



April 2, 2020

The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Room 509F
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Special Open Enrollment Period for Federal Health Insurance Exchange

Secretary Azar,

The American Nurses Association (ANA) is writing to urge you to open a special enrollment period for the federal health insurance exchange during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that this coverage option is open to Americans who otherwise do not have access to health insurance coverage. ANA's [Principles of Health System Transformation](#) state that the U.S. healthcare system must ensure universal access to a standard package of essential health care services for all citizens and residents; this is especially true during this public health emergency.

While ANA applauds the administration for taking extraordinary regulatory actions to ensure that all Americans have access to testing and care for COVID-19, this current crisis underscores the dire need for coverage and access to care for all Americans. No American citizen should have to decide to forego testing or care because of a financial hardship; this is especially true in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, while the nation is focused on COVID-19, other critical healthcare needs, including acute and chronic conditions and other infectious diseases, have not disappeared. While we understand that Americans who have become unemployed and lost their employer-sponsored insurance as a result of this pandemic are able to enroll through individual special enrollment periods, this still leaves tens of millions of previously uninsured Americans vulnerable. All American citizens should be able to access affordable healthcare services for any need, including COVID-19 and any associated comorbidities.

ANA looks forward to engaging the administration on the critical issue of universal access to healthcare for all Americans. ANA also extends the opportunity for HHS to reach out to the organization as a resource during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide information and nursing

related content. For further discussion, please contact Brooke Trainum, Assistant Director, Policy and Regulatory Advocacy, at (301) 628-5027 or brooke.trainum@ana.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ingrida Lusi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "I".

Ingrida Lusi
Vice-President, Policy & Government Affairs

cc: Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN, ANA President
Debbie Hatmaker, PhD, RN, FAAN, Acting ANA Chief Executive Officer