



November 11, 2010

Letter to the editor The Globe and Mail

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The Canadian Nurses Association would like to make an important point of clarification regarding The Globe and Mail's health-care series: physicians are not the centre of our health-care system, Canadians are.

Canadians will benefit when governments look at health in a different way and understand that care must be delivered in homes and community clinics, as much as it is in hospitals and physicians' offices. Canadians will always need a strong acute care system, one that continues to adopt innovative approaches to reduce wait times. But we also need a transformed primary health-care system, one that is equally as strong and focused on health promotion and chronic disease management. That system would see registered nurses and other health-care providers as a first point of contact for Canadians and working as part of a team to deliver the health care patients need, when and where they need it – while saving the publicly funded system time and money.

The voice of nursing has been missing from this series and that's unfortunate because listening to nurses — the health-care providers who spend more direct time with Canadians than any other— is crucial as we work to find solutions. Medicare is sustainable. The question we need to talk about is affordability and that's a discussion that nurses must be part of.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Judith Shamian'.

Judith Shamian, RN, PhD, LLD (hon), D.Sci. (hon), FAAN
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