



August 30, 2018

The Honorable Robert Wilkie, JD, LLM
Secretary
The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie,

On behalf of the 44 undersigned organizations representing 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. 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 is to serve our nation's veterans. Nurses, as the largest component of the health workforce, are integral to this goal. 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 priority of improving their health and wellness.

The unique partnership the Nursing Community Coalition has created with our members allows us 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. This extends to the recent rule regarding APRNs practicing to the full extent of their education and clinical training. Currently, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse-midwives are included in this critical effort by the VA to expand access to health care. However, certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) were not included in the rule, inconsistently citing no current shortage for anesthesia care. We hope to work with the VA to change this decision as there are documented needs within VA facilities for care that can be provided by CRNAs. The Nursing Community Coalition welcomes the opportunity to offer expertise as this rule continues to be implemented.

Again, the Nursing Community Coalition welcomes the opportunity to meet and discuss how to further support veterans' health. Please call on the [Nursing Community Coalition](http://www.thenursingcommunity.org) to be a voice for the profession and our patients by contacting the coalition's Executive Director, Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, at 202-463-6930 or at smiyamoto@aacnnursing.org.

Sincerely,
Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses

Promoting America's Health Through Nursing Care

www.thenursingcommunity.org · 202-463-6930 ext. 272

American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordination
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Nurses Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association
American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators
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
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 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 Council of State Boards of Nursing
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
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Society of Pediatric Nurses
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society