



*Montreal Gazette*

Letter to the Editor

*Published January 28, 2011*

Re: Nurses wanted – Stat!

Kudos to the Lakeshore General Hospital’s human resources department for its “quick response” policy of getting in touch with nurses within one hour of applying for a job with the hospital. But, while the policy may help that one hospital recruit nurses in a competitive environment where nurses are in short supply, the root causes of the nursing shortage across Canada, unfortunately, are still not being properly addressed.

The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) knows too well how critical the current and looming nursing shortage is. According to a CNA report, if solutions are not put in place now, the nursing shortage will grow by almost five times over the next 15 years. Canada will be short almost 60,000 nurses by 2022. And the health of Canadians will suffer.

Your article, Nurses wanted – Stat!, rightly points out that there are many causes to the current shortage, ranging from nurse fatigue to nurse retirement and work environment. There are solutions. Some CNA recommendations include: increasing nurse productivity by removing non-nursing tasks and providing additional support staff, reducing nurse absenteeism by focusing on the health of nurses, ensuring workloads are manageable and that nurse fatigue is addressed, and increasing enrolment in nursing schools.

If these changes are implemented, then hopefully – once the human resource departments get the nurses in the door – the environment will be one where the nurses can and will provide the best health care possible.

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

Judith Shamian  
President, Canadian Nurses Association