

General meeting results



On Jan. 26, your Board of Directors (BOD) and I had the opportunity to meet with 280 members who attended the general meeting to discuss and vote on

the BOD's recommendations on resolution #1. The meeting provided another opportunity for us to hear first hand about the issues of concern to you, and it brought to a close our formal consultation process on resolution #1. The process also offered a chance to connect with our members, and learn more about how we can continue to have open communications in the future.

The meeting was the culmination of nine intense months of consultation with our 26,000 members, many of whom we heard from directly. Indeed, more than 6,000 members told us what was important to them regarding nursing, health and social issues. We heard your passion for our profession, for Medicare, and for the social and environmental determinants of health.

At the meeting, members discussed and voted on six recommendations presented by RNAO's BOD. The recommendations reflect what you have told us:

Raising issues nationally

RNAO members indicate that the federal government is paying too little attention to their issues of concern, and they want those issues – both nursing and healthy public policy – to be raised nationally, and with a stronger voice.

Nursing

RNAO members indicate that the national association has an important role to play in promoting issues of nursing policy and practice at the federal level. Members referred to issues such as replacement of RNs, standards of nursing practice, e-health and informatics, workplace issues, nursing shortage, collaborative practice, nursing education, mentorship for new nurses, nurse practitioners and expanded roles for nurses.

Social determinants of health

RNAO members believe that the social and environmental determinants of health are a critical area for national and provincial advocacy, and they want CNA to assume a stronger role in advancing these at the federal level. In particular, members identified as their key priorities: poverty, environment, education, childcare, and housing.

Medicare

RNAO members believe that Medicare and health-care reform are critical areas for national and provincial advocacy, and they want CNA to assume a consistent and assertive role in defending Medicare from

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current threats and working to enhance it by promoting primary health care, protecting universal health care, stopping the expansion of for-profit delivery, enforcing the *Canada Health Act*, developing a national pharmacare program, and improving the health of Aboriginal people.

Nurses as a social force

RNAO members want national activism. They expect their national association to mobilize nurses, nursing organizations and the public across the country to raise their issues and to speak out for nursing and for health. They want to see a proactive agenda, by participating in and leading coalitions, organizing campaigns, engaging with politicians and governments, and through other forms of grassroots mobilization of both nurses and the public.

Positive engagement with CNA

Members want RNAO and CNA to collaborate in bringing members' issues onto the national stage to bring about positive change. This includes advancing the social and environmental determinants of health, defending Medicare, and effecting leader-

ship for nurses as a national social force.

Openness and transparency

Members envision nursing associations at all levels to be open, transparent, accountable, and member-driven. They also want to be kept updated on the issues that matter to them.

In the past nine months, you have made it clear, through the survey to all members, 25 local consultations and your almost unanimous approval of the BOD's recommendations at the January general meeting, that these are the policy priorities your professional association must continue to speak out on. These are also the policy agendas you want your national association – CNA – to actively pursue.

The excitement of working together with CNA in an activist role for our national association is just starting. Our members' energy will continue to encourage CNA and its member organizations as we all collaborate to place nurses at the forefront of healthy public policy.

We have come out of this process – provincially and nationally – stronger than ever. We look forward to collaborating with CNA to advance issues that are important to RNAO members at the national level.

This is a victory for nurses everywhere, and for the public we serve.

It has been my privilege to preside over this democratic process. RNAO has grown, in deeds and in actions, into an organization that is owned by its members. That is our strength and source of energy as we move forward together.

Let me finish by saying that, on behalf of the board, it has been a great honour for us to hear the voices of thousands of members. Your board of directors and staff believe that you – members in all roles, in all sectors and in all regions of the province – should be in the driver's seat: speaking out for health, speaking out for nursing.

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IS PRESIDENT OF RNAO.