



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

1090 Vermont Ave, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20006-4949 ph (202) 414-0140 | (800) 962-9008 | www.osteopathic.org

February 15, 2017

The Honorable David Shulkin, MD
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC. 20420

Dear Secretary Shulkin:

On behalf of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the nearly 130,000 osteopathic physicians and osteopathic medical students we represent nationwide, congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). We believe that your proven record as an advocate for our nation's veterans, your personal experience as a physician, and your deep understanding of the interactions between the Administration and Congress make you well-qualified to lead the VA. Your confirmation provides essential continuity as the department carries out its efforts to improve the delivery and coordination of care, not only within the VA, but within a growing network of physician partners in the community who provide care to veterans.

As you know, osteopathic physicians are trained in and practice a whole-person approach to care that takes into account mind, body, and spirit – an approach that we believe aligns naturally with how the VA views the unique health care needs of veterans. Many osteopathic physicians are veterans, and many have trained in the VA or have cared for large veteran populations. As such, osteopathic physicians are well positioned and eager to help the VA address the health needs of those who have served our country.

The AOA is deeply grateful for the opportunity to have worked with you and your staff in your previous role as Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Health. Through a coalition of physician partners organized by the AOA, we have opened a regular productive dialogue with your department that allows us to share ideas, present information, and collaborate with the VA more effectively, as well as carry the VA's messages to physicians in the community through our membership channels. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your team in your new capacity to ensure that the men and women who have so bravely served our nation have access to the care they need and have earned.

Again, congratulations on your confirmation. As you address the significant challenges ahead, whether improving access to timely care within the VA or expanding partnerships with physicians in the community, please do not hesitate to call upon the AOA or our members for assistance.

Sincerely,

Boyd R. Buser, DO,
President