



March 6, 2017

The Honorable David Shulkin, MD
Secretary
The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary Shulkin:

On behalf of the Nursing Community coalition, we look forward to working with you as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss shared goals. The Nursing Community includes 63 members that are the cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the profession. Our coalition members are proud to represent the largest segment of the healthcare workforce nationally and within the VA healthcare system. We stand ready to work with you and your staff to improve veterans' health by collaborating to support the education, practice, research, and regulation of Registered Nurses (RNs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs).

The VA's mission to serve our nation's veterans makes nurses an integral link to all aspects of care. Whether in remote rural areas or large urban cities, RNs and APRNs are proven, high-quality providers who lead and partner to ensure successful care continuity and transitions. Health care in our country continues to progress toward patient and family-centered models where providers and appropriate coordinated services develop an individualized care plan. Nurses are at the heart of this model. The holistic approach the profession brings to the care of our nation's veterans and their families is vital to meeting our shared goal of improving their health and wellness. This extends to the VA's most recent rule regarding the ability of APRNs to practice to the full extent of their education and clinical training. We can offer our expertise and the on the ground experience of our members as this rule is implemented.

The unique partnership the Nursing Community has created with our members allows our national nursing organizations to unite on shared agendas and to promote America's health through nursing care. With that said, we pledge to work with you as head of the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs to thoughtfully assess where change is needed and preserve critical advancements.

Again, the Nursing Community welcomes the opportunity to meet and discuss how to further support veterans' health. Please call on the [Nursing Community](#) to be a voice for the profession and our patients by contacting Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, at 202-463-6930 ext. 247 or SMiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu.