



# RNAO

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario  
L'Association des infirmières et infirmiers  
autorisés de l'Ontario

## SUDBURY & DISTRICT CHAPTER

### RECAPPING OUR YEAR

As 2018 comes to an end, we thought our members might want to know what's been happening at the local Chapter level.

You may recall that we undertook a survey to help identify members' hopes and visions for our Chapter and, as a result, we are trying to address the desire for more frequent communication by putting this short newsletter together.

We hope you enjoy it.

### ADVANCING THE ROLE AND IMAGE OF NURSES

Earlier this year, Chapter President David Groulx met with the new Chief Nursing Officer at Health Sciences North to discuss support for nurses within the acute care setting.

He also invited David McNeil, past president of RNAO and co-author of the report, *Rural and Remote Workforce* to meet with the Chapter Executive to discuss advancing recommendations in the report.

Nursing Week, in May, included our usual celebration in collaboration with other local nursing groups. Two awards conferred by the Chapter included the *Special Contribution to the Nursing Profession award* to Nicole Seguin-Ethier and the *Special Contribution to our Community as a Nurse award* to Barb Ballantyne.

### SPEAKING OUT ON EMERGING ISSUES

In response to news coverage suggesting cuts to Registered Nurse positions at Health Sciences North (HSN), an open letter to HSN and the North East LHIN was prepared, advocating for reconsideration of their plan to bring in a balanced budget by cutting RN positions. We also wrote to the 3 major provincial parties advocating for more Registered Nurses in all settings, where needed.

### INFLUENCING HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY / QUEEN'S PARK ON THE ROAD

Meetings occurred with both local MPPs to discuss cuts to hospital nursing staff, the need for opioid-overdose prevention services, the importance of establishing minimum staffing standards in Long Term Care, and the desire to have the sexual health school curriculum reinstated. President David Groulx and Political Action Officer Maria Casas met with France Gelinias, NDP MPP & Health Critic for Nickel Belt, and Jamie West, MPP for Sudbury, and were pleased to confirm that they support RNAO's positions on these topics.



Maria Casas, NDP MPP Jamie West, David Groulx

## COMMUNITY DRUG STRATEGY

According to figures from the government of Ontario, there were at least 1,261 deaths across the province in 2017 attributed to opioid poisoning. That represented an increase of 45% over the previous year when 867 deaths were recorded. A recent Sudbury Star article suggested that there were 34 overdose related deaths in the Sudbury district in that same period.

There is robust evidence that supervised injection services (SIS) and overdose prevention services (OPS) are saving lives as part of a comprehensive response to drug use. Supervised injection services allow people to inject drugs under the supervision of trained registered nurses and other health workers who provide sterile supplies, overdose prevention and management, as well as, other health and social support services.

Given the scale of the opioid poisoning crisis, Health Canada announced in December 2017 that it would grant exemptions to the province of Ontario, allowing temporary OPS sites to operate. London was the first city to have a sanctioned OPS site in the province. In the year after opening its doors, nurses and outreach workers supervised thousands of injections and there were no deaths due to overdose.

When we became aware that Sudbury City Council was considering the development of a SIS for our community, we wrote to each City Councillor and the Mayor to advise them of our support and to encourage them to proceed with a study to evaluate what services Sudbury would specifically need. We received a positive response to our letters and, in the end, Council voted in favour of funding such a study.



## PROVINCIAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the provincial AGM in April, members (from left to right) Karl Cheung, David Groulx, Mila Wong, and Paul Andre Gauthier attended from Sudbury.

Karl and Mila attended as voting representatives for the Chapter. David participated as Chapter President and Paul Andre represented the Clinical Nurse Specialist Association of Ontario.

## CONNECT WITH US

We welcome your feedback. Contact us at [rnaosudbury@gmail.com](mailto:rnaosudbury@gmail.com).



You can also follow us on Facebook.