



Letter to the Editor: in response to article titled: *Deputy premier off to England to view mobile medical service*, posted March 20, 2012, the Herald News.

Physician Assistants (PAs) are part of the solution to improving emergency care in rural Nova Scotia

The Deputy Premier, Frank Corbett is looking for a solution to the looming emergency health care crisis in New Waterford, Nova Scotia. According to the Deputy Premier, one of the proposed ways to increase access to care for Nova Scotians is to introduce mobile health care teams. PAs, along with other health professionals, should be included in this model and can actually enhance the level of care provided to patients who reside in remote communities. Other provinces, including Manitoba, Ontario and New Brunswick have incorporated PAs into their health care system and are realizing the benefits that can they provide.

PAs, like myself have a high level of medical training and can perform tasks similar to that of their supervising physician, essentially extending the physicians practice. PAs have a close and dependent relationship with physicians and function with negotiated autonomy. Physician supervision can be done onsite or remotely. This relationship would allow for a PA to work in settings such as the proposed mobile health care teams as well as in emergency room departments to extend the physicians services.

Perhaps now is the time to integrate PAs into our health care system. Patients would be the big winners, with increased access to care, reduced wait times and quality medical care.

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