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April 12, 2021

Annette Flanagin, RN, MA,
JAMA and the JAMA Network
330 N Wabash Ave
Chicago, IL 60611

Dear Ms. Flanagin:

I am writing on behalf of the National Health Council (NHC) to commend your publication of "*The Reporting of Race and Ethnicity in Medical and Science Journals.*" Scientific journals have an essential role in advancing health equity. As the preeminent medical journal, JAMA's publication of these guidelines is a significant milestone toward achieving health equity.

Created by and for patient organizations 100 years ago, the NHC brings diverse organizations together to forge consensus and drive patient-centered health policy. We promote increased access to affordable, high-value, sustainable health care. Made up of more than 140 national health-related organizations and businesses, the NHC's core membership includes the nation's leading patient organizations. Other members include health-related associations and nonprofit organizations including the provider, research, and family caregiver communities; and businesses representing biopharmaceutical, device, diagnostic, generic drug, and payer organizations.

The new guidelines for how we speak about and present information on diverse populations will help ensure that scientific knowledge in the JAMA Network will help drive consistency in and consideration of diverse populations in scientific reporting. As the language we use to describe diversity and drive inclusion has evolved, the JAMA Network's action is an example of keen foresight and thought leadership.

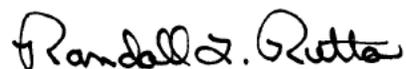
We support this step, encourage you to periodically update the guidelines as language continues to evolve, and hope to work with you closely to continue to drive health equity.

While the style guide is a significant first step, we would also like to see guidance that requires all JAMA Network submissions report the study population's demographic make-up so that disparities can be considered and identified consistently. Language consistency will make positive strides in identifying equity issues, but we also need to ensure that all studies and reports capture the research population's make-up. In addition, data and tracking on the demographics of those researchers submitting as well as reviewers in the JAMA Network will help drive greater equity by promoting transparency about the researchers and review team.

Finally, we strongly support JAMA Network's leadership in partnering with other scientific journals to create consistent standards that require consistent language and data on diversity across the board. A meaningful first step would be to work with the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) to develop standard recommendations about language usage and data reporting related to diversity.

Again, we thank you for your leadership on health equity and look forward to working with you on this and other initiatives. Please do not hesitate to contact Elisabeth M. Oehrlein, Ph.D., MS., Assistant Vice President, Research & Programs, if you or your staff would like to discuss these issues in greater detail. She is reachable via e-mail at eoehrlein@nhcouncil.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randall L. Rutta". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Randall L. Rutta
Chief Executive Officer