



August 30, 2017

Elinore McCance-Katz, MD, PhD
Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Abuse
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Assistant Secretary McCance-Katz,

On behalf of the Nursing Community Coalition, we would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Abuse for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The Nursing Community Coalition includes 65 members that are the cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the nursing profession. We believe that the healthcare delivery system should be one that promotes wellness, advances research through scientific discovery, and provides timely access to care across the continuum.

We applaud the comments you made during your confirmation hearing noting the need work with all providers to help with addiction treatment. With over four million licensed Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), and nursing students, the profession stands ready to work with you and SAMHSA to create an integrated health care system. We look forward to working with you as you lead an agency vital to improving the care and support of those impacted by substance abuse and mental illness.

For years, our coalition has worked with agencies within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to ensure programs are implemented to support provider education and training with the goal of ultimately increasing access to affordable, high-quality care. We stand ready to help advance SAMHSA initiatives that aim to maximize the role of all providers in the healthcare team. Our organizations are committed to working with the Administration to combat the abuse and misuse of opioids that has become a national epidemic.

The unique partnership the Nursing Community Coalition has created with our members allows our national organizations to unite on shared agendas and to promote America's health through nursing care. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you directly and share our collective priorities. In the meantime, if the Nursing Community Coalition can be of any assistance please do not hesitate to contact the Coalition's Executive Director, Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto at smiyamoto@aacnnursing.org or at 202-463-6930, ext. 247.

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