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There's a valuable lesson to be learned from "Nurses can help raise vaccination rates, new study shows" (Nov. 23). Permitting a wider range of health-care providers in different settings to coordinate and deliver services such as flu vaccinations will help make Canadians healthier.

The Canadian Nurses Association recognizes flu vaccination as the most effective method of preventing flu and its complications. Regular handwashing, staying home when sick, avoiding close contact with others who are sick, and living a healthy lifestyle are other important methods that everyone can employ. While many people who get the flu recover within a week or two, infants, seniors, pregnant women and those with chronic illnesses are at higher risk of severe complications and are often among the 20,000 people who are hospitalized each year.

More than 4.4 million Canadians do not have a primary care provider, a serious access-to-care problem. Enabling health-care professionals, such as registered nurses and pharmacists, to deliver their fullest range of care possible is a practical and important action that should be taken now. It makes good sense to have the flu shot more readily available because it has the potential to keep Canadians healthy and out of hospitals.

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