



National Black Nurses Association, Inc.

Debra A. Toney, PhD, RN
President
Las Vegas, Nevada

Millicent Gorham, MBA
Executive Director

National Black Nurses Association Health Reform: Guiding Principles

The National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) is committed to improving the quality of life of persons of African American heritage and the public in general. NBNA is dedicated to the grassroots approach in advocating for health reform legislation and actions that will eliminate health disparities. NBNA feels strongly that social determinants of health must be researched and incorporated as a fundamental requirement in health reform.

The four guiding principles required to address health reform focus on access, cost, quality and workforce.

Access

- Health care is a fundamental human right. Ensure that all Americans have access to high quality, affordable health coverage to prevent disease and to appropriately manage chronic illness. Access to health care should be guaranteed to all Americans when they need it. Significant steps should be taken toward reducing the number of American families without health care coverage.
- Equitable benefits must include preventive services, treatment and follow-up services that are culturally and linguistic appropriate for physical and mental health care.
- Governmental protections have to include but not be limited to eliminating environmental hazards, incorporating nutritional resources and physical fitness.
- Active community based health programs must be integrated and supported to assist with ensuring accessibility.
- Innovative strategies such as drive through services for flu shots; patient navigators for chronic diseases; and, tele-programs for health services should be considered.
- Health care coverage should be guaranteed for older women who lose their insurance when their husbands retire.
- Access to health information technology to improve coordination of care, treatment and health outcomes.

NBNA

8630 Fenton Street, Suite 330
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Phone: 301-589-3200 • Fax: 301-589-3223 • E-mail: NBNA@erols.com
www.NBNA.org

Cost

- It must be affordable and resources have to be available to ensure there is one tier of quality of care allowing for free choice of providers.
- Incentives like pay for performance will need monitoring.
- Establishing transparent financial incentives for institutions integrating information with quality outcomes have to be developed and easily accessed by all.
- Increased funding must be available for community based organizations that focus on preventive care, health services, research and legal services relating to health care.
- Increased funding for community and migrant health centers should include funding for the education and training of a diverse workforce.
- Barriers to health that limit choice need to be minimized such as deductibles, co-pays, and services offered only from 9-5.

Quality

- Quality must integrate the six principles of care recommended by the Institute of Medicine; client –centered, safe, effective, timely, efficient and equitable.
- Input from the community and appropriate stakeholders to develop health reform processes have to be considered.
- The requirement of reporting of information should be culturally sensitive, linguistic appropriate and based on health literacy.
- There must be an increase in funding for research for chronic disease and biomedical research in the African American community by African American providers and with African American patients.
- Implement applications and technology to improve quality of care and health outcomes.
- Data collection has to be based on demographics, race, ethnicity, age and gender and other socioeconomic factors, to guarantee quality assurance and improved health performance. Collection should include satisfaction, access, cost, chronic care management and outcome.

Workforce

- Full funding of Title VIII, Nurse Education and Training Programs.
- Increased funding for biomedical, qualitative and quantitative research through all NIH institutes to create an improved diverse workforce.
- Expand funding including loan repayment, grants for all health care professionals including those with advanced degrees.
- Funding for resources to elevate nurses to the next degree level i.e. Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses to Registered Nurses and Registered Nurses to baccalaureate prepared nurses (BSN) to Advanced Practice Nurses (APN). This funding would incorporate resources to backfill nurses from the bedside while in class receiving their advanced degree and assist in restoring the advanced nursing programs. NBNA feels strongly the role of the APN in health reform is monumental in various capacities.
- Expand workforce diversity and invest in health care institutions for education and training and employment, i.e. urban and rural hospitals, community health centers, managed care organizations, retail clinics and Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Hold the Department of Education accountable making certain math, science and English are fundamental principles learned in early years serving as the foundation for nursing, health care professions, science and research.