

Statement for the Record
American Nurses Association
Ensuring Equity in Coronavirus Vaccinations
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis
February 19, 2021

The American Nurses Association (ANA), representing the interests of the nation's 4.2 million registered nurses, commends the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis for convening this briefing on Ensuring Equity in Coronavirus Vaccinations, and appreciates the opportunity to submit this statement for the record.

ANA is committed to advancing the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting a safe and ethical work environment, bolstering the health and wellness of nurses, and advocating on health care issues that affect nurses and the public. ANA is at the forefront of improving the quality of health care for all.

Ensuring the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines is vital to ending the pandemic. We also know that building public confidence in vaccines now and in the future is critical to success particularly for communities of color. According to a recent Kaiser Family Foundation study of early data from states collecting racial and ethnic demographic data, there is a disconnect between those who have received vaccinations and the at risk groups likely to suffer the worst effects of COVID, i.e., communities of color. The Kaiser report found that to date, vaccination patterns by race and ethnicity appear to be at odds with who the virus has affected the most¹. Unfortunately, this data is not yet being collected by a majority of states. It will be necessary for states and localities to provide a clearer picture to inform efforts to mitigate the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color. Further, data is critical to understanding racial equity concerns in vaccination distribution plans and identifying any disparities that can be addressed through policies, changes in strategy, and education.

ANA calls for a concerted and deliberate effort to provide communities of color ongoing information and facts about COVID-19 vaccines and immunization. Communities of color must have timely access to credible information about authorized COVID-19 vaccines and how to get vaccinated against the virus. Nurses are innate problem solvers and proven innovators. ANA calls for nurses to have a seat at the table to help investigate, identify, and solve problems related to the rollout and equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Nurses have an in-depth firsthand knowledge of our health care system and the communities we serve, which is essential to combatting COVID-19 on the frontlines. In addition, ANA is proud of our national President Ernest J. Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN, for participating in a COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial and leading by example for both nurses and communities of color.

Thank you for giving nurses the opportunity to provide input on the importance of equity in COVID-19 vaccination efforts. ANA stands ready to work with the Select Subcommittee on the

¹ <https://www.kff.org/policy-watch/early-state-vaccination-data-raise-warning-flags-racial-equity/>

Coronavirus Crisis to find and implement sustainable solutions regarding this important issue. If you have any questions, please contact Ingrida Lusi, Vice President of Policy and Government Affairs, at (301) 628-5081 or Ingrid.Lusi@ana.org