

RAAP 2024

AMPA 2024

Report of the Chairperson of ARM Council

I would like to begin by thanking the members of ARM Council for their dedication over the past year. I also want to acknowledge the information and support provided by the Liaisons from Provincial Executive, Colin Matthew (past) and Jeff Denys (current), and Staff Liaison, Lisa Black-Meddings. Thanks, too, to administrative assistant Cindy Blanchard, for her help and hard work in support of ARM Council.

A thank-you, as well, goes out to Manfred Netzel for his contribution as Chairperson of ARM Council 2021-2023. He stepped down in June, and I assumed the role at that time, with Bryan Smith (Chapter 11) becoming Vice-Chair.

The ARM Biennial occurred in May, and was a great success. Delegates met in person for the first time since the Biennial of 2019. Tom Golightly spoke to us about pensions, representatives from OTIP and EFG gave presentations, and the keynote address was given by Natalie Mehra, executive director of the Ontario Health Coalition. Mary-Lou Cunningham was the recipient of the Betty Ann Bushell Award for her tremendous contributions to ARM as a member, and president, of Chapter 11. The Ian Cameron newsletter award was given to Suzette Clark, editor of the newsletter in Chapter 9.

Two initiatives were endorsed by the Biennial. The first is a Working Group to examine ARM priorities including the recruitment and retention of members. This idea was presented to ARM Council in March, 2023 by Robin MacDonald, a new ARM member in Chapter 21/18, and it came to the Biennial as a motion supported by ARM Council. The composition of the Working Group was decided on at the September meeting of ARM Council from nominations received, and this group met online twice before providing a progress report to ARM Council in November.

The second initiative is a Home Care Survey. This arose after a presentation by Colleen Ireland and Rita More (Chapter 13/16) at the March ARM Council meeting, which identified the numerous frustrations encountered in trying to access home care supports in Ontario. The Biennial resolved that “all Chapters solicit anonymized evidence from Chapter members regarding local home care services with results of their findings to be submitted to ARM Council.” Chapters also are asking Districts to distribute the survey to their members. It was decided by ARM Council that the survey will be conducted province wide from January 31 to February 14, 2024, with tabulated results to be presented to ARM Council in April. Thanks go to Bruce Awad, president of Chapter 9, and his committee in Chapter 9 who developed the survey, and did a test run locally in October.

ARM Council, and local Chapters, continue to support the Ontario Health Coalition in its efforts to protect public health care. Many members volunteered time to help the OHC conduct its Health Care Referendum in May, 2023, which collected over 500,000 votes, of which 98% were against privatization of Ontario’s public hospitals.

In 2023, ARM Council renewed membership in CURC and OFUR, the national and provincial bodies of retired workers. In November, for the first time ARM sent a Delegate to the OFL convention as a member of the OSSTF delegation. I attended the first three days, and found it to be an enlightening and worthwhile experience.

ARM Chapters continued to participate in CPAC Regionals this year. ARM members are potentially a powerful resource for political action, and a number of members are actively involved in political parties and social causes.

Membership in ARM increased by more than 2% from November 2022 to November 2023, after declines during the pandemic. This seems to be largely due to the significant increase in memberships as part of the enrollment process for RTIP benefits.

Meetings of ARM Council have been in-person in 2023, except for the January meeting, which was virtual. The fall meetings were held at 49 Mobile, and we anticipate holding the June 2024 meeting in the new building at 60 Mobile. The January meeting once again will be virtual, both to reduce travel and accommodation costs and to avoid travelling in inclement weather.

I look forward to the successful completion of the Home Care Survey and the use of its results to push for improvements to the provision of home care in this province. The recommendations of the Working Group will be received by ARM Council, with possible implementation next year. Moving forward, ARM Council will continue to support the Federation, and ARM Chapters will continue to provide activities and information to their members.

Respectfully submitted by

Iain Beaton,

Chairperson, ARM Council