The Organization of Nurse Leaders - MA, RI, NH, CT, VT (ONL) is a not-for-profit, professional membership organization for current and aspiring nurse leaders. Its membership is comprised of more than 1,000 nurses from across five New England states. ONL’s members lead more than 275,000 licensed nurses who care for 1.3 million patients per year in hospitals alone.

Our members also care for tens of thousands of patients in other care settings. ONL’s mission is to advance a culture of health through excellence in nursing and the organization works in full collaboration with local and national professional healthcare organizations to promote excellence in nursing leadership, and by extension, high-quality and high-value patient care.
MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT AND THE CEO

COLLEAGUES,

Charles Darwin famously said, “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent; it is the one most adaptable to change.” During this second full year of the pandemic, you persevered and adapted to change as nurse leaders throughout New England. This year brought different challenges because of the deep, collective fatigue experienced by the nursing profession, combined with previously unseen numbers of staff getting COVID themselves.

Fatigue was felt across care delivery locations, within academia, and at all levels of nursing leadership. When it came to working through the challenges of the past year, in many cases you reframed the problem and innovated different approaches. In other instances, you relied on foundational bedrock principles of what good leadership looks like. ONL sincerely thanks you for your leadership!

ONL continued to adapt this past year as well. It continued to leverage Zoom to share valuable content within our member states, across the US, and even with nurse leaders internationally. Attendance at ONL professional development programs grew year-over-year, both in terms of unique participants, and total contact hours awarded.

ONL also worked to amplify its position as a convener of nurse leaders, whether that be through nationally recognized expert presenters, or through dynamic discussions which helped to not only frame developing challenges, but also to share solutions. This convener role was also evidenced through a robust multi-state policy and advocacy agenda that saw ONL experts providing insights to other organizations around topics such as; nurse staffing ratios, diversity, equity and inclusion, nurse licensure compact legislation, paid FMLA legislation, and more.

In a climate where many organizations are simply trying to survive, ONL has continued to increase its reach, influence, and value. This accomplishment was recently recognized by the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL), which named ONL the 2022 recipient of its Affiliate Achievement Award. This prestigious award honors an AONL affiliate that promotes nursing leadership and its influence in the areas of the advancement of nursing practice, patient safety, quality, recruitment and retention, or another priority initiative for that particular state/region and can serve as a model for other states or regions with similar interests.

In closing, we’d like to thank the ONL team for a very special year. We’ve witnessed the tremendous talent and dedication of the staff, board, and committee volunteers, that continue to push the boundaries of what it looks like to lead within the context of a professional nursing leadership organization in a pandemic. ONL stands poised to continue to lead into the future with expertise, vision, impact, and value. ONL stands ready to continue to develop the community of nurse leaders, and thus help build the future of nursing itself. It has been our deep and sincere pleasure to help lead this remarkable organization and bear witness to the incredible grit, passion, skill, dedication, and pride of our nursing colleagues.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO,
JUSTIN & AMANDA

Justin Drew,
MSN, RN, NEA-BC
ONL President, 2021-2022

Amanda Oberlies,
PhD, MBA, RN, FAAN
Chief Executive Officer
RESPONDING TO UNPRECEDENTED NURSING WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Nurse leaders throughout our region have grappled with workforce challenges for years. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing issues and introduced new demands that are making it harder than ever before to recruit and maintain a nursing workforce that supports safe, effective patient care. Last year, 75% of the ONL members who responded to our Member Assessment indicated it was ‘extremely important’ that ONL address nursing workforce challenges in the region. We heard you and responded to this call to action. Over the last year we intensified and accelerated our multi-year focus on the nursing workforce to drive regional solutions to this critical issue.

NURSING WORKFORCE REPORT: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS DURING THE COVID ERA

ONL convened a regional think tank to inventory nursing workforce challenges and gather best practices and strategies to address them. These leaders convened during the summer of 2021 and again at ONL’s Fall Quarterly Meeting. The result of this effort is a report published in January titled Nursing Workforce Report: Challenges and Solutions during the COVID Era. It breaks down the current challenges with nurse recruitment and retention, provides insights on compensation, and offers advice for leveraging metrics, evidence-based strategies, and emerging ideas to retain and engage the nursing workforce.

A SUSTAINED VOICE FOR LICENSURE FLEXIBILITY

ONL has long advocated in support of decreasing regulatory barriers associated with state-based licensing. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic many states issued executive or emergency orders to allow interstate nursing practice. Throughout the past year ONL continued to lend support and influence to have these orders adopted into legislation.

- **NURSE LICENSURE COMPACT (NLC)**

ONL continues to work toward regional adoption of the NLC. The Massachusetts Health Policy Commission, an independent state agency, sought out ONL’s perspective for its analysis of the NLC. It concluded that the Commonwealth’s entry into the NLC could increase access to care, improve quality, and lower costs of care. Additionally, ONL members providing testimony in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

- **GRADUATE NURSE PRACTICE**

Utilizing any and all qualified practitioners was a priority during the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic organizations in NH and CT had the flexibility to hire newly graduated nurses into nursing roles. Executive orders during the pandemic allowed MA and VT to use graduate nurses in similar ways. ONL is now working with various stakeholders to determine what the use of Graduate Nurses will be moving forward.
INCREASING FUNDING FOR NURSING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In late March the United States Department of Labor invited ONL to participate in a roundtable of nurse leaders from practice and academia. This event gave ONL the opportunity to voice support for allocating federal funds to the development of the nursing workforce with members of Secretary of Labor Martin J. Walsh’s team.

SUPPORT FOR STATE-BASED WORKFORCE TASK FORCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CT CENTER FOR NURSING WORKFORCE</th>
<th>MA NURSING COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE SUSTAINABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Connecticut Center for Nursing Workforce, Inc. works toward a robust, sustainable, diverse and exceptional healthcare workforce in Connecticut.</td>
<td>Massachusetts Nursing Council on Workforce Sustainability is part of a statewide effort to tackle the nursing shortages in Massachusetts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONL will support and engage with leaders to advance the important work being led by the CCNW.</td>
<td>ONL will partner with the NCWS to create a statewide advisory board and participate in the development of a charter, strategic plan, and implementation plan to achieve the Council’s goals.</td>
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Influencing and advancing policy requires engagement and persistence. On behalf of everyone on ONL’s Government Affairs Committee, thank you for identifying key issues and providing viable solutions. Thank you for leaning in to challenging conversations and advocating tirelessly for needed resources. ONL has credibility with important stakeholders, and we have succeeded in advancing important workforce flexibilities. The challenges of the past two years are unprecedented, and much work remains. Thank you to our members for continued engagement in shaping policy in our region.

Ashley Waddell, PhD, RN
Director, Government Affairs & Educational Programs, Organization of Nurse Leaders MA, RI, CT, NH, VT

ANALYSIS OF PFMLA IN THE REGION

Though the implementation of paid family and medical leave provides benefits to workers and is an important tool for supporting employee wellness, it has been a significant challenge for nurse leaders who are working tirelessly to maintain staffing levels. ONL provided an analysis of PFMLA in the New England region along with guidance on anticipating the potential impact.

Full report available at oonl.org
Educational programs provided through ONL continue to focus on two main components: delivering timely content by expert speakers and creating space for leaders to connect and share ideas. We strive to be responsive to learner needs when developing new programs and refining existing ones. This year ONL’s educational programs addressed critical challenges with nurse recruitment and retention, growing awareness of the need to re-invest in evidence-based practice, cultivating health work environments, building diverse teams, and advancing inclusivity, and caregiver/leader wellbeing. In addition to timely hot-topics ONL continues to offer foundational leadership-development content that many organizations are integrating into their leadership on-boarding pathway.

GROWTH IN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS TO ENHANCE PROGRAMMING

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a key deliverable for Magnet organizations and is the methodology used to answer practice questions. Developing leaders with EBP skill will position your team to re-build with processes that have been tested and proven to improve quality, patient outcomes, and satisfaction. Last year ONL and The Ohio State University College of Nursing’s Fuld Institute for Evidence-based Practice partnered on a two-day leadership development program to prepare nurse leaders to advance EBP in their organization.

We are excited to deepen our workforce programming through an expanded partnership with Renee Thompson, DNP, RN, CSP, CEO & Founder of the Healthy Workforce Institute (HWI). Together we will offer the asynchronous self-study course “Eradicating Bullying & Incivility: Essential Skills for Healthcare Leaders.” This online course will provide a solution for nurse leaders who want to cultivate a professional, supportive, and respectful workforce culture, free from bullying and incivility. We will also partner on a virtual workshop that will give nurse leaders tools to address common disruptive behaviors and create a culture of caring.

In early 2022 ONL was named a Watson Caring Science Partner. In the fall we will launch a customized, first of its kind program called the WCSI Caritas Executive Intensive. This executive cohort will provide Chief Nurse Officers and senior nurse leaders time and space to reconnect to the humanity of healthcare and to their authentic self, so that they can continue to lead their teams forward.

Throughout 2021 and 2022 ONL expanded our partnership Rose Sherman, EdD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, a nationally recognized expert on nurse leader development. Dr. Sherman edits the popular leadership blog EmergingRNLeader.com and is Editor in Chief of Nurse Leader. Together ONL and Dr. Sherman offered programming tailored specifically to current nursing workforce challenges. Our program “Become the Nurse Leader No One Wants to Leave: Nurse Retention in Turbulent Times” sold out four times.

MORE THAN 7,000 CONTACT HOURS AWARDED
LEADERSHIP LUNCH SERIES

Last year ONL connected nurse leaders with contemporary, national thought leaders—some of the most sought-after speakers in nursing. These virtual events are a convenient and accessible opportunity for nurses to temporarily divert their focus from the day-to-day to their personal and professional development.

Eileen K. Fry-Bowers PhD, JD, RN, CPNP, FAAN
Nursing at a Crossroads: Where Do We Go From Here?

Donna Wright MS, RN, NPD-BC
Building our Bold New Future through Professional Development and Competency Assessment

Beverly Malone PhD, RN, FAAN
Purpose, Power and Passion: The Need to Dream

Teri Pipe PhD, RN
Establishing Rituals of Renewal

Cynda Rushton PhD, RN, FAAN
Cultivating Self-Stewardship as a Leader

Renee Thompson DNP, RN, CSP
Cultivating a Healthy Workplace by Addressing Disruptive Behaviors

Debbie Stamps EdD, MBA, MS, RN, GNP, NE-BC
Recruiting for Outcomes: Community Partnerships to Advance Health Equity

Lori Armstrong DNP, RN, NEA-BC
The Inseparable Link—Nurse Engagement and Patient Safety Outcomes

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ONL continued to offer its signature leadership development courses, which provide nurses at every step of the leadership continuum with opportunities to learn and grow.

The Nuts and Bolts of Nursing Leadership
Workshops for nurse managers, nurse directors, charge nurses, and emerging nurse leaders led by Dr. Rose Sherman EdD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN and Joyce Batcheller DNP, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN

Nurse Leader Master Class
Our executive-style leadership development program focused on adding depth to each leader’s capacity.

ENGAGING NURSE LEADERS FROM 26 STATES

A groundbreaking project by and for nurses, The Nurse Antigone presents dramatic readings of Sophocles’ Antigone on Zoom—featuring professional actors and a chorus of frontline nurses—to help frame powerful, guided discussions about the unique challenges faced by nurses before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic. ONL is the sponsor of the June 26th production—please plan to join us!
Expanding upon the long-standing relationship between ONL and the New England Regional Black Nurses Association, ONL formed a Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and Belonging (DEIB) Task Force with a charge of sharing strategies that increase awareness and facilitate the integration of inclusivity, diversity, and equity in nursing culture and organizational structure. The DEIB Task Force began its work by leading the development of ONL’s Position Statement on Racism and the Nurses’ Pledge to Champion Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity.

A TOOK KIT FOR ACTION

To help bring the important commitments in the position statement and pledge into broad action, the DEIB Task Force recently completed a new resource, Nurses Taking a Stand: A Tool Kit for Addressing Racism in Nursing and Healthcare. It is a resource for nurse leaders to increase awareness of barriers to an inclusive workplace and to provide actionable strategies to overcome these barriers.

Recognizing and addressing systemic racism in healthcare organizations requires commitment on the part of organizational leaders at all levels and in multiple disciplines. This DEIB Tool Kit is designed to be a useful tool for a variety of healthcare settings and departments and can be customized to organizational culture and population.

#1. Start with Heart
#2. Create a Safe Space
#3. Practice Self-Awareness
#4. Cultivate Open Dialogue

...and how these topics impact the healthcare workplace and patient care.

THANK YOU TO THE ONL DEIB TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Nadia Raymond, PhD(c), MSN/MHA, RN
Carol Conroy, DNP, RN, FAAN
Justin Drew, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Lauren Trongard-Scott, BSN, RN, MSOL
Kierrah Leger, DNP, RN, NE-BC
Emily Nguyen, MSN, RN-BC
Diane Welsh, DNP, RN, CNE
Bentley Munsell, BSN, RN, CEN
Ena Williams, MBA, RN, CENP
Joan Sham, MS, RN
Megan Matson, PhD, RN
ONL is honored to be the recipient of the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) 2022 Affiliate Achievement Award! This award recognizes an affiliate that promotes nursing leadership and its influence in advancing nursing practice, patient safety and quality, recruitment and retention, or another priority initiative for its particular state/region, and can serve as a model for other state or regions with similar interests.

**ONL’S NOMINATION HIGHLIGHTED:**

- Our ability to quickly and effectively pivot to provide remote programs and services
- Our impact on regional policy and practice, including numerous legislative wins
- Our formation of a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity position statement, pledge, and task force
- Our role in convening senior nurse leaders on weekly pandemic response calls

Accepting the 2022 Affiliate Achievement Award:
- Beth Beckman, DNSc, RN, PRN, NEA-BC, FAAN
- Patricia Noga, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN
- Amanda Stefancyk Oberlies, PhD, MBA, RN, FAAN
- Justin Drew, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
- Jeannette Bronsord, DNP, MSN, MS, RN, NEA-BC
- Jennifer Thiesen, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, FNP-BC, ACNP-BC, CMAC
Every three years ONL embarks on a journey to create a new strategic plan. This year we partnered with the team at Innovation Point to facilitate the strategic planning process. Board members participated in two facilitated sessions. One session featured two external thought leaders, Robyn Begley, AONL CEO, and Sarah Sladek, author and association expert. Together we created the new ONL Strategic Plan 2022-2024.
AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

MARY B. CONCEISON AWARD
Excellence in Nursing Leadership
Carol Conroy DNP, RN, FAAN

PRESIDENT’S AWARD
Excellence in Nursing Leadership
Gaurdia Banister PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN

MARYLYN RINKER AWARD
Excellence in Nursing Leadership
Pamela Switzer BS, BSN, RN

JANET MADIGAN AWARD
Excellence in Advocacy
Lisa Sundean PhD, MHA, RN

Marcia Proto M.ED, CAS

ELAINE K. SHERWOOD AWARD
Excellence in Service
Jacqueline Bergeron DNP, RN, NEA-BC

SHARON SMITH SCHOLARSHIP
- Katelyn Green MSN, RN (doctoral program)
- Cari Ryding MSN, RN (graduate program)
- Jessica Gifford BSN, RN (graduate program)
- Cynthia Peterson MSN, RN, CCRN (doctoral program)
- Elizabeth Hassan DNP, RN (graduate program)
- Heidi Pfeifer MSN, RN (doctoral program)
- Katherine Magni MSN, RN, OCN (doctoral program)
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Regional Nursing Director
Brigham and Women's Hospital

Appointed Board Member
Emily Nguyen, MSN, RN-BC
Director of Quality and Safety
Bone and Joint Institute
Hartford Healthcare
INVESTING IN NURSE LEADERS AND THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITIES

When we develop and empower nurse leaders, we impact thousands of nurses across New England, and by extension, all of the patients seeking care in our communities. That is why our mission at the ONL Foundation is to invest in nurses and help them become transformational leaders who can improve care in their communities.

THE WORK OF ONL FOUNDATION

The ONL Foundation seeks to develop and empower nurse leaders in our region through nurse leadership and workforce research, educational programming, leadership development initiatives and mentorship, and awards and scholarship opportunities.

RN PLATES ARE ON THE ROAD!

ONL Foundation led the effort to create an “RN” license plate for Massachusetts drivers. This custom plate is a way to celebrate our profession and demonstrate our pride in being a nurse. Additionally, the proceeds from the license plates go directly to ONL Foundation and are used to empower and develop more nursing professionals. We now have more than 500 plates on the road. Visit the Massachusetts RMV website to order yours.

SUPPORT THE ONL FOUNDATION

As a 501(c)(3) affiliate of ONL, the ONL Foundation relies on the financial support of corporations and individuals. Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to support the essential contributions of nurses. Visit onlfoundation.org to donate.
To Be a Nurse

10,000 hours and then some
A science whose foundation lies
At the intersection of theory and practice
A foundation laid one brick at a time
A new language of numeric relationships and acronyms

Learning to simultaneously interpret the
Universality of anatomy and physiology that we all share
With the entirely unique elements
Of the mind, culture, and circumstance

To be a nurse
To be an expert in restoration to health
Is to mix the science of the human body
With the uniqueness of the human experience

To interpret not only the chemistry
But to meet the patient where they are
Requires an effort that is only met
By bringing one’s entire self to the situation

To be a nurse
Is to learn always
Sometimes humble
Sometimes a teammate, always compassionate

To be a nurse with expertise
Is to trust an intuition based on countless hours
Hours built on weekends and holiday and night shifts
When the rest of the world lies in repose

Those who share the profession
Communicate without speaking
Understand a particular and unique sense of humor
Solve problems and innovate not for ego
But because these skills are requisite

Courageous and trustworthy
Present for some of the greatest joys humanity has to offer
As well as some of the most horrific tragedies
Witness to circumstances that must draw out tears
On the commute home if appropriate healing is to follow

To pull from science and
Emotional intelligence and evidence-based practice
To bravely walk into the messiness of humanity while always
Upholding dignity and respect

The shift ends
The mind exhausted
The body tired
The heart tested
A privilege to bring my best
My experience
My intellect
Myself
To restore health
To restore humanity

Justin Drew, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
ONL President, 2021-2022