



Thursday, April 18, 2013

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Editor-in-Chief
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Re: Tears are misplaced for axed Health Council

With all due respect, Ms. Kheiriddin, your push back against those who shed tears for the Health Council is misplaced.

The health-care system doesn't need a voice. It needs a set of clear, meaningful health indicators and outcomes so we can monitor and measure its performance and our nation's health. How else are we to improve if we aren't measuring what we need to manage?

Patients need a voice. And for that to happen registered nurses and other providers think strong federal, national leadership is needed. Whether or not councils should be permanent, or indeed the mandate of the specific council in question, Canada must have a national body actively monitor and report on key targets. A national body that can listen to what health providers and Canadians are saying can shift targets in response to the needs of the population — a national body that can help scale local innovations up to national solutions and enable Canadians to receive the same quality of care wherever they are.

While Canada is among the top spenders in the world on health care, our health outcomes are not even close to being among the best. Now is the time when the government should be ramping up efforts to improve quality of care, national standards and health outcomes — not backing away.

The withdrawal of the federal government from its leadership role in the health of Canadians is unacceptable.

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

Barbara Milton, RN, PhD, CHE, CCHN(C)
President