



August 19, 2022

Shereef Elnahal, M.D.
Under Secretary for Health
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Dr. Elnahal:

On behalf of the [Nursing Community Coalition \(NCC\)](#), which includes [63 member organizations](#), we congratulate you on your confirmation as Under Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss shared goals. The NCC represents a cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the nursing profession and believes that the healthcare delivery system should be one that promotes wellness, advances research through scientific discovery, and provides timely access to care across the life continuum. We are proud to continue our work with the Department, especially as nurses, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs)¹, nursing students, and nurse leaders represent the largest segment of the healthcare workforce nationally and remain essential providers within the VA healthcare system.

As we have witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in health care settings across the country, nurses are the experts leading at the frontlines of the healthcare response. This is true within the VA as well. The VA's mission to serve our nation's veterans makes nurses and APRNs an integral link to all aspects of care, no matter if it is in remote rural areas or large urban cities. The NCC recognizes that, particularly during these unprecedented times, ensuring the health care of our veterans and patients across the country is crucial. This includes our support for initiatives that remove barriers to high-quality nursing care, such as making full practice authority for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) in the VA permanent.

The unique partnership the NCC has created allows our national nursing organizations to unite on shared priorities and promote America's health through the nursing lens. We stand ready to work with you to preserve critical advancements and support the health of our veterans who deserve nothing less. If the Nursing Community Coalition can be of any assistance to you or your staff, and to set up a meeting to discuss shared goals, please do

¹ APRNs include certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs), and nurse practitioners (NPs).

not hesitate to contact the coalition's Executive Director, Rachel Stevenson, at rstevenson@thenursingcommunity.org or at 202-463-6930, ext. 271.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
Academy of Neonatal Nursing
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Heart Failure Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
American Association of Post-Acute Care Nursing
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Nurses Association
American Nursing Informatics Association
American Organization for Nursing Leadership
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc.
American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association for Radiologic and Imaging Nursing
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association of Public Health Nurses
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Association of Forensic Nurses
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners

National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Nurses Association
National Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers
National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence
National League for Nursing
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Society of Pediatric Nurses
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society