

Canada Health Act Changes Could Disrupt Access to Nurse Practitioner Care for Albertans, Warns Beaumont Health Leader

The upcoming Canada Health Act-related policy and funding changes taking effect April 1, 2026 may affect patients' access to care from Nurse Practitioners.

EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA, January 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In January 2025, former federal health minister Mark Holland released a "Canada Health Act Interpretation Letter" outlining a new "CHA Services Policy". When this policy comes into effect in April 2026,

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Our clients rely on the services we provide for survival and quality of life. Any policy shift that risks reducing access to Nurse Practitioners risks pushing vulnerable patients further into crisis.”

Dr. Melody Morin

“patient charges for medically necessary services, whether provided by a physician or other healthcare professional providing physician-equivalent services, will be considered extra-billing and user charges under the CHA.”

- C.D. Howe Institute

[Dr. Melody Morin](#), Registered Psychologist, CEO and

Clinical Director of [Level Up Wellness Group](#) in Beaumont, Alberta, is calling attention to the potential impact these legislative and funding changes may have on patients currently receiving timely, specialized care through Nurse Practitioners—particularly in the areas of mental health, hormone therapy, pandas-pans, and complex chronic conditions.

“There is very little public clarity around how these changes may affect patients who are already struggling to access appropriate care. For many individuals and families, Nurse Practitioners are not an optional service—they are the only realistic point of access to timely treatment.”

- Dr. Melody Morin

Dr. Morin has consulted with healthcare legal experts, who note that the exact implications of these upcoming Canada Health Act changes are still unclear, highlighting the need for discussion and careful planning to ensure patient access to essential care.

“The letter recognized that the scope of practice for many non-physician healthcare providers – particularly nurse practitioners – had expanded considerably to the point where they were

delivering many of the same services as physicians.”

- C.D. Howe Institute

But, the reason the scope of practice for Nurse Practitioners has expanded considerably is to address the underlying challenges in primary care access to patients. According to the Nurse Practitioner Association of Alberta (NPAA),

“1 in 4 Albertans do not have access to primary care.”

- Nurse Practitioner Association of Alberta (NPAA)

To address this lack of primary care access for Albertans, in November 2023, the Government of Alberta announced a Nurse Practitioner Primary Care Program,

“Nurse practitioners are highly trained and valued medical professionals. By enabling them to open their own clinics, we are ensuring Albertans can more easily access the care they need.”

- Danielle Smith, Premier

Despite the province’s efforts, our healthcare system continues to struggle to deliver care to Albertans. According to the Alberta Medical Association (AMA), nearly 60% of Albertans who visited an emergency room in the past year rated their experience as poor:

“A new report from the Alberta Medical Association (AMA) gives the province’s health-care system low grades, citing long emergency room wait times and ongoing difficulty finding a family doctor.”

- CityNews Edmonton

Our complex healthcare system has numerous systemic challenges, from strain caused by population growth:

“I think the biggest thing that we would like to see in the AMA is that we really need to get a handle on the population growth.”

- Dr. Shelly Duggan, President of AMA

As well as, Canadian healthcare providers presenting with symptoms of burnout from delivering care. BMC Public Health published a study in January 2024 that found the prevalence of burnout for the Canadian public health workforce was “78.7%”.

Furthermore, according to the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions,

“94% of nurses are experiencing symptoms of burnout”.

- Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

There are many challenges in our healthcare system that require innovative solutions to better

serve patients. In the long-term, we can address systemic challenges posed by population growth and healthcare worker burnout by investing in people delivering primary care to expand access.

In the short-term, we can contact our local MLAs to share our feedback that we want to maintain access and public funding to primary care providers, such as Nurse Practitioners (NPs).

Ideally, primary care services provided by NPs need to be publicly insured so that all Albertans have access to at least some form of primary care provider. If they are not publicly insured, then private providers will fill these gaps to ensure primary care access for all Albertans.

Dr. Morin struggled to find appropriate medical care for her daughter's mental health and for her own hormonal health for years, which inspired her to found Level Up Wellness Group in Beaumont, Alberta to support people with their holistic health and wellbeing.

She integrated Nurse Practitioners (NPs) into her organization because she saw significant gaps with supporting her clients' holistic health. Her team of NPs support the whole person – addressing physical health, managing and prescribing medications and coordinating necessary blood work and testing.

“Our clients rely on the services we provide not for convenience, but for survival and quality of life. Any policy shift that risks reducing access to Nurse Practitioners risks pushing vulnerable patients further into crisis.”

- Dr. Melody Morin

-ENDS-

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