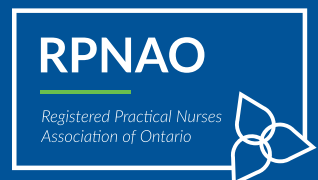


We are

Annual Report 2018/19





We are
Nurses

In a health system where resources are strained, pressures are mounting, care is evolving, and everyone is at their most vulnerable, the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario (RPNAO) builds the profile and professional capacity of RPNs so we can better care for our patients and better support our fellow health workers.

As leaders in professional practice, we champion the critical role of RPNs to Ontario's health system and offer ongoing professional development to support excellence, quality and safety of care.

Today, more than 45,000 RPNs support patients, clients and residents in Ontario hospitals, public health units, in the community, long-term care facilities, schools, and private health providers.

What is an RPN?

Registered Practical Nurses are regulated, knowledge-based nurses:

- RPNs combine nursing skills, knowledge and judgment to provide compassionate, informed and expert care.
- The vast majority of RPNs employed in Ontario provide direct care to patients, clients and residents on a daily basis.
- For many RPNs, caring for older adults is an important priority in their day-to-day practice and as Ontario's demographics continue to shift, there will be an even greater need for the services and skills of RPNs.

Message from the President & CEO

On behalf of the staff and board of RPNAO, we are delighted to share RPNAO's 2018-2019 Annual Report.

As a professional association, our ability to deliver the impactful work we do on behalf of RPNs depends on the ongoing dedication of our members. We're pleased to report that our membership base continues to be strong. Over 2018-19, our membership grew to 14,530, an increase of seven percent compared to the previous year, with our student memberships growing an impressive 24 percent.

The past year was an exciting one for us at RPNAO. Our professional practice team continued to deliver leading edge educational programming, resources and supports on topics ranging from role clarity to de-escalation to respond to the evolving needs of RPNs. Based on feedback from members, we also enhanced our focus on self-care by hosting *Address the Stress*, a full day event dedicated to nursing self-care and expanded our self-care e-learning modules.

As practice leaders, we continue to be called on for our nursing expertise, both at home and abroad. This year, we build on our seminal role clarity work with the release of peer reviewed articles. Through our RPN Innovation Fund, we invested in a supplemental RPN focus to University of Toronto's *Changing Workplaces in a Knowledge Economy Study* that, once completed, will give us a much better understanding about the impact that RPNs have on our health system.

We also continue to develop innovative ways of raising the profile of RPNs. Building on the success of last year's *In Good Hands* campaign, this Nursing Week, we launched *Caring Ontario Forward* a future-oriented campaign that featured the stories and experiences of RPNAO members. Through a series of online videos, coupled with thought-provoking opinion pieces published in a variety of media outlets, we showcased the critical role RPNs play in Ontario's health care system.

Last year's change in government also ushered in a new health landscape with a number of changes on the horizon. This gave us an opportunity to continue to build stronger relationships with our elected officials at Queen's Park. Thanks to our ongoing advocacy work and our Queen's Park Day this April, we are pleased to report that this government recognizes and values the important contributions that RPNs make across our health system. One notable success was the government's recent commitment to moving forward with modest changes to scope of practice for RPNs by summer 2020. Over the coming months, we will continue to build on these foundational relationships to push forward the issues that matter most to our members.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. In the pages that follow, we outline a number of exciting initiatives and projects that have kept us busy this past year. Thank you to our members for your ongoing commitment and the trust you place in us to deliver excellent programming, cutting edge professional practice resources and advocate on your behalf.

And finally, we would like to recognize and thank the amazing staff at RPNAO who work so hard to ensure we're able to deliver on the mandate given to us by you, our members. Thank you for your incredible contributions to practical nursing in Ontario.



Linda Keirl
RPN
President

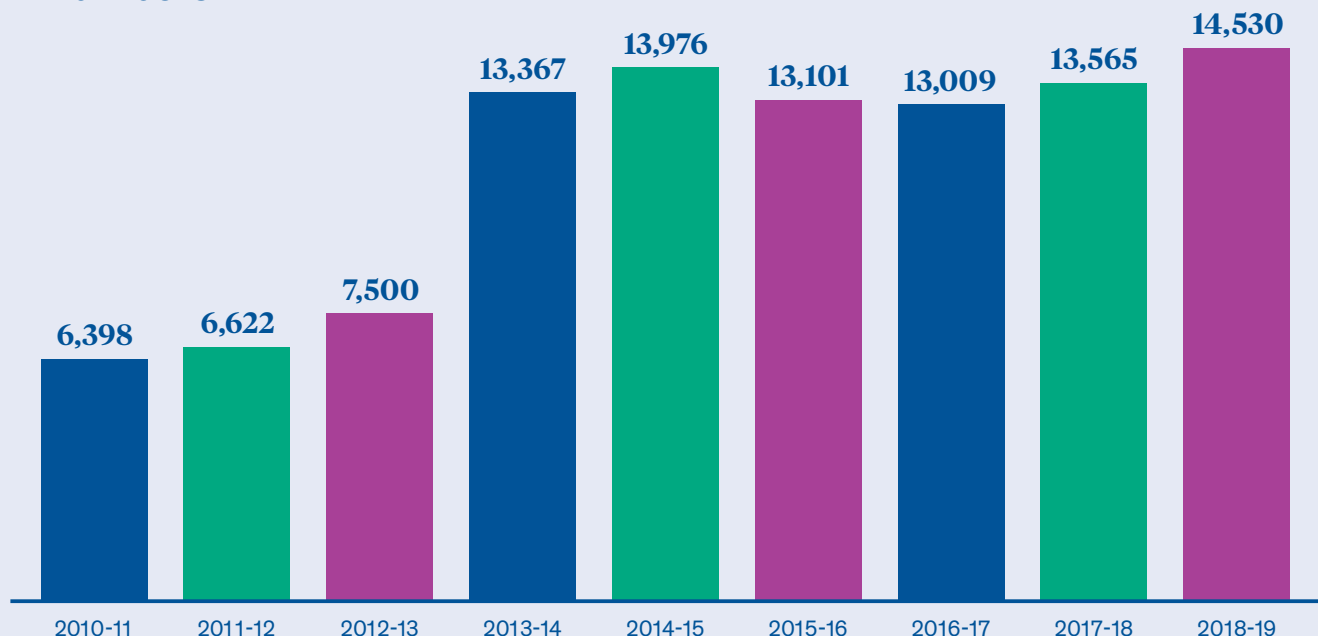


Dianne Martin
RPN, RN, BScN, MA
Chief Executive Officer

Spotlight on Membership

Each new membership gives us the opportunity to continue to grow the meaningful impact we have on behalf of all RPNs. Over the past year, we have continued our sustained membership growth. In 2018-19, we reached a total 14,530 members, an increase of 7% compared to the previous year. As always, practical nursing students continue to make up an important part of our overall membership. As a result of enhanced engagement with our educational intuitions over the past year, we saw an impressive 24% growth in our student memberships up to 1,295 student members.

There's strength in numbers.



RPNAO's Year by the Numbers

3 Role Clarity Workshops delivered

388

Direct Engagements with Members related to **Professional Practice and Career Support**

15

RPNs funded to attend the Dorothy Wylie Leadership Institute

6,414 km travelled across Ontario during Nursing Week

1

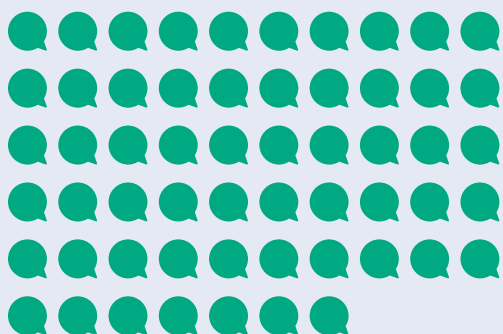
Online Hub for RPNs Launched

2,400+

Professional Development Grants provided through the Nursing Education Initiative

2,115

RPNs responded to **Changing Workplaces in a Knowledge Economy Study** — groundbreaking research about the RPN profession



57 Presentations to College Practical Nursing Students (a 140% increase from the previous year)

13,000+

Visits to our Online Professional Practice Resources



80

RPNs participating our Address the Stress Day focused on self-care

100+

RPNs advocating to MPPs at our Queen's Park Day



New Graduate Workshops delivered



Nursing Week 2019 Caring Ontario Forward Campaign Poster

Raising the profile of RPNs

Sustained growth has allowed us to continue our innovative work to build the profile of Ontario's RPNs through public awareness campaigns and thoughtful opinion pieces.

In January, we released a video about changing workplace realities of nursing to help shine a light on the challenges nurses face every day in the workplace and offer tips for employers. The video received tremendous response and engagement from nurses across Ontario.

This year, our public awareness campaign, *Caring Ontario Forward*, launched during Nursing Week, delivered a future-oriented message about the important role RPNs play in Ontario's health care system. The campaign featured RPNAO members telling their own unique and exceptional stories of skill, compassion, and meaningful impact on patients and communities. By highlighting the experiences of

RPNs working across sectors, the campaign illustrated the breadth and quality of skills that RPNs contribute every day to our evolving provincial health system. This campaign generated an incredible 1.3 million online impressions.

The campaign was supplemented by a series of opinion pieces included in five different publications. These diverse pieces showcased the commitment of RPNs to their profession, highlighted the impact RPNs can have on patients and their families, and the challenges nurses are facing in our evolving health system. Together these articles reached an audience of over three million.



We are
Professionals

Empowering Nurses Throughout their Careers



New Graduate Workshop at Conestoga College

RPNAO is committed to supporting RPNs throughout their careers from new grads to experienced nurses. Growing numbers of nurses continue to take advantage of the wide range of career supports we offer.

Giving Students a Head Start

As an association, we understand the importance of ensuring PN students start off on the right path. To support them in their transition from the classroom to the workplace, we continue to offer our highly sought-after New Graduate Workshops. This year, we delivered eight workshops that gave students the chance to create career plans, obtain guidance for resume development and participate in mock job interview scenarios.

We also recognize how essential it is for students to gain hands on experience. This year, we were proud to continue our long tradition of supporting student placements. We welcomed 5 practical nursing students to work with our professional practice team and gain a better understanding of the role that professional associations play in supporting RPNs and advancing nursing across Ontario.

"Thank you for the opportunity and support that I received from RPNAO in attending Dorothy Wylie Health Leaders Institute (DWHLI). The experience was inspirational, engaging, and fun. I truly learned so much about myself and my journey of leadership in health care. I sincerely appreciate everything that RPNAO as an organization does to support and advance our profession, and the amazing community of members it consists of."

Angela Corneil,
RPNAO Member



RPNAO booth at Health Career Fair

Career Development and Mentorship

RPNAO continues to offer free access to the Career Directions program, a practical, self-learning program to guide RPNs as they progress through their career journeys.

Recognizing the importance of mentorship to career development we are pleased to continue growing our mentorship matching program. This year, 35 mentors volunteered their time and expertise to support fellow RPNs.

Workshops, Resources and Toolkits

As the pressures in our health system evolve, we are continually responding to those changes to meet the needs of our members. RPNAO continues to diversify the sector leading professional practice supports we offer.

This year we continued to offer our renowned Role Clarity and Patient-Centered Care workshops. We also expanded our Self-Care and Conflict De-escalation learning modules generating over

10,000 engagements. In advance of the legalization of cannabis, in October 2018, we introduced a new resource to make sure nurses had the information they needed to know as the legislative landscape evolved. Our Workplace Violence toolkit also remained extremely popular with over 9000 views.

Catalyzing Leadership

We continue to invest in impactful leadership opportunities for RPNs. Based on tremendous interest and feedback from the previous year, this March, we recruited a second cohort of RPNs to participate in our year-long Leadership Pathway program. Through this innovative experience, RPNs have access to networking opportunities and the chance to develop a leadership career plan with the support of coaches. We also provided bursaries for 15 RPNs to participate in this year's Dorothy Wylie Health Leaders Institute that brings together healthcare leaders across different professions for 4 days of intensive learning followed by ongoing coaching.



We are
Leaders

Making Connections, Building Community

We value member engagement. Though we live in one of Canada's largest provinces, we won't let geography get in the way of connecting with membership. We remain committed to connecting with and hearing from our members through events, educational opportunities and our online communities.

RPN Connect

During our 2017 Provincial Tour, RPNs told us they wanted more opportunities to connect with their colleagues across the province. That's why this spring we launched a new online connection hub that brings together RPNs to connect, collaborate and contribute ideas to enhance the nursing innovation and excellence in professional practice. The name of our hub, *RPN Connect*, was coined by our member Jessica Lavis, who won our "Name the Hub" challenge.

In addition to wanting more ways to connect, RPNs also told us they were interested in more opportunities to lead innovative projects. To support that goal, we introduced two funded challenges for RPN work based projects, focused on RPN-identified priorities, Joy in Work and RPN Practice Innovation and Impact. Through these challenges, RPNs in partnership with their employers, will be able to bring about meaningful change in their organizations.

Ambassador Program

Our Ambassador program continues to grow and serve as a great way for our team to connect and disseminate key information to RPNs across the province. This year, we were thrilled to welcome our dedicated roster of 35 RPN and 25 student ambassadors to the program and appreciate their support in raising awareness about our programming and resources.

RPN Journal

Our magazine is one of our flagship communications vehicles that allows us to communicate with members and share impactful news that affects nursing and our health system. This past year, through the Journal we continued to share personal stories about RPNs, highlight health policy and practice changes, showcase innovative programming and more.

Nightingale News

Our electronic newsletter continues to be a great way for our members to stay up to date on the latest RPNAO news and events. With a new design this year, we expanded our content to include trends and innovation, education and e-learning, career development, publications and resources, events and member benefits. The newsletter reached more than 14,000 subscribers this past year. Be sure to sign up on our website to stay in-the-know.

Social Media

RPNAO continues to engage with members through our growing social media channels. We are proud to have grown our followers on Twitter to over 7,300 and on Facebook to over 12,000, an increase of 7% and 20% respectively. Follow us if you don't already.

"RPNAO has been wonderful at advocating for the scope, role, and practice of RPNs. They've also been incredibly helpful in facilitating conversations with employers and care partners about the role of RPNs.

Jen Calver,
RPNAO member



Nursing Week visit to St. Joseph's Care Group in Thunder Bay

Advancing Nursing Practice and Innovation

While RPNs make up a significant percentage of the health workforce, we do not have a robust body of research about their experiences and impact. We hope to change that.

Through our RPN Innovation Fund, we were pleased to invest in the expansion of RPN related research. This year, we supported researchers leading University of Toronto's Changing Workplaces in a Knowledge Economy Study to develop a dedicated focus on RPNs. We were thrilled to have surpassed our target of respondents with 2115 RPNs participating in the study. In the coming months, we look forward to sharing the findings of the study with our members and the broader health community.

RPNAO also continues to contribute to advancing nursing practice through our membership on Boards, Committees and Groups including:

- Joint Provincial Nursing Committee
- Nurses Health Program Board of Directors
- Working Group on Strengthening Safety and Security in Long Term Care Medication Management Systems
- Numerous Provincial Advisory Committees for College PN Programs
- Steering Committee for the development of Violence, Aggression and Responsive Behaviors Toolkit
- The National Nurse Data Standards Symposium

In addition, we are regularly called on for expertise in professional practice. Some of our collaborative work in 2018-19 included:

- Active engagement in the Public Inquiry into the Safety and Security of Residents in the Long Term Care Homes System
- Advising the College of Nurses of Ontario on Entry to Practice Competencies for RPNs
- Supporting the development of the new provincial Palliative Care Competencies by the Ontario Palliative Care Network
- Providing feedback to the Canadian Gerontological Nurses Association on the draft standards for Gerontological nursing
- Advising the Ontario Association of Public Health Leaders regarding the role of the RPN in public health
- Recommending RPNs to provide subject matter expertise for the development of CNA's gerontology certification exam.
- Participating in the Canadian Nurses' Association's collaborative stakeholder round table discussions on intra-professional collaboration.



RPNs speaking with Ontario Minister of Health
Christine Elliott at 2019 RPNAO Queen's Park Day



RPNs meeting with Official Opposition Leader Andrea Horwath

Advocating for Nurses

RPNAO regularly engages with elected officials and key decision makers to make sure the voice and concerns of RPNs on key professional practice and health policy issues are heard.

This year, our Queen's Park Day provided an opportunity for RPNs to meet with their elected representatives. Over 100 RPNs travelled to Toronto for the day to speak to Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) from all four parties about the value that RPNs bring to Ontario patients and the health care system overall. The event brought together passionate advocates from communities across Ontario, working to advance provincial policies that will impact the nursing profession and the expert care RPNs bring to patients every day. One of the key requests we made to government was to make sure nurses are putting their education and experience to best use by making modest regulatory changes to RPNs' scope of practice.

As a result of our advocacy efforts, the government has directed the College of Nurses to put forward changes to scope of practice by June 2020.

"I wanted to extend my gratitude for being invited to take part in RPNAO's Queen's Park Day last April. It was a tremendous opportunity to see first hand how the RPNAO works together with government to help those of us on the front lines. The experience has given me insight and excitement to continue searching for new opportunities to further my professional career."

Stephanie Campbell,
RPNAO member

Celebrating Excellence in Nursing

Each year, we make it a priority to celebrate exceptional nurses through our Awards of Excellence. At our 2018 AGM and Conference in Gravenhurst, we recognized several RPNs who are committed to delivering excellence in care across all corners of the province.

Employer Award of Excellence

This award recognizes employers that have demonstrated outstanding achievement in improving the utilization of RPNs in innovative ways. The 2018 recipient of this award was **Hospice Wellington**. Located in Guelph, Ontario, Hospice Wellington provides services to the residents of Wellington County through 180 volunteers and a staff of 27, including clerical, PSWs, RPNs and RNs. The organization actively encourages RPNs to work to their full scope of practice and fosters a culture of continuous learning.

Preceptor Award of Excellence

This award recognizes and honours an RPN who has contributed in a significant way as a role model for a practical nursing student. This year's award winner, **Michelle Lee**, RPN is described as an inspiring role model who is so committed to being a preceptor that she learned American Sign Language so she could communicate with her student, who is deaf. She is someone who is always looking for challenges and who always has an empathetic approach.

Award of Excellence and Innovation

This award is given to an RPN who has contributed in a significant way to practical nursing in Ontario and whose efforts have demonstrated exemplary nursing practice. The 2018 recipient is **Julia Hart**, RPN who is described as an excellent resource in the operating room at London Health Sciences Centre.

Excellence in the Care of Older Ontarians (The Martha Award)

This award celebrates the dedication of an RPN who provides exceptional care to older adults in a manner that is respectful, compassionate and professional. This year's recipient is **Sarah Heuston**, an RPN at Meadow Park Long Term Care in Chatham.

The President's Award

This award honours an individual, group or organization who demonstrates outstanding commitment to furthering the utilization and recognition of RPNs in Ontario. This year's recipients have been focused on creating professional development strategies in nursing since 1992 and have been strong, long-time advocates for RPNs. This year's recipients of the President's Award are **Mary Wheeler and Gail Donner**.

Honorary Lifetime Membership

From time to time, RPNAO identifies an individual who has contributed to practical nursing and to the association in a very significant way and thanks them with an honorary lifetime membership. This year's recipient, **Anne McKenzie**, was an RPN for 43 years and worked in hospital, long-term care, foot care and community care. She was a preceptor to many and also served as a council member of the College of Nurses of Ontario and a Board Member and President of RPNAO.



We are
Inspired

Your Member Benefits



RPNAO visit to Lakeridge Health in Durham

As we grow our membership, we remain committed to continually enhancing the value of membership. In fact, the benefits of RPNAO membership have never been so numerous.

Building the professional profile and standing up for RPNs

RPNAO regularly advocates to elected officials and key decision makers to make sure the voice and concerns of RPNs on key professional practice and health policy issues are heard.

Engaging educational opportunities

RPNAO's in-person workshops and online eLearning programs provide ongoing development to expand your learning experience at your convenience. Topics include leadership, self-care, patient-centred care, role clarity, workplace violence prevention, and conflict de-escalation.

Sector-leading professional malpractice and liability insurance

Professional Liability Protection (PLP) Insurance is a mandatory requirement for the College of Nurses of Ontario, and we're proud to offer you the most comprehensive coverage available. Our coverage includes access to your own legal counsel, and should you be accused of malpractice or negligence, our Legal Expense coverage provides financial assistance to pay the legal fees in the course of a legal defence – something that is not typically offered by other organizations and employers.

Career-building services and support

RPNAO members can access exclusive career development programs, including our New Grad Workshop and Career Directions® — a customized program to help RPNs make career decisions and develop formal career plans. RPNAO is your portal to exciting career opportunities throughout Ontario and you can set up alerts to receive relevant job postings in your inbox. Employers post jobs in real-time and receive candidate applications directly to their email accounts.

Community building and mentorship

RPNAO launched several career-building initiatives to support RPNs in the workplace, including a Mentorship-Match Program and an online Connection Hub that brings together RPNs to connect, collaborate and contribute ideas to enhance the nursing innovation and excellence in professional practice.

Access to Specialty Interest Groups

Specialty Interest Groups (SIG) provide professional development and networking opportunities for nurses in a variety of practice areas. Membership in a SIG can help you maintain excellence and competency through specific professional development programs while also helping to form a collective voice.

Exclusive savings and discounts

Access benefits offered from a range of partners via the Member's Only section.

Board & Staff

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Maxwell Hamlyn, RPN, ORT, UT

Past-President

Melissa Erdodi, RPN

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