

## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Nursing Science Under Threat: Urgent Call to Action from Professional Organizations For Nurses of Color

**Alexandria, VA-April 16, 2025:** The professional organizations representing nurses of color stand in firm solidarity with the American Nurses Association (ANA), American Academy of Nursing (AAN) and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) regarding the extensive restructuring at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), including the removal of National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) Director, Dr. Shannon Zenk.

We urgently call for the preservation of nursing science amid this unprecedented reorganization of our federal research infrastructure. The reduction of 20,000 positions across federal health agencies, including essential scientific and support staff at NINR, presents an immediate threat to the continuity of vital research initiatives that improve health outcomes for all Americans.

Nursing science is the science of patient-focused care and aimed at restoring and promoting health and well-being in communities across our nation. As one of the keys to improving health outcomes for all Americans, nursing research develops evidence-based interventions and care models that address complex health challenges and enhance the quality of patient care in all healthcare settings.

Nursing has consistently remained the most trusted profession in the US for the past 23 years. For decades, nurse scientists have been instrumental throughout NIH, advancing evidence-based interventions, treatments, and models that directly impact how care is provided at the bedside, in communities, and at home. This work has been particularly vital for historically underserved populations who have benefited from nursing research focused on addressing health inequities and improving access to equitable quality care. Without nursing science, there will be lack of knowledge and research to make informed policy decisions, through which health policy development risks being incomplete and disconnected from patient realities.

The scientific contributions of nurse researchers are essential to developing interventions that effectively serve our nation. The current restructuring impedes progress and pathways for scientists who reflect the communities they serve from trainees to senior investigators whose expertise is crucial to addressing complex health challenges across diverse populations.

We strongly urge HHS and NIH leadership to:

1. Immediately consult with nursing organizations, scientists, and community stakeholders before implementing further changes
2. Preserve dedicated and adequate funding and infrastructure for nursing research through NINR as a stand alone NIH institute with nursing leadership
3. Ensure continuity of critical studies that address our nation's most pressing health needs for all people
4. Maintain pathways to support and advance nurse scientists at all career stages
5. Commit to transparency regarding the rationale for restructuring decisions and their anticipated impact on nursing science

Our organizations remain ready to contribute our expertise and collaborate with federal agencies to strengthen rather than diminish the nursing research enterprise. The health of our communities depends on robust, well-funded nursing science that builds the evidence base for equitable, effective healthcare delivery.

We call upon Congress to exercise its oversight authority to ensure that nursing research receives the protection and investment it deserves. Our coalition pledges to actively advocate for maintaining NINR's scientific capacity and leadership during this critical time.

The science of care must not be compromised. We stand united in our commitment to preserving nursing's scientific contributions to the health and well-being of our nation.

This statement reflects the unified voice of Racial and Ethnic Diverse Nursing organizations across the United States, including:

- Academy of Diversity Leaders in Nursing
- Association of Black Nursing Faculty
- Black Nurse Collaborative
- Black Nurses Week
- Black PhD Nurse Scientists
- DLJames Consulting
- Diversity in Nurse Anesthesia Mentorship Program
- DNPs of Color
- Ghanaian-Diaspora Nursing Alliance
- National Alaska Native American Indian Nurses Association
- National Association of Hispanic Nurses
- National Black Nurses Association
- Network of Black Male Nurse Leaders
- Philippine Nurses Association of America
- Society of Latinx Nurses
- The Society of Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners of Color

