



National Black Nurses Association, Inc.
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 910, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (301) 589-3200 • Fax: (301) 589-3223

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**National Black Nurses Association Announces
End of Life Care Resolution**

SILVER SPRING, MD, August 1, 2017, The National Black Nurses Association announces the passage of its resolution “End of Life Care: Transitioning Patients with Dignity and Family” at the Opening Ceremony of its 45th Annual Institute and Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. “In collaboration with VITAS Healthcare, a corporate roundtable member and corporate sponsor of the conference, NBNA is pleased to continue to partner to provide end of life education to our membership”, stated Dr. Eric J. Williams, NBNA President. “For 10 years, VITAS as offered state of the art education to over 1000 NBNA members; helping the nurses to give better support to patients, family members and care givers”.

“This resolution is but one way to recognize that NBNA and VITAS Healthcare are walking hand-in-hand to help patients transition with support and dignity during their final hours”, stated Joni Lovelace, Chair, NBNA Resolutions Committee.

VITAS Healthcare is providing 28 hours of continuing education during the NBNA annual conference, July 31-August 4, 2017. The theme of the Conference is “Nursing Innovations: Building a Culture of Health”. The Opening Ceremony is open to the public on Tuesday, August 1, 6 p.m., Mandalay Bay Conference Center.

The NBNA mission is “to serve as the voice for black nurses and diverse populations ensuring equal access to professional development, promoting educational opportunities and improving health”.

National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) Resolution

Title: End-of-Life Care: Transitioning Patients with Dignity and Family Support

Whereas, dying is a natural physical process and spiritual phenomenon with different cultural connotation.

Whereas, death and dying is uniquely different for each individual and family.

Whereas, patients desire to transition life with dignity, respect and family support.

Whereas, death may be sudden or gradual.

Whereas, symptom, pain and stress management are important and needed across the life span.

Whereas, palliative care is a medical specialty that focuses on relieving the burden of advanced and life-threatening illnesses by providing compassionate and supportive caring interventions and not curative medicine. During a stage of their treatment plan, palliative care patients can receive aggressive disease management from an interdisciplinary team.

Whereas, hospice care is a health service that provides supportive assistance to patients in their final phase of terminal illness and/or advanced age of life to provide comfort, support and improved quality of life. Hospice focus is also caring during the active stage of dying.

Whereas, the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization reported in 2015 that 1.7 million patients received hospice services, and the need for this service will continue to increase.

However, there is a large number of patients that are seriously or terminally ill that are not receiving palliative or hospice services. The numbers for patients of color that are going without these services are devastatingly high. Of the 1.7 million patients being served, less than 10% of them are African Americans, less than 8% are Hispanics and less than 4% are Asians, even though patients of color carry an equal or higher incidence of having chronic and terminal illnesses that are appropriate for palliative/hospice referrals.

Whereas, palliative and hospice care includes physical, emotional, social and spiritual support for both the patient and caregiver/family.

Whereas, all patient population has the right to live comfortably, transition with support, and moreover, die gracefully without pain and suffering.

Whereas, VITAS Healthcare and NBNA have collaborated as corporate partners for 14 years and have provided End-of- Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) training for 10 of these years across the Country reaching hundreds of nurses per year. VITAS Healthcare has provided ELNEC training to 1,000 NBNA members. In addition,

VITAS Healthcare is providing a much-needed healing service to many communities in 40 states by sponsoring "Missing our Mothers" and "Missing our Dads" events; now

1. **Therefore, Be It Resolved:** The National Black Nurses Association, Inc (NBNA) believes that all patients are entitled to appropriate culturally sensitive end-of-life care options.
2. **Therefore, Be It Resolved:** The NBNA supports the need for end-of-life education in all programs and health professional schools, nursing curricula.
3. **Therefore, Be It Resolved:** The NBNA supports End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) training for all nurses.
4. **Therefore, Be It Further Resolved,** that NBNA supports global palliative and hospice care funding as part of national and international health care plans for providers and systems, including funding for education and research.

References:

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Dunn, H. (2016). Hard Choices for Loving People. Quality of Life Publishing Company, Naples, FL.

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (2015) annual report, retrieved Jun 6/3016 at:
http://www.nhpc.org/sites/default/files/public/Statistics_Research/2015_Facts_Figures.pdf