

In this newsletter you will find:

Updates on Waterloo Chapter's AGM, Fall Tour, RNAO's 100th AGM, story and member highlights, student corner and what's ahead.



JOINT CHAPTER EDITION

Waterloo-Wellington Newsletter



As the year winds down, our Waterloo and Wellington Chapters continue to build on the momentum sparked by our inaugural joint summer newsletter. What began as a collaborative first step has grown into a vibrant, shared platform that celebrates our regional nursing community and strengthens the connections that support our work.

This fall edition reflects the depth of that collaboration. Inside, you will find stories from recent events, highlights from our executive teams and features that showcase the many ways nurses across our region are contributing to advocacy, leadership and community care. From student engagement to policy initiatives and chapter milestones, each section captures the heart of what makes our chapters thrive.



We hope this issue offers a moment of reflection on the impact we create together and inspires you as we look ahead to a new year of possibilities. Thank you for being part of a dedicated, compassionate and forward-thinking RNAO community.

Nursing leadership in action

Member Spotlight



A nurse's path to policy impact

Myah Douglas

Former policy and political action network officer (PPAN) for the Wellington Chapter, Myah Douglas has now joined RNAO's policy and political action department at head office. It is a natural next step for a nurse who has always viewed advocacy as the heart of nursing.

"Nurses' impact is not limited to the bedside, but extends to the larger system itself"

-Myah Douglas, former Wellington Chapter PPAN

"We are a publicly funded profession, present at the most vulnerable moments of people's lives, yet historically, we have not been present where decisions are made. That disconnect is no longer acceptable," she shares.

Myah's journey from personal support worker to registered practical nurse to registered nurse, with experience spanning trauma, surgery, corrections, and home care, shaped her conviction that advocacy is not separate from nursing; it is nursing. In her new policy role, she is helping to redefine what it means to be a nurse in Canada, not only as caregivers, but as educators, decision-makers, and leaders.

"You do not need a specific title or a degree in policy to make change; you only need to believe that your voice matters."

-Myah Douglas, former Wellington Chapter PPAN



Leading connection in an emerging scope

Ruby Riza Amoncio

As RN prescribing expanded across Ontario, many newly authorized nurses were searching for a place to connect, ask questions, and build confidence in a role still taking shape. With support from RNAO leadership, Waterloo Chapter communications executive network officer (ENO), Ruby Amoncio founded the [RN Prescribing Community of Practice \(CoP\)](#) to create that space.

What began as small conversations quickly revealed how much nurses valued learning alongside peers navigating similar responsibilities.

"Community begins when someone opens the door and others choose to walk through it."

-Ruby Amoncio, Waterloo Chapter communications ENO

As interest grew, RNAO formally integrated the CoP into its structure. In October 2025, it became a subgroup within the Staff Nurse Interest Group (SNIG), giving RN Prescribers a dedicated home to collaborate and strengthen their practice.

"Nurses strengthen the system when they come together with curiosity and purpose."

-Ruby Amoncio, Waterloo Chapter communications ENO

Ruby's leadership helped lay the foundation for Ontario's first provincial community for RN prescribers, ensuring no nurse takes on this expanded role alone.

Reach out to your local chapter or visit RNAO.ca to find your place in the movement for change.

Welcoming the next generation of nurses at Conestoga College

The energy was unmistakable at Conestoga College during the last week of September, where the RNAO student booth drew more than one hundred enthusiastic learners who stopped by to explore what it means to be part of Ontario's nursing voice. With information displays, friendly conversations and opportunities to register for free student memberships, the booth quickly became a hub of curiosity and connection.

With more than 100 students registering on the spot, our Waterloo and Wellington Chapters can expect a welcome boost in student membership by the next audit. More importantly, the event offered a chance to inspire and empower future nurses who are already showing a passion for leadership.

This momentum reflects the growing strength of our local chapters. Every conversation at that table was a reminder that the future of nursing is bright and that students are eager to be part of meaningful change.



Matteen, who helped lead the booth activities, shared that the event was a major success. Students lined up throughout the day, eager to ask questions, learn about advocacy and understand how RNAO can support them from their very first steps in the profession. Many internationally educated nurses were especially engaged, seeing RNAO as a pathway to community, mentorship and belonging.



Feature Story: Honouring service through the eyes of a Wellington Chapter nurse

On a quiet November morning in Guelph, Wellington Chapter Finance ENO Margaret Boyle Class joined community members, dignitaries and veterans for this year's Remembrance Day ceremony. Walking among those who served was deeply meaningful for her. She admitted she hesitated at first, unsure if she belonged in the parade lineup, but quickly remembered she was standing there for past, present and future nurses who have always cared for those impacted by war.



Left to right: Margaret Boyle Class, Mike Schreiner (MPP Guelph) and Mary Carley

As the procession passed the cenotaph, people along the street began to clap. The applause grew, and Margaret felt tears come. In that moment, she says, there was a profound sense of pride. Pride in nursing, pride in her community and gratitude for the country we are fortunate to call home.



Left to right: Mayor Cam Guthrie (Guelph), Mary Carley and Margaret Boyle Class



Margaret marched alongside retired nurse educator Mary Carley, now in the Halton Chapter, who wore her original 1969 graduation uniform in honour of the generations who paved the way. Their presence together reflected the continuity of nursing's service through time.



Mary Carley and Margaret Boyle Class stand together holding a poppy wreath laid in honour of those who served.

Mary wears her original 1969 nursing graduation uniform, symbolizing the legacy and continuity of nursing service across generations.

The ceremony itself brought together many threads of remembrance: the gathering of community members; the solemn reflections; the wreaths placed with care; and the silence shared in unison. What stood out was not only the ceremony itself, but the meaning carried in every step of the parade.

"We are so lucky to live in Canada."

-Margaret Boyle Class, Wellington Chapter finance ENO



Margaret's participation is a reminder that remembrance is not only about ceremony. It is about showing up, honouring sacrifice, and representing our profession with humility and heart.



Celebrating progress and strengthening our nursing community



On Oct. 17, 2025, the RNAO Waterloo Chapter gathered at Golf's Steakhouse in Kitchener for an Annual General Meeting filled with connection, reflection, and renewed purpose. Members from across the region came together over dinner to celebrate a year defined by advocacy, growth, and the unmistakable strength of our nursing community.

The evening opened with updates from our executive network officers, who highlighted the chapter's achievements and set the tone for the year ahead. Many guests described the atmosphere as energizing, with conversations woven by shared values, shared challenges, and shared pride in our profession.

One of the most memorable moments of the AGM was the keynote workshop by Alexa Rae, Navigating Compassion Fatigue: Strategies For a New Wellbeing. Drawing from her unique blend of nursing, education, and trauma-informed leadership coaching, Alexa offered an experience that resonated deeply with attendees. Members reflected on the emotional weight of their work, shared stories, and left with evidence-based tools to support wellbeing in high-demand environments.

As the event wrapped up, the sense of community was unmistakable. Members expressed gratitude for the opportunity to connect, learn, and be reminded that in nursing, we move forward together.

The Waterloo Chapter extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended, contributed, and continues to champion nursing excellence across our region. We look forward to building an even stronger, more visible chapter in the year ahead.

Fall Tour 2025



On Nov. 3, 2025, nurses from across Waterloo Region gathered virtually for the RNAO Waterloo Chapter's annual Fall Tour with Dr. Doris Grinspun, RNAO's chief executive officer. The evening offered meaningful dialogue, collective reflection and a celebration of RNAO's 100 years of action and impact.



The session opened with welcoming remarks from Chapter chair Preet Kaur. A land acknowledgement by PPAN Mandy Ogudu followed, grounding the gathering with respect and intention. Communications ENO Ruby Amoncio then delivered the Waterloo Chapter update, highlighting a year marked by collaboration, visibility and renewed engagement.

Amoncio shared key accomplishments, including the Region 4 Red Carpet Nursing Week Gala, recent media engagement on CTV's Mike Farwell Show, the launch of the joint Waterloo and Wellington newsletter, and successful information booths at Conestoga College where more than 100 students registered for free RNAO memberships.

Attendees also heard about upcoming initiatives, such as the in-person outreach dinner in early December with RNAO director of membership Morgan Hoffarth, as well as the chapter's Queen's Park on the Road meeting with a local member of Parliament. Data collected through the Waterloo nursing issues survey will guide this political discussion and help ensure local concerns are elevated to decision makers.

Amoncio then introduced Dr. Grinspun, who delivered a powerful presentation on nursing leadership, system transformation and the importance of strong advocacy. Dr. Grinspun invited members to participate actively in shaping solutions that support both the profession and the health of Ontarians. The presentation ended with a lively question-and-answer segment, giving nurses and guests the opportunity to raise issues directly with RNAO leadership.

The event closed with remarks from Chapter chair Preet Kaur, who thanked participants for their commitment to advancing nursing excellence in the Waterloo Region.

STUDENT CORNER

SPOTLIGHT:



DANIELLE MACABIO

Student ENO, Wellington Chapter

Future nurse. Community advocate.
Student leader.

“Don’t be afraid to show up.”

*-Danielle Macabio, Wellington Chapter
student ENO*

That’s the advice Danielle offers to fellow nursing students looking to get involved. “You don’t need experience, just curiosity and a willingness to learn,” she says. “Every event or meeting opens a door.”

“RNAO gives me a space to advocate for meaningful change, even as a student. It helps me see the issues in nursing and healthcare, and learn from those who have walked the path before me.”

Though she’s just beginning her RNAO leadership journey, Danielle has already made her mark, reminding us that sometimes, presence is the most powerful form of participation.

***“Are you a student with ideas or questions?
Connect with your local chapter.
We’d love to feature you next!”***

Building Your Future in Nursing

Starting the school year brings new challenges, new friendships and new opportunities to grow as a nurse. Whether you’re just beginning your program or heading into your final placements, remember that you are part of a profession that thrives on collaboration and advocacy.

Here are a few ways to get involved this fall:

Connect with RNAO early.

Student membership is free, and it’s one of the best ways to access mentorship, advocacy training, and career resources.


Join campus events.


RNAO’s Waterloo and Wellington Chapters teamed up at a recruitment event at Conestoga College that sparked fresh energy in our community.

Find your voice.

Student representatives help shape chapter events and bring the student perspective.

**WANT TO
SHARE YOUR
TIP? DM US!**

 @rnao_waterloo
@wellingtonchapter

 RNAOWaterloo
RNAO-Wellington Chapter

WELLNESS CORNER



Caring for Nurses, Caring for Community



Fall is a season of change, reminding us as nurses to pause, protect our health and recharge our energy. With busy shifts and growing demands, this is an important time to focus on small daily practices that support both physical and mental well-being. By staying mindful of our own wellness, we strengthen our ability to provide safe, compassionate care to others.

Send us your favourite fall wellness practice.

We will feature member contributions in the next newsletter.



PROTECT



- **Flu & COVID boosters:** Book early to protect yourself and those in your care.
- **Sleep hygiene tip:** Aim for 7–9 hours. Consistent rest lowers burnout risk.

RECHARGE



- **5-minute grounding:** Try box breathing (inhale for 4, hold 4, exhale 4, hold 4).
- **Nature break:** A 15-minute walk outdoors can reduce stress hormones.

NOURISH



- **Seasonal picks:** Dark leafy greens, squash, and citrus help boost immunity.
- **Hydrate:** Cooler weather = dryer air. Keep a refillable bottle on hand.



WARNING SIGNS OF BURNOUT:

- Persistent fatigue
- Irritability or detachment
- Sleep disruption

WHAT HELPS:

- Peer support (connect with colleagues)
- Protect personal time
- Small resets: stretch, hydrate, and journal gratitude

IEN Integration: Resources and Pathways for Internationally Educated Nurses

Every internationally educated nurse brings valuable skills, perspectives, and cultural knowledge to our healthcare system. Yet navigating licensure, regulatory requirements, language expectations, and local best practices can be challenging. Below are trusted resources in Ontario to help you with each step of the journey.

Resource	What It Offers	How It Helps IENs
CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses	Programs like STARS (Supports, Training, and Access to Regulated-employment Services), PASS (Pre-Arrival and Post-Arrival supports), mentoring, language/communication training, exam prep, workplace integration.	Helps IENs at different stages. From before arrival abroad, to settling in Ontario, to preparing for licensure.
College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO)	Detailed guides on registration/licensure, standards, exam requirements, supervised practice, upgrading or bridging programs.	Offers clarity on what steps are required to become registered, what documentation is needed, and what education or practice gaps may need to be addressed.
Supervised Practice Experience Partnership (SPEP)	A partnership program between the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO), Ontario Health and CNO approved organizations. The program offers applicants the option to complete a supervised practice experience in Ontario.	Provides hands-on experience, helps demonstrate competence and performance in the Canadian healthcare setting.
National Newcomer Navigation Network (N4)	Toolkits, webinars, and resource compilations focused on welcoming IENs, systemic barriers, and promising practices. Newcomer Navigation	Useful to understand broader policy, advocacy, and community supports; also helps with knowing your rights and expectations.

“Knowing the next step is as important as gaining new knowledge.”

Tips & Insights

Always begin with the CNO assessment to know exactly what competency gaps (if any) you need to bridge.

Language proficiency is often a key requirement. Look for programs (like those through CARE) that offer communication/language support.

Seek supervised practice opportunities early: hands-on experience not only builds skills but confidence and professional networks.

CALLING FOR VOLUNTEERS

Open ENO roles

We're looking for passionate members to join our executive team. Open ENO positions are a great way to develop leadership skills and contribute to your chapter's impact.

Waterloo chapter

2-year term (Nov. 1, 2025 - Nov. 1, 2027)

- Membership Executive Network Officer

1-year term (Nov. 2, 2026 - Nov. 1, 2027)

- Workplace Liaison ENO
- Student Liaison ENO (Must be an Undergrad)

Contact the chapter by scanning the QR code or clicking the link:



https://chapters-igs.rnao.ca/contact/contact_group?gid=65

Wellington chapter

2-year term (Nov. 1, 2025 - Nov. 1, 2027)

- Communications Executive Network Officer

1-year term (Nov. 2, 2026 - Nov. 1, 2027)

- Workplace Liaison ENO
- Social Media ENO

Contact the chapter by scanning the QR code or clicking the link:



https://chapters-igs.rnao.ca/contact/contact_group?gid=3

Know someone perfect for the role? Encourage them to connect!

Tell us what you'd like to see in future issues.

Scan the QR code or click the link to take our quick feedback survey:



<https://forms.gle/sK9iEQ3ezfcWWczT6>

Join Our WhatsApp Group!



We created a friendly space for members to stay connected and share ideas.

ASK YOUR CHAPTER ENO FOR THE LINK TO JOIN!

"Across our region, every connection between nurses becomes a spark that lights the path to better care."