

Letters to the Editor

Call for individual action

As educators who teach in programs for registered nurses in Alberta, we are concerned about the news that, for three years, most newly-graduated RNs will not find work in Alberta, and that many RNs around the province could be replaced by less qualified staff. Research strongly suggests that these changes in hiring policy will have a negative impact on patient safety, and could potentially jeopardize the overall quality of health care in Alberta, both immediately and in the long term.

In light of these developments, we urge anyone who shares one or both of the above concerns to consider our CNA Code of Ethics (endorsed by CARNA), which outlines our responsibilities as nurses to advocate for protection and promotion of the public's right to safe and dignified health care, and to identify ways to influence government/AHS policy. There are numerous activities that could be undertaken: write/speak to your MLA, organize a postcard campaign, organize a public forum, write a guest editorial for a newspaper, etc. If each of us does just ONE activity, hopefully we can make a difference in the future of health care in Alberta.

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RN voice... a welcome one

I am very pleased with CARNA's submission to the Minister's Advisory Committee on Health. I read it in full and agree wholeheartedly with the content. I have often felt frustrated in the past because it seems CARNA has been silent when it comes to advocating for public health care and for registered nurses. I understand that the mandate of CARNA is to protect the public, but the best way to do that is to have registered nurses at the forefront of health care in this province. The direction that this government is taking with health care is frightening to say the least. I am looking forward to CARNA's public awareness campaign. The patients we see in acute care value and appreciate the work we do, but I think the public does not often understand the value of a registered nurse and how crucial we are to the system. I think it is time CARNA takes a stand and informs the public of the important role RNs play in health care. I support CARNA's decision to forego the annual conference and put its resources towards a public awareness campaign. Thank you for your hard work in this area.

Orissa Shima, RN

Cardiff

EDITOR'S NOTE: We know it, you know it and now CARNA wants the public to know it. In January, CARNA launched "Expert Caring Makes a Difference," a public awareness campaign that reaches out to Albertans with a blend of personal stories and research-based facts about the unique impact of registered nurses in our health system. Over the seven-week period, the campaign will air 550 commercials, publish advertisements in major dailies and place 75,000 online announcements. The campaign refers Albertans to www.expertcaring.ca, a storehouse of key pieces of nursing research and a place to view our ads. Check it out and spread the word: *expert caring makes a difference.*

Congratulations on MACH submission

I recently had the opportunity to read the submission to the Minister's Advisory Committee on Health. I want to congratulate the authors on a well-written, strongly-worded document. In my opinion, this is one of the best and most forthright documents ever produced by CARNA. My fervent hope is that the document will open the eyes of the intended readers. Once again, congratulations and well done.

Kathryn Crooks, RN

Medicine Hat RN