public health nursing in preparation for the RNAO pre-budget submission to the Province.

**Ontario Public Health Association:** As a Constituent Society member, OPHNL is represented on the OPHA Board of Directors and is participating in the OPHA Advocacy Committee.

## Strategic Plan Update

### Fostering a Highly Competent Workforce



Workforce planning was identified as a priority area for OPHNL during the pandemic recovery planning discussions. This topic will continue to be a consideration in OPHNL Strategic Planning moving forward.

In 2019 OPHNL endorsed the development of a national post-graduate program as an option for nurses seeking further education in public health nursing. This program officially launched in 2022 and runs through Mohawk College. For more information about the program see [click here](#).

## Strategic Plan Update

### Systems Level Impact

In follow up to meetings with the Provincial Chief Nursing Officer and RNAO, a small group of Chief Nursing Officers and OPHNL Executive Committee Members were brought together to develop products that represent a coordinated and consolidated voice from public health nursing leadership in Ontario.

The development of these documents occurred over the past several months and has involved consultations and feedback from the OPHNL Executive Committee, OPHNL CNO Network Group, Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Medical Officers of Health, and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies.

In short, OPHNL recommends that the Provincial Government “increase and stabilize permanent funding for public health nurses to address service delivery backlogs and implement, innovative, convenient and easily accessible programs to promote health, prevent disease, and support the Province’s identified priorities immediately and over the long term.” It is OPHNL’s position that with increased and stabilized permanent funding for PHN positions, public health units can flexibly respond to community needs.

To support this broad recommendation, OPHNL has created two documents to share with OPHNL membership, the Provincial Chief Nursing Officer, and Registered Nurses Association of Ontario:

[Recommendation Information Sheet](#)

[Background Document](#)

[Letter of Support from the Association of Local Public Health Agencies](#)



## Strategic Plan Update

### Marketing and Memberships

Membership in OPHNL has gone down post COVID-19. The Executive Committee will be conducting a membership drive in preparation for 2024.

If you have new nursing managers or directors in your local public health agency, this is an important and exciting time to join OPHNL’s efforts. Please promote OPHNL membership in your organization.



## Looking Ahead

There are several important dates coming up. More details will be communicated about the Special Meetings and the Annual General Meeting via the OPHNL Email Listserv.



Date	Event
Immediately	Recruiting for positions of Treasurer and Regional Chair Representative from Central East
May 9, 2023 4:30-5:30	Special Meeting to Approve Interim OPHNL Budget (MS Teams)
June 9, 2023 9:00-5:00	OPHNL Executive Committee and OPHNL CNO Network Group Meeting to Begin Strategic Planning (In Person, Toronto)
June 2023	Call for Members to participate on Resolution Committee (committee will meet virtually)  Call for Nominations for President Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary to be elected at AGM
November 2023	OPHNL Annual General Meeting (In-Person, Toronto)