



September 27, 2017

Vanila M. Singh, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 715-G
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Singh,

The [National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care](#) (the Coalition) appreciates the opportunity to support and endorse the nominations of four experts from the palliative care and hospice community to the Department of Health and Human Service's Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force (Task Force). It is essential that the Task Force include health care practitioners knowledgeable about the need to provide safe and effective pain management to all persons living with serious, painful, chronic and disabling illnesses. These four nominees are recognized experts in the field of hospice and palliative medicine and nursing and strive to improve pain relief by achieving a balanced approach to pain management.

The Coalition is composed of the nine leading national hospice and palliative care organizations dedicated to advancing care of patients, families and caregivers living with serious illness, as well as those facing the end of life. The organizations that form the Coalition represent nearly 5,500 physicians and physician assistants, 11,000 nurses, 5,000 professional chaplains, more than 5,000 social workers, researchers, 1,600 palliative care programs, and over 5,300 hospice programs and related personnel, caring for millions of patients and families. Our combined membership represents the interdisciplinary hospice and palliative care team which is person- and caregiver-centered. Many of the individuals within our Coalition membership care for the nation's sickest and most vulnerable patients, including those at the end of life, and a central element of providing high-quality palliative care is timely and effective management of pain and other distressing symptoms.

Our Coalition strongly endorses the following four nominations to the Department of Health and Human Service's Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force. This Task Force is poised to provide expert advice and recommendations for the development of best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication and will be focusing on developing strategies for disseminating best practices to the appropriate Federal agencies, prescribers and the public. These four nominees will be a great asset to the important work of this Task Force and will be able to assist with implementation of the Task Force's recommendations. All four of these individuals have been directly nominated by a primary organization.

- **Kathleen Broglio DNP, ANP-BC, ACHPN, CPE, FPCN (Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association)**
- **Jim Cleary, MD, FACHPM (American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine)**
- **Sean Morrison, MD (American Cancer Society-Cancer Action Network)**
- **Cynthia Stafford MSN, APRN, ACHPN (Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association)**

The Coalition strongly recommends that the Task Force have representatives with specific expertise and familiarity with the pain care needs of those needing palliative care in multiple settings. Interdisciplinary pain assessment and management is a key component of both hospice and palliative care. The goal of palliative care in any setting is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family. One of the most debilitating and frequent symptoms palliative care specialists help patients address is pain. Patients with a myriad of serious illnesses often have painful symptoms, and pain can also be a side effect from a variety of treatments. Reducing pain through multiple modalities is a key tenet of palliative care. Our Coalition strongly encourages HHS ensure a variety of experts from disciplines such as hospice and palliative care be represented on this important Task Force focused on communicating pain management best practices to the nation's prescribers and other health related care personnel.

Thank you for your consideration of these Coalition endorsed nominees to the Interagency Pain Management Task Force. If you have any questions about these endorsed nominees or if any of our Members can assist in the work of the Task Force, please contact me at amym@nationalcoalitionhpc.org or 202.306.3590.

Sincerely,



Amy Melnick, MPA
Executive Director
National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care

Members of the Coalition

- [American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine](#) (AAHPM)
- [Association for Professional Chaplains](#) (APC)
- [Center to Advance Palliative Care](#) (CAPC)
- [Health Care Chaplaincy Network](#) (HCCN)
- [Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association](#) (HPNA)
- [National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization](#) (NHPCO)
- [National Palliative Care Research Center](#) (NPCRC)
- [Physician's Assistants in Hospice and Palliative Medicine](#) (PAHPM)
- [Social Work Hospice and Palliative Care Network](#) (SWHPN)