



Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations

November 13, 2020

Dear Congressman Lawson,

As public health nurses, we were thrilled to see President-elect Biden's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and see that he has created a Coronavirus Task Force. However, on behalf of six organizations representing The Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations, we highlight our concern that a public health nurse is not part of the Coronavirus Task Force's leadership.

As the largest portion of the healthcare workforce, nurses are the providers offering the majority of care to COVID-19 patients and will be the professionals leading community efforts on vaccine distribution, extending access into underserved communities, communicating safety and efficacy information in terms the lay public can understand, and administering the vaccines, as well. Nurses are an integral part of the response to this pandemic and need to have representation on your Task Force.

The vital role of public health nursing at this time is undeniable. Throughout the pandemic, public health nurses have served on mobile strike teams investigating case-contacts, delivered education on self-isolation and quarantine through hotlines and home visits, and interpreted the rapidly shifting guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Several states have had public health nurses on the statewide leadership team working alongside their governors and disaster response teams, making decisions and managing the unfolding events of the pandemic. Public Health Nurses have valuable experience networking with and providing services to hard to reach populations in local communities. They are reliable and proven responders during community and infectious disease emergencies, providing safe, effective, and nondiscriminatory, trusted care to the communities in which they serve. As highlighted by the many critical roles currently being filled by public health nurses, having the expertise and perspectives of a Public Health Nurse at the Virus Task Force table will be crucial to ensuring a well-coordinated response that equitably reaches populations at greatest risk.

We have compiled a list of diverse public health nurse experts in vaccine and communicable disease prevention. Based on their expertise, qualifications, and excellence in professional nursing, we enthusiastically recommend the nurses listed below to the Virus Task Force.

Ifeyinwa V. Asiodu, PhD, RN, IBCLC

Assistant Professor

UCSF School of Nursing

Department of Family Health Care Nursing

Biographical Sketch: Dr. Asiodu has a demonstrated track record of impactful leadership in areas of public health lactation, reproductive justice, advocacy, and research. Her academic training and over 17 years of nursing experience, which includes in-patient critical care, perinatal home visiting, and public health administration, have prepared her to be an effective community-based participatory researcher, clinician, educator, and Maternal and Child Health advocate. This expertise uniquely positions Dr. Asiodu to make critical contributions to the new U.S. COVID-19 Taskforce. Dr. Asiodu is a national lactation expert and public health nurse scientist. She is the American Public Health Association (APHA) representative to the United States Breastfeeding Committee COVID-19 Infant and Young Child Feeding Constellation and serves on the leadership teams for the APHA Breastfeeding Forum and Public Health Nursing Section. In California, Dr. Asiodu serves on the Executive Committee of the California Maternity Quality Care Collaborative, is a member of the Advisory Board of the San Mateo County Black Infant Health Program, and is the immediate past Board Chair of the California Breastfeeding Coalition. Dr. Asiodu is also actively involved in local, state, and national breastfeeding, reproductive health, and public health organizations geared toward achieving birth and breastfeeding equity and justice, such as HealthConnect One and the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN). The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted maternity care practices and perinatal healthcare utilization, especially in communities of color. Dr. Asiodu is a member of the Reproductive Health Equity and Birth Justice Core of the **Pregnancy CoRonavIrus Outcomes RegIsTrY (PRIORITY)**, a nationwide study of pregnant or recently pregnant people who are either under investigation for Coronavirus infection (COVID-19) or have been confirmed to have COVID-19 at UCSF. She is also conducting critical infant feeding research in neonatal and community settings. In addition, Dr. Asiodu currently leads efforts to support marginalized Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Birth Workers and pregnant and postpartum people in the U.S. and U.S. territories most impacted by the pandemic through the COVID-19 Birth Worker Relief Fund. To date, the Relief Fund has raised over \$330,000 and provided over 140 one-time, small grants to BIPOC Birth Workers and BIPOC-led community-based organizations. Dr. Asiodu has dedicated her career to improving health inequities and disparities in BIPOC communities and would be a valuable asset to the U.S. COVID-19 Taskforce.

Camille Burnett, PHD, MPA, PHNA-BC, RN, BScN, DSW, FAAN

Cralle Day Endowed Professorship

Associate Professor, University of Kentucky, College of Nursing

University of Kentucky Office of the Provost, Strategic Advisor Community Engagement and Academic Partnerships

Biographical Sketch: Dr. Burnett is the Strategic Advisor in the Office of the Provost for Community Engagement and Academic Partnerships, an Associate Professor in the College of Nursing and the Cralle Day Endowed Professor in the Center for Research on Violence Against Women at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Burnett is a board-certified advanced practice public health nurse educator, administrator, scientist and expert. She has been selected for highly competitive and prestigious leadership appointments and affiliations at the University of Virginia Center for Health Policy, Nationally as an American Association of Colleges of Nursing Policy Think Tank Inaugural Appointee (1 of 11

selected Nationally), as the previous elected Vice-President of the Nursing Network on Violence Against Women International, as an International Council of Nurses Global Nurse Leader (1 of 30 selected worldwide in 2019) and most recently receiving the nursing professions' highest honor as a 2020 inducted Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing. Dr. Burnett is also the Chair of the Dean's Workgroup for Health Equity and Racial Justice at the University of Kentucky College of Nursing; Co-Director, Integrated Special Populations University of Kentucky Center for Clinical and Translational Science and is also a Research Affiliate of both the University of Kentucky Center for Health Equity Transformation and the Markey Cancer Center.

As a community-engaged scholar, Dr. Burnett critically examines facilitators of health equity by focusing on structures and policies that influence and shape the health of disparate populations. COVID-19 has illuminated the scourge of health disparities in its disproportionate effect on black and brown people. Equity informed approaches with an intentional focus on, and deployment of, community engaged strategies and partnerships, particularly for those communities and populations hardest hit by COVID-19 is paramount to the successful implementation of a national strategy. This requires a particular type of exposure, expertise and hands-on experience doing such work which Dr. Burnett, a leading nursing voice in this specialized space, has done, and that ideally positions her to serve on the Biden-Harris Transition COVID-19 Advisory Board.

Jason E. Farley, PhD, MPH, ANP-BC, FAAN, FAANP, AACRN

Professor | Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

PhD, DNP/PhD and Post-Doctoral Program Director

Adult Nurse Practitioner | Infectious Diseases, Johns Hopkins Medicine

Director | The REACH Initiative

Clinical Core Co-Director | JHU Center for AIDS Research (CFAR)

Biographical Sketch: Dr. Farley is a Professor of Nursing at The Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, an Infectious Disease-trained Nurse Epidemiologist, and a Nurse Practitioner in the Division of Infectious Diseases at The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. His research develops strategies to optimize care for persons with infectious diseases, including studies designed to keep patients engaged in care over long periods of illness. Presently, he serves on the frontline of the SARS-CoV-2 *response at both The Johns Hopkins Hospital* as well as the Baltimore City Health Department in helping to stand up community-based testing sites and improve infection control procedures. He is the lead investigator for a number of SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 studies in collaboration with the COVID-19 Vaccine Prevention Network (CoVPN) from NIH. He was selected as to serve in the College of Experts for the United Kingdom Research and Innovation on COVID-19 in low- and middle-income countries grant review. Recently, he received the COVID-19 Courage Award from the American Nurses Association in the category of Science. He is the immediate past chair of the Emerging Infectious Disease Expert Panel within the American Academy of Nursing. He is frequently called upon to speak on nursing and public issues in the media.

Shauna Miller, DNP, RN, PHN, CNE

Assistant Professor

School of Nursing- California State University, Fresno

Biographical Sketch: Dr. Shauna Miller, is an experienced Public Health Nurse; please consider my qualifications to serve along with other public health and science experts to develop a blueprint for fighting the coronavirus. Assistant Professor of Public Health Nursing, California State University, Fresno. This position requires the education of Registered Nurses in the Public Health discipline. This course

follows the guidelines supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, (AACN), and accreditation is through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Registered Nurse providing direct patient care in multiple areas of practice. As an expert in the field of trauma-emergency nursing, my practice as a Rotor-Wing Flight Nurse and Emergency-Trauma Nurse-led me to pursue the path to promotion of health and prevention of injury and disease. Doctoral Project and continued passion are providing exceptional nursing care for adults with autism. The health outcomes of vulnerable populations must be considered as unique and important especially during a pandemic. Registered Nurses are uniquely qualified by education, training, and experience to lead in this fight against the coronavirus. Please consider the value a Public Health Nurse would bring to this taskforce.

Susan Sullivan MS, RN-BC

Vaccine Preventable Disease Nurse Consultant
Communicable Disease Branch

Biographical Sketch: Susan Sullivan MS, RN-BC, has worked as a Public Health Nurse Expert for over 32 years to prevent and control communicable diseases. With experience in both Maryland and North Carolina, Susan's expertise ranges from surveillance and outbreak investigation to managing immunization and infection control programs. Susan's expertise includes designing and conducting Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) compliant emergency preparedness training and exercises. Susan is leading efforts to support North Carolina's mass immunization clinic planning. She is also assisting the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and the state's local health departments and healthcare providers to investigate vaccine-preventable disease cases, implement appropriate public health prevention and control measures, and the efficient and effective use of healthcare staff and other resources. Susan will bring real-world experience to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the efforts and outcomes of the critical work of the President Elect's Virus Task Force.

Sharon Vanairsdale, DNP, MS, APRN, ACNS-BC, NP-C, CEN, FAAN

Program Director for Serious Communicable Disease
Emory University School of Medicine

Biographical Sketch: Sharon Vanairsdale, DNP, APRN, ACNS-BC, NP-C, CEN, FAEN, FAAN is the Program Director for the Serious Communicable Diseases Unit at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, GA, the HHS Region 4 Ebola and Other Special Pathogen Treatment Center. As the Program Director, she manages unit readiness and hospital preparedness for patients with special pathogens and has been involved with the preparation and response to the COVID-19 pandemic at Emory Healthcare. Dr. Vanairsdale is also the Director of Education and Resources for the National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center (NETEC), a training program funded by HHS to prepare healthcare workers to safely and effectively manage patients with special pathogens. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Dr. Vanairsdale has led NETEC to develop and deploy education and resources related to COVID-19. She has collaborated with federal partners at CDC and ASPR to disseminate best practices related to patient care, conservation strategies for personal protective equipment, infection prevention and control measures, among others. Dr. Vanairsdale has frontline experience during this pandemic and would be an asset to the task force.

Tener Goodwin Veenema PhD MPH MS RN FAAN

Professor of Nursing and Public Health

Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Biographical Sketch: **Tener Goodwin Veenema, PhD, MPH, MS, RN, FAAN**, is Contributing Scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security and Professor of Nursing and Public Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. An internationally recognized expert in disaster nursing and public health emergency preparedness, she has served as senior scientist to multiple federal agencies. An accomplished researcher, Dr. Veenema has sustained career funding over 2.2 million dollars, is a member of the Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness at the National Academy of Medicine, and is an elected Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing, National Academies of Practice, and Royal College of Surgeons, Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery, Dublin, Ireland. Dr. Veenema was awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal of Honor (International Red Crescent, 2013) the highest international award in Nursing. She received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award (2017), was selected Visiting Research Scholar to Torrens Disaster Institute (Australia, 2017) and NYU (2018,) and received a lifetime achievement award from Columbia University School of Nursing (2019). Dr. Veenema served as the National Academy of Medicine 2018 Distinguished Nurse Scholar-in-Residence.

Public Health Nurses in communities across the country look forward to working with you on the pandemic response. Please let us know if you need further information.

Sincerely,



Lisa A. Campbell, DNP, RN, PHNA-BC
Chairperson CPHNO



Zenobia Harris, DNP, RN, MPH, CPH
Vice-Chairperson CPHNO