

February 2026

Triage Desk

Hello,

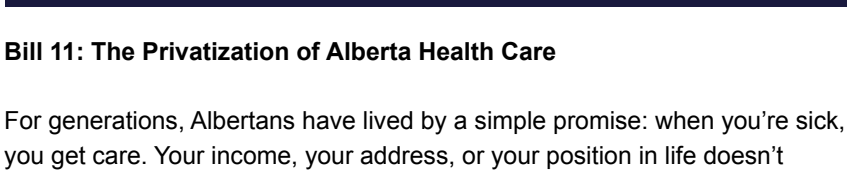
February brings a mix of moments to celebrate and reflect. We mark Valentine's Day on the 14th, Canada's Flag Day on the 15th, and Family Day on the 16th. On the fourth, we recognized World Cancer Day, and throughout February, we celebrate Black History Month, honouring the contributions and experiences of Black communities across Canada.

At the same time, there are issues we can't ignore. Our health care is being pushed toward an American-style two-tiered system while capacity challenges continue to seriously impact patients, families, and health care workers across the province.

In this edition, nurses share what those pressures look like on the front lines, and why the conversation about capacity can't wait.

Thank you for reading.

Nursing Notes



Bill 11: The Privatization of Alberta Health Care

For generations, Albertans have lived by a simple promise: when you're sick, you get care. Your income, your address, or your position in life doesn't matter. That's the Canadian way. That's the Albertan way.

Bill 11 shatters that promise. It creates a shortcut for the wealthy, while everyone else waits.

It allows doctors to charge patients directly for medically necessary care while still working within the public system. That creates two lines for health care: one for those who can pay, and one for everyone else. The government calls it reform. It isn't. It's abandonment.

They promise shorter wait times; ask them to show you how.

Right now, doctors, nurses, and operating rooms are already stretched to their limits. Shifting these limited resources to serve patients who can pay **doesn't create new capacity**. It prioritizes those who can afford to jump ahead. That means the rest of us face longer waits for care that should be available to everyone.

Costs don't go down - they get hidden and shifted.

Private clinics charge more, and profits go to shareholders, not hospitals. Meanwhile, you still pay taxes to support the public system that loses staff and resources to private services. If you or your loved ones choose, or need, to use private care, you may end up paying twice: once through your taxes and again out of pocket. And if you can't afford private care, you're still funding a system that now favours those who can.

Albertans did not vote for this.

We were promised stronger public health care, not an American-style system where illness becomes a business and profit comes first.

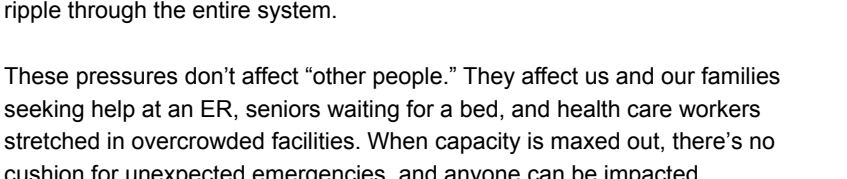
Bill 11 tells Albertans: if you have money, you're fine. If you don't, you'll wait or go without.

Health care should be a right. Bill 11 makes it a luxury.

It puts a price tag on care, and once that happens, there is no going back.

Visit [Friends of Medicare](#) to see how Bill 11 will impact you.

Brain Food



Capacity is Care

When Alberta's health care system runs out of capacity, the impact is immediate. It means full emergency rooms, unavailable hospital beds, cancelled surgeries, and longer waits for urgent care.

Hospitals across the province are operating close to their limits. Intensive care units are running at very high capacity, and staff shortages have led to temporary bed closures. When patients can't move out of emergency departments, delays ripple through the entire system.

These pressures don't affect "other people." They affect us and our families seeking help at an ER, seniors waiting for a bed, and health care workers stretched in overcrowded facilities. When capacity is maxed out, there's no cushion for unexpected emergencies, and anyone can be impacted.

That's why [Alberta Needs Care](#). Without enough capacity to meet demand, timely access to care is at risk.

Strengthening the system means making room for patients, supporting staff, and ensuring care is there when it's needed most.

Learn more about our [Alberta Needs Care campaign](#).

Quote of the Month

"The man who moves a mountain begins by carrying away small stones."

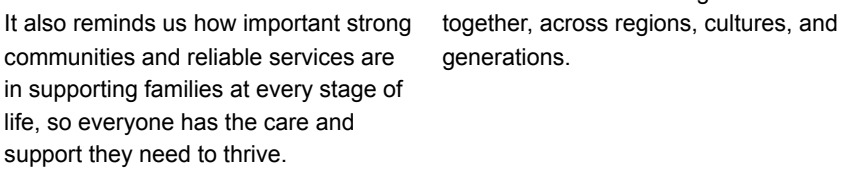
— Confucius

What Nurses Are Saying

Nurses are on the front lines of care every day, supporting you and your loved ones in some of life's biggest moments. So who better to speak to what's really happening in our health system?

As part of **Alberta Needs Care**, we asked nurses to share one thing about the joys, challenges, and realities of their work, and with their permission, we'll be sharing those voices with you each month.

Here's what nurses had to say this month.



What's Next?



Family Day is a chance to celebrate the people who show up for us, in the big and small, everyday moments.

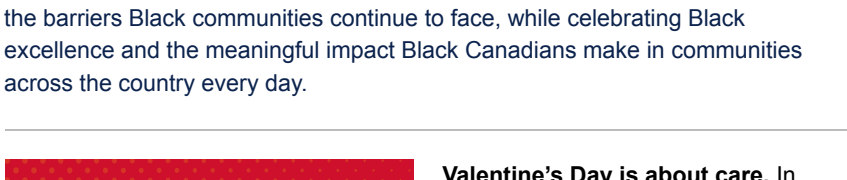
It's about sharing meals, checking in, helping out, and taking time to be together.

It also reminds us how important strong communities and reliable services are in supporting families at every stage of life, so everyone has the care and support they need to thrive.



Canada Flag Day commemorates the first time the red-and-white maple leaf was officially raised on February 15, 1965.

The flag is a symbol of unity, diversity, and shared values, and this day invites us to celebrate what brings Canadians together, across regions, cultures, and generations.

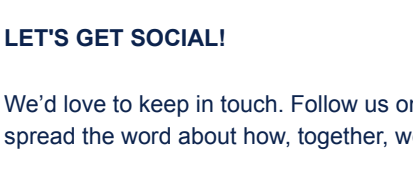


Black History Month

Black History Month is a time to recognize and celebrate the achievements, leadership, and lasting contributions of Black communities in Canada.

It's also an opportunity to learn more about the diverse histories and experiences that have helped shape our country.

As Canada marks 30 years of Black History Month, the month invites reflection on the barriers Black communities continue to face, while celebrating Black excellence and the meaningful impact Black Canadians make in communities across the country every day.



Valentine's Day is about care. In health care, care depends on capacity.

Without enough staff, space, and resources, even the best intentions fall short.

This Valentine's Day, we're highlighting a simple truth: **capacity is care**, and building a health care system that can meet demand is essential to ensuring people get the care they need, when they need it.

Happy Care Day!

Let's Connect

LET'S GET SOCIAL!

We'd love to keep in touch. Follow us on our social media platforms and help us spread the word about how, together, we can support Alberta's nurses.

MEMBERS CAN DOWNLOAD THE **UNA APP** [HERE](#).