



Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations

David Blumenthal, MD, M.P.P.
President, The Commonwealth Fund
1 East 75th Street
New York, New York 10021

July 28, 2022

Dear Dr. Blumenthal,

As the Chair of the [Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations \(CPHNO\)](#), representing public health nurses across the nation, I am writing to express our concern about the inequitable representation of public health professionals on *The Commonwealth Fund Commission on a National Public Health System* and urge you to advance a multidisciplinary approach now and in the future. The Commission's chair and 8 commissioners are all physicians supported by a physician-centric project team.

As you know, public health nurses (PHNs) are the largest segment of the public health workforce, and as such are anchored in communities across the United States. PHN leaders act as the chief health strategists working upstream on social determinants of health (SDoH) employing a systems approach. PHNs engage community stakeholders across sectors to form partnerships, foster shared funding, resources, services, governance, and collective action.

In collaboration with community members and other professions across settings, PHNs use timely actionable data to develop core metrics for SDOH, build core infrastructure, and transform and strengthen health departments. [Kett et al \(2022\)](#) found the presence of a lead executive of a health department with a nursing degree "is associated with improved community health outcomes" (p.570). Using a [Public Health 3.0](#) lens and building a repertoire of grant funding strategies, we are re-envisioning the role and functions of PHNs with embedded time in community engagement, incubating vital partnerships to create health, equity, and resilience in communities. Likewise, we advocate for these strategies to transform the role and functions of fellow public health professionals, such as epidemiologists, sanitarians, and educators. It is through interprofessional collaboration and community

engagement that together, we can best achieve *better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including people living on a low income, the uninsured, and Black indigenous people of color.*

To ensure an equitable process, CPHNO is calling on not only The Commonwealth Fund, but all philanthropic organizations who engage in this work to develop self-monitoring guidelines or common standards for representation and stakeholder engagement to advance equity in community and professional representation, to champion expert voices from diverse sectors, and to achieve outcomes that will improve the public's health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa A. Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa A. Campbell, DNP, RN, PHNA-BC, CDP, FAAN
Chair, CPHNO
chair@cphno.org
lisa.a.campbell@ttuhsc.edu
361.550.4580