



779 7065

April 26, 2017

David J. Shulkin, MD
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

RE: Suzanne Klinker

Dear Dr. Shulkin,

I whole heartily endorse Mrs. Suzanne Klinker, director of Bay Pines VA Healthcare System (Bay Pines VA), as a candidate for your planned Internal Field Advisory Committee. USF Health enjoys an innovative and creative academic affiliation with Bay Pines VA, and under Mrs. Klinker's leadership over the last five years we have advanced our health education programs, partnered to enhance clinical care for our veterans, and expanded our collaborative research mission.

Both USF Health and Bay Pines VA share the desire to ensure veterans receive timely, cost-effective medical care of the highest quality. We have a longstanding history of collaborating to provide health care specialty needs. Mrs. Klinker appreciates this history and worked with us to review our affiliation agreements and to create opportunities that would enable USF's academic health center to be a partner of choice. For veterans whose special needs cannot be met directly at Bay Pines VA, we have developed special programs to facilitate care in ophthalmology, neurology and psychiatry. Mrs. Klinker was instrumental in achieving these goals.

More than 600 USF Health students per year across GME, medical, nursing, pharmacy, public health, and physical therapy programs rotate through Bay Pines VA. During her tenure, Mrs. Klinker has been dedicated to shared strategic planning for education programs. She opened innovative learning programs in LEAN management to our health care learners, which resulted in our housestaff, medical students and nursing students earning numerous yellow and green belt certificates. She partnered with us to increase experiences for our nursing and pharmacy students. Mrs. Klinker also helped enhance our PhD program in Nursing by ensuring Bay Pines VA faculty could work with the doctoral students to complete the requisites for their doctoral degrees. We are now working together to establish an ACGME clinical informatics fellowship.

Mrs. Klinker explored the combined unique strengths of the VA and USF Health and helped find ways we could partner to capitalize upon new research opportunities in ALS, post-traumatic stress disorder and cardiovascular health. This has led to several grant applications now under review. This collaboration will no doubt bring new insight for enhancing veteran care. We also regularly partner to recruit both new and established scientists for shared research opportunities.

1 | page

In all these education, clinical care and research endeavors, Mrs. Klinker has proven to be an extraordinary partner in advancing our shared goal of optimal veteran care. Therefore, it is with immense pleasure that I support her nomination to be a member of your planned committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Lockwood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Charles Lockwood, MD, MHCM
Senior Vice President, USF Health
Dean, USF Health Morsani College of Medicine
Professor, Obstetrics & Gynecology and Public Health
University of South Florida