

Nurses should be allowed to prescribe meds

We've almost all been there at one time or another. Your child has an earache or our parent in a long-term care facility has a bladder infection.

Patients with these conditions can wait hours for treatment, sometimes at an already-busy hospital emergency department.

Could authorizing nurses to prescribe drugs for non-complex conditions make the Ontario health-care system more efficient and effective? The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) thinks so, and the Ontario government agrees.

This month, Metroland Media was the only Toronto media outlet to report the Ontario government is preparing to amend the Nursing Act to authorize registered nurses to prescribe certain drugs for non-complex conditions and to communicate a diagnosis. If approved, the changes would also authorize nurse practitioners to prescribe controlled substances.

Increased access to health care, improved outcomes and a better patient experience all are direct results on investments we've made and hard work done by nurses and others, Ontario Health Minister Eric Hoskins said in a statement to Metroland Media Toronto.

RNAO has been lobbying for years to expand the practice scope of Ontario's 96,000 registered nurses.

Registered nurses bring a wealth of knowledge gained from years of experience in front-line patient care, and for many, from ongoing continuing education.

A 2012 RNAO report concluded the medical knowledge of registered nurses (who have a four-year degree), and nurse practitioners (who have a degree plus postgraduate education) has not been fully utilized. As RNAO CEO Doris Grinspun said, "Now registered nurses and nurse practitioners can become a huge solution to health care access issues, not only for people, but for complications and system ineffectiveness."

In Britain, nurses have been prescribing medication for 15 years, Grinspun noted. Alberta and Manitoba are moving toward developing a prescribing role for registered nurses. It makes sense for Ontario to do the same.

Registered nurses on social media asked if increased responsibility and liability will be accompanied by a pay raise. Some nurse practitioners argue, since they already prescribe, why not focus on their scope of practice first?

Prescribing medication is a serious responsibility. The Ontario government's move to amending the legislation must be met with the education required to protect patient and nurses alike. But it's a good idea.

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Letters to the editor

Community made fundraiser a hit

On Jan. 17, 2017, Sharon Sharpe was struck by a transport truck and suffered serious injuries.

A benefit dance was held on March 4, 2017 to raise funds to aid Sharon in the long recovery process ahead of her.

The donations of prizes for the raffles that were received from the local businesses in the community were overwhelming.

The Masonic Temple donated the hall to host the event. Sharon's coworkers supported the cause by contributing to all the draws held within her workplace.

Unifor Local 876 and the Recreation Club helped with expenses to pay for the event. A big thank you to all the individuals involved in organizing, donating, or assisting with the planning and success of the event.

Special thanks to Joe Fields for providing the entertainment and to Tim Somerville, Margaret Neil, Allyssa Kent and James Walker for bartending.

It was an amazing time for everyone who came out. A total of \$8,171 was raised for Sharon.

Businesses that supported the efforts for Sharon Sharpe were:

Boston Pizza, Spa on Main, Quizno, Downtown Spa & Relaxation Centre, Fresh Co., Marcells, Canadian Tire, Trendz, Harveys, Georgetown GMC Chevrolet, Kelseys, Koffee Corner, Food Basics, employees at Reitmans, Art of Rebellion, employees at Cargill Ltd., Circa Fit, Tim Hortons, Pickled Piper, The Works (Milton), Shoeless Joe's, Pet Smart, Halton Hills Thunder, GTA Home Health Care, Super Lube, Genhairations, Halton Regional Police, Essroc Read Mix, Ginger Quinn, Rolo Trucking, Colleen McKnight-Rolf, Bella Tan and Andrea Kellman for Epicure.

We apologize if we missed anyone, but know that we appreciated everyone who contributed. Thanks again on behalf of Sharon Sharpe.

Submitted by Jody Axeford

We too could have roads paved in gold

I live in Norval. I travel Winston Churchill daily. This portion to Mayfield is in very poor condition and has been for some time. The portion above Mayfield is great and was resurfaced last year by

Peel. Also when leaving Georgetown via Mayfield, the section before Mayfield is like driving on railroad tracks, until you cross Winston Churchill into Peel and it becomes smooth. I believe generally the condition of a lot of the roads in Halton are in poor condition.

The answer if I enquired probably would be a lack of available funds, no doubt.

However, I can't help but think back about the money wasted. One issue that affects me was making a secondary plan for Norval. It was one horrendous waste of funds in my mind.

This endeavour was underway for two or three years and I'm sure hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on a project that could have been resolved with the stroke of a pen, accepting the status quo.

It would be interesting to see an accounting of this project.

Instead, consultants were hired, lawyers were involved, and many meetings were held. What was accomplished?

Certainly nothing visible.

The automobile sales outlets were to be closed, the body shops closed, the storage facility closed. None of this occurred.

William M. Pomeroy