



Letter to the Editor, *The Globe and Mail*

Re: Canada boasts record number of doctors, but is it enough? (Nov. 16):

Improving health care in communities throughout Canada requires a better understanding of what those populations need. Thank you, Steven Lewis, for your reminder that numbers rarely tell the full story.

The Canadian Institute for Health Information reports the supply of physicians is growing faster than Canada's population; other reports on Canada's registered nurse workforce have shown the same trend. But as the provincial and territorial governments look for innovative solutions to improve the health-care system, their first stop needs to be with Canadians. A leading example can be found in Alberta, where a delivery plan for primary health care starts with a needs assessment of the population being served. Workforce statistics and quotas cannot be our driving force, positive health outcomes must be.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Mildon".

Barb Mildon
President, Canadian Nurses Association