

Ontario Nurses' Association Weekly Media Scan Summary

March 9 to 13, 2026

ONA coverage:

Public health nurses join Ontario Nurses' Association

The Kirkland Lake Northern News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.northernnews.ca/news/public-health-nurses-join-ontario-nurses-association>

Public health nurses vote to join Ontario Nurses Association

TimminsToday, March 6, 2026

<https://www.timminstoday.com/local-news/public-health-nurses-vote-to-join-ontario-nurses-association-11962861>

Ontario Nurses' Association wins vote to represent nurses at Northeastern Public Health

BayToday, March 6, 2026

<https://www.baytoday.ca/local-news/ontario-nurses-association-wins-vote-to-represent-nurses-at-northeastern-public-health-11962608>

Public health nurses have voted to join ONA

CJKL FM, CJTT FM; March 6 and 9, 2026

Note: Nurses at the public health unit are joining the province's largest healthcare-specific union. The Ontario Nurses' Association says that it will be representing nurses at the Northeastern Public Health unit after the nurses' bargaining group voted overwhelmingly to join.

Nursing coverage:

Ford defends health-care record as hospitals say financial 'crisis' is coming

CBC News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/doug-ford-health-care-spending-9.7116136>

Break down licensing barriers holding back Canada's health workforce

Policy Options, March 9, 2026

<https://policyoptions.irpp.org/2026/03/health-licensing-barriers/>

Canadian Union of Public Employees Ontario rallies in Markham before agreement reached on nursing home job cuts

YorkRegion, March 8, 2026

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/cupe-ontario-rallies-against-senior-care-company-in-markham/article_750f5a9f-36b3-516e-9255-e2cf516caae3.html

Industry coverage:

'I see my brother in every death that I've attended': addictions crisis is personal for North Bay detective

CBC News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/north-bay-drug-street-crime-investigator-documentary-9.7106883>

Provincial funding going to improving wastewater infrastructure near Nipigon Hospital

CBC News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/nipigon-hospital-wastewater-9.7118076>

Overdose awareness event honours lives lost in Thunder Bay

CBC News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.7117976>

Number of Ontarians taking stimulants more than doubled after pandemic, study finds

The Globe and Mail, March 9, 2026

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-number-of-ontarians-taking-stimulants-more-than-doubled-after-pandemic/>

Six Nations man becomes Canada's first doctor of public health

The Hamilton Spectator, March 8, 2026

https://www.thespec.com/news/hamilton-region/indigenous-public-health-covid/article_429816e1-8abd-53d1-8cb2-a744f24171a5.html#tncms-source=hot-stories

The 'prison' of toxic masculinity can keep men from seeking medical care. Canada wants to fix that

CBC Radio, March 7, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/men-health-delays-9.7117702>

'Cyber incident' prompts London's health unit to shut down phone lines, software systems

CBC News, March 6, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/health-unit-cyber-9.7118051>

Political coverage:

Mark Carney calls three byelections for April that could lead to Liberal majority

The Toronto Star, March 8, 2026

https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal/mark-carney-calls-three-byelections-for-april-that-could-lead-to-liberal-majority/article_c385167b-1236-42ba-8fe1-901031016fdc.html

ONA coverage:

Ontario nurses warn student loan changes will worsen shortages

CP24, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cp24.com/news/canada/2026/03/10/ontario-nurses-warn-student-loan-changes-will-worsen-shortages/>

Nursing groups warn OSAP loan cuts will worsen Ontario's medical staffing crisis

CTV News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/northern-ontario/video/2026/03/09/nursing-groups-warn-osap-loan-cuts-will-worsen-ontarios-medical-staffing-crisis/>

Ottawa's Bruyère Health cutting 55 frontline positions

CBC News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/bruyere-health-cuts-ottawa-9.7121289>

Nurses and nursing students speak out against program changes

CICI TV, CFZN FM, CJJM FM, CFBG FM, CFCO AM; March 9, 2026

Note: Members of the Ontario Nurses Association and the Canadian Nursing Students Association are concerned that changes to the Ontario Student Assistance Program will add financial barriers to those pursuing nursing.

ONA to represent Northeastern Public Health Unit

CJTT FM, March 9, 2026

Note: The Ontario Nurses Association announced last week that it will be representing nurses at the Northeastern Public Health Unit after an overwhelming vote to join following a merging of two health units.

Nursing coverage:

Registration of U.S. nurses in B.C. soars amid recruitment push

The Toronto Star, March 10, 2026

https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/british-columbia/registration-of-u-s-nurses-in-b-c-soars-amid-recruitment-push/article_19a65bfd-4ddd-5d0d-ad3d-49f406a30347.html

Ottawa's Bruyère Health cutting 55 frontline positions

CBC News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/bruyere-health-cuts-ottawa-9.7121289>

Industry coverage:

Sister of Sikh influencer killed outside LaSalle, Ont., home says she was 'kind-hearted'

CBC News, March 10, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/nancy-grewal-sister-speaks-about-influencer-s-killing-9.7121317>

Canadians are dying preventable deaths in this country's choked ERs, doctors warn

The National Post, March 10, 2026

<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/emergency-department-deaths>

With Canada's help, this Ugandan initiative is transforming health outcomes for women and children

The Globe and Mail, March 10, 2026

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-healthy-child-uganda-women/>

Ontario hospital tries virtual waiting room to address wait times, overcrowding in ER

The Canadian Press, March 9, 2026

<https://www.chch.com/chch-news/ontario-hospital-tries-virtual-waiting-room-to-address-wait-times-overcrowding-in-er/>

Belleville council receives update on provincial funding to HPE OHT

Quinte News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.quintenews.com/2026/03/09/378746/>

Windsor man charged after allegedly threatening to shoot paramedics

CBC News, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/windsor-man-paramedic-shooting-threats-9.7120835>

'It was inedible' – how can Ottawa hospital food be made better?

CBC Radio, March 9, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/cbc-podcasts/1420-this-is-ottawa/episode/16201922-it-was-inedible-how-can-ottawa-hospital-food-be-made-better>

PEI to collect voluntary info about race, ethnicity in health card applications

The Globe and Mail, March 9, 2026

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-pei-to-collect-voluntary-info-about-race-ethnicity-in-health-card/>

Human Rights & Equity coverage:

White nationalist activity in Niagara monitored by anti-racism group, police

The Hamilton Spectator, March 10, 2026

https://www.thespec.com/news/niagara-region/grimsby-hate-events/article_592c99dc-e2d5-5d7b-9c0b-0b751820af52.html#tncms-source=communities-news

Political coverage:

Shots fired at U.S. consulate in Toronto, no injuries reported

The Toronto Star, March 10, 2026

https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/shots-fired-at-u-s-consulate-in-toronto-no-injuries-reported/article_5f5adb0a-ba67-474b-8fe8-94f8ce49ced6.html

Canada 'will not be participating' in Iran war, defence minister says

Global News, March 9, 2026

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11722309/canada-iran-military-participation-mcguinty/>

First Nations leaders show opposition to separatism at Alberta legislature

The Globe and Mail, March 9, 2026

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/alberta/article-first-nations-leaders-show-opposition-to-separatism-at-alberta/>

ONA coverage:

Nursing students and nurses troubled by recent updates to the Ontario Student Assistance Program

CHMS FM, CFZN FM, CHPB FM, CHMT FM, CHBY FM; March 9-10, 2026

Note: Nursing students, nurses, and delegates from the Canadian Nursing Students' Association, along with the Ontario Nurses' Association, express their apprehension regarding the recent changes to the Ontario Student Assistance Program. They assert that these alterations diminish the accessibility of non-repayable grants, compelling students to rely more heavily on loans.

Nursing coverage:

Nurse Police Team responds to 510 calls in 2026

CTV News, March 11, 2026

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/windsor/article/nurse-police-team-responds-to-510-calls-in-2026/>

UPDATE: Nurse practitioner coverage added during parts of Thessalon ER shutdown

SooToday, March 10, 2026

<https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/multi-day-closure-coming-to-thessalon-emergency-department-11981558>

Industry coverage:

Ontario's first confirmed case of mpox variant reported in Toronto

CityNews, March 11, 2026

<https://toronto.citynews.ca/video/2026/03/11/ontarios-first-confirmed-case-of-mpox-variant-reported-in-toronto/>

A crisis unfolding: Hamilton shatters record with 199 overdose calls in 28 days

The Hamilton Spectator, March 11, 2026

https://www.thespec.com/news/hamilton-region/opioid-crisis-overdose-record-shattered/article_446d5826-3f25-5116-b0ce-557bc8e1969d.html

West Hamilton addiction treatment facility expects to open in May as resistance from neighbours continues

The Hamilton Spectator, March 11, 2026

https://www.thespec.com/news/hamilton-region/addiction-homelessness-drugs-hamilton-ontario/article_ddd3cab3-48dc-5566-a911-fcf3f7947e50.html

Health equity key in Northern Ontario School of Medicine University's new 5-year plan

CBC News, March 11, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/nosm-new-strategic-plan-9.7122954>

Start screening for colorectal cancers earlier, Canadian Cancer Society urges

CBC News, March 11, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/colorectal-cancer-screening-age-45-9.7123437>

Toronto physiotherapist acquitted of sexual assault on teen girl. Judge expresses 'common-sense concern' about his treatment methods

The Toronto Star, March 11, 2026

https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/toronto-physiotherapist-acquitted-of-sexual-assault-on-teen-girl-judge-expresses-common-sense-concern-about/article_7c25349b-0f7b-4d8d-bc6d-c91f3b4c51d6.html

Thessalon ER to be closed for 3 days

CTV News, March 10, 2026

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/northern-ontario/video/2026/03/10/thessalon-er-to-be-closed-for-3-days/>

Opinion: Patients or profits first?

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, March 10, 2026

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/patients-or-profits-first/>

Human Rights & Equity coverage:

First Nation in northern Ontario praises mining company for 'true reconciliation'

CBC News, March 11, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/biigtigong-nishnaabeg-reconciliation-9.7122748>

Political coverage:

High school students protest OSAP changes as school counsellors warn of growing uncertainty

CBC News, March 11, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/high-school-osap-protest-9.7122592>

Ford says Ontario government will take over Toronto's Billy Bishop airport

CBC News, March 10, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ford-province-billy-bishop-takeover-9.7122427>

Ontario to consolidate 36 conservation authorities into 9

CBC News, March 10, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ont-conservation-authorities-9.7122978>

ONA coverage:

'Most dangerous job' — After Windsor shooting threat, health workers call out job violence

The Windsor Star, March 12, 2026

<https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/most-dangerous-job-after-windsor-shooting-threat-health-workers-call-out-job-violence>

Nursing coverage:

Manitoba government plans steps toward reducing nurse overtime, improving care

The Toronto Star, March 11, 2026

https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-government-plans-steps-toward-reducing-nurse-overtime-improving-care/article_90b497e9-3dbb-5a8c-8d90-1ae95177cbfe.html

Industry coverage:

How remote First Nations are working with Ornge to improve medical transportation

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/ornge-emergency-first-response-team-program-9.7124502>

Should London open a 'safe' site for smoking drugs? Here's what mayor, health unit say

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/safe-inhalation-site-london-9.7124611>

Toronto's fastest growing chronic disease is preventable. This is what doctors recommend

The Toronto Star, March 12, 2026

https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/doctors-say-early-testing-and-lifestyle-changes-key-to-preventing-kidney-disease/article_f1befab6-e188-4ea8-a0a7-241e60250e01.html

Labour coverage:

Teacher's union calls on Ford government to restore school board trustees

CityNews, March 12, 2026

<https://toronto.citynews.ca/video/2026/03/12/teachers-union-calls-on-ford-government-to-restore-school-board-trustees/>

North Bay-area school bus drivers continue strike despite potential deadline

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/school-bus-driver-strike-northern-ontario-9.7124528>

Nursing coverage:

Large volume of patients puts Kenora, Ont., hospital in chronic 'Code Surge'

CBC News, March 13, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/kenora-hospital-code-surge-9.7126439>

Chateau Park redevelopment in Amherstburg to add 160 long-term care beds

Ontario Construction News, March 13, 2026

<https://ontarioconstructionnews.com/chateau-park-redevelopment-in-amherstburg-to-add-160-long-term-care-beds>

Job cuts at Ottawa hospital show deepening crisis of underfunding across Ontario

Rabble, March 12, 2026

<https://rabble.ca/labour/job-cuts-at-ottawa-hospital-show-deepening-crisis-of-underfunding-across-ontario/>

Industry coverage:

Canada's hospital emergency rooms have hit a breaking point. Is it the new normal?

CBC News, March 13, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/canada-hospitals-wait-times-9.7123684>

Large volume of patients puts Kenora, Ont., hospital in chronic 'Code Surge'

CBC News, March 13, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/kenora-hospital-code-surge-9.7126439>

Suspended doctor faces 28 new sex-crime charges, including sexual touching of minors

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/david-poon-28-new-charges-9.7126847>

Over 15,000 students could be suspended in Peel Region due to vaccination status

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/peel-students-suspension-vaccinations-9.7126673>

Police link nearly 40 overdose calls in 24 hours to toxic drugs allegedly being handed out

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/39-overdoses-free-drugs-london-ontario-9.7126514>

Three charged after suspected fentanyl pills disguised as aspirin seized in east Hamilton

The Hamilton Spectator, March 12, 2026

https://www.thespec.com/news/crime/drug-bust-east-hamilton/article_8a37cf44-2920-52d8-a386-53e96f0c63d3.html

Plasma donation company denies responsibility for injuries Winnipeg man suffered in 2023

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/grifols-plasma-donation-lawsuit-winnipeg-9.7124579>

2 people die after giving plasma at for-profit Winnipeg collection centres: Health Canada

CBC News, March 11, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/2-people-die-after-fatal-adverse-reactions-while-giving-plasma-in-winnipeg-health-canada-9.7122868>

Labour coverage:

Workers' advocate starts registry of sarcoidosis patients to push for research into occupational exposure

CBC News, March 13, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/sarcoidosis-disease-occupational-job-related-mining-silicosis-9.7124649>

Canada's economy lost 84,000 jobs in February, unemployment rate ticked up to 6.7%

CBC News, March 13, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/canada-labour-force-survey-february-2026-9.7127105>

'Record levels' of employment in Windsor-Essex, new labour market report finds

CBC News, March 12, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/employment-windsor-essex-9.7126399>

Political coverage:

Ontario tightens FOI laws by excluding premier, cabinet ministers' records

The Canadian Press, March 13, 2026

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-foi-changes-9.7127380>

Media Releases

Nursing Students, Ontario Nurses' Association Concerned About Cuts to Student Grants

TORONTO, ON, March 9, 2026 — Nursing students, nurses and health-care professionals across the province, members of the Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) and Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA), are deeply concerned by recent changes to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP). These changes reduce non-repayable grants and increase reliance on student loans. These decisions risk creating additional financial barriers for students pursuing post-secondary education, including those entering essential professions such as nursing.

Nursing education is academically rigorous and clinically intensive with extensive course work, laboratory training, and more than 1,400 hours of unpaid clinical placements in hospitals, long-term care homes, and community settings before graduation. These requirements significantly limit students' ability to maintain consistent employment while completing their studies. As a result, many nursing students rely heavily on financial assistance programs such as OSAP to support their education and living expenses.

Workforce projections estimate that Ontario could face a shortage of more than 30,000 nurses by the end of the decade if recruitment and retention challenges are not addressed. At a time when Ontario and Canada continue to face significant nursing shortages, policies that create additional barriers to nursing education raise serious concerns for the future of the health-care workforce.

The impact of reduced financial supports is not experienced equally. Increased reliance on loans and rising tuition costs disproportionately affects students from low-income families, Indigenous communities, rural and northern regions, first-generation post-secondary learners, racialized students, and students with disabilities. Financial barriers risk narrowing the diversity of the nursing workforce and limiting opportunities for students who bring critical lived experiences and perspectives to patient care.

The CNSA and ONA call on the government of Ontario to ensure that financial aid policies support equitable access to post-secondary education and do not create additional barriers for students pursuing essential health-care professions such as nursing.

Quotes:

“Nursing students are already contributing to Ontario’s healthcare system through extensive clinical placements while completing rigorous academic training. When financial supports are reduced and tuition continues to rise, the message students receive is that pursuing a career in nursing may come at an unsustainable personal cost.” - Scarlett Montserrat Sanabria-Ramos, President of the CNSA

“Before we graduate, nursing students complete more than 1,400 hours of unpaid clinical placements while meeting rigorous academic and professional standards. If Ontario is

serious about addressing the nursing shortage, it must restore OSAP funding, recognize the reality of unpaid clinical labour, and ensure that financial barriers do not prevent qualified students from entering the nursing profession.” – Sierra Punchard, former Ontario Regional Director of the CNSA

“Access to publicly funded and delivered post-secondary education and health care is a fundamental right. These cuts to OSAP are part of the Ford Conservatives’ larger plan to privatize the essential public services that our communities rely on. While Ford denies, deflects and defunds, nurses and health-care professionals will fight back for our communities, including students, and our patients, residents and clients.” – Erin Ariss, ONA Provincial President

-30-