



August 5, 2010

Letter to the editor

National Post

*(As published in National Post, August 7, 2010)*

Re: The CMA doesn't go far enough (National Post, August 5, 2010)

The [Canadian Medical Association's latest report](#) responding to escalating health-care costs, wait times and uneven levels of service contributes to the dialogue we need to have in this country about how to best serve Canadians' health-care needs. Canada's registered nurses agree that our health system needs to build on the existing strong foundation to genuinely respond to changing population needs and bring about greater health system effectiveness. Canadians need to be able to access a full range of services without compromising their own financial well-being or that of our governments.

We vigorously disagree, however, with [your opinion piece's](#) suggestion that creating "a hybrid system that permits private health-funding options in parallel with a publicly-funded universal health system" is the answer. A two-tiered system would simply widen the health-care gulf between the rich and the not-so-rich and make the overall system more expensive. There is a great deal of evidence to back this up.

Streamlining the way resources are used across the system would be far more productive. Nurse practitioners, for example, can provide excellent access for the five million Canadians who have no access to primary care. And placing greater focus on team-based health care to manage chronic illness, mental health and health promotion will lead to a healthier population and reduced health-care expenses.

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