



April 3, 2024

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

RE: FY 2025 LHHS Funding and Report Language Request to Support Palliative Care Research

Dear Chairs Baldwin and Aderholt and Ranking Members Capito and DeLauro:

The undersigned member organizations of the Patient Quality of Life Coalition (PQLC) write to thank you for including \$12.5 million for the National Institute of Aging (NIA) to implement a trans-Institute, multi-disease strategy to focus, expand, and intensify a national research program in palliative care. Your ongoing bipartisan, bicameral, and steadfast leadership has been instrumental in realizing this step to strengthen the commitment to support patients facing serious illness and their families. PQLC is a group of over 40 organizations dedicated to advancing the interests of patients and families facing serious illness, with the overarching goal of providing patients with serious illness greater access to palliative care services. Our members represent patients and their caregivers, health professionals, and health care systems.

As you begin work on the FY 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor/HHS) bill, we request \$12.5 million to support the newly announced consortium for palliative care research across the lifespan. Such funding will advance research, foster development of early and mid-stage researchers, and engage various healthcare systems and community partners.

FUNDING REQUEST

On behalf of our nationwide network of advocates, PQLC urges you to continue to support access to quality palliative care and appropriate, effective pain management by prioritizing palliative care research at the NIH/NIA.

We urge the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor/HHS to provide \$12.5 million in FY 2025 funding to NIA for the trans-Institute, multi-disease Consortium for Palliative Care Research Across the Lifespan.

REPORT LANGUAGE REQUEST

Building on current efforts of NIH/NIA to establish the Consortium for Palliative Care Research Across the Lifespan, we offer the language below for your consideration as part of the report to accompany the FY 2025 LHHS appropriations:

***Palliative Care Research.**—The Committee provides \$12,500,000 for NIA to coordinate the work of the Consortium for Palliative Care Research Across the Lifespan, including developing early and mid-stage researchers, and engaging various healthcare systems, providers, and community partners. The Committee recognizes that palliative care is a critical area of research and informs supportive care for patients of all ages with serious illness and their families focused on relief of symptoms and suffering, communication of prognosis and treatment options in the context of patient goals, and coordination of care within and across healthcare settings.*

BACKGROUND

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses. It focuses on providing patients with relief from the symptoms and stress of a serious illness. Palliative care is appropriate at any age and any stage in a serious illness (ideally made available to patients with serious illnesses upon diagnosis) and can be provided along with curative treatment. By focusing on priorities that matter most to patients and their families, palliative care has been shown to improve both quality of care and quality of life during and after treatment. Furthermore, palliative care reduces hospital utilization and results in overall cost savings. Yet, despite the demonstrated benefits of palliative care, there remain millions of Americans who are unable to access such services.

This requested FY 2025 appropriations funding would continue the valuable work started by the Appropriations Committee's FY 2024 palliative care funding. Continued funding in FY 2025 will allow NIH to continue the five-year plan set out in the NOFO to develop a specialized center called the "Consortium." The aim of the Consortium will be to provide resources, expertise, and coordination to advance innovative, high-quality research on palliative care for those living with serious illnesses across the lifespan. This research infrastructure will encompass Alzheimer's disease (AD) and AD-related dementias (ADRD), cancer, and other serious illnesses and populations relevant to the partnering ICOs.

We greatly appreciate your leadership and previous support of advancing palliative care research.

Our organizations welcome the opportunity to discuss our requested funding and report language with you. If you have any questions, please contact Daniel E. Smith, acting chair of PQLC at dan.smith@advocacysmiths.com.

Sincerely,

Alzheimer's Association
Alzheimer's Impact Movement
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American Heart Association
Association for Clinical Oncology
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
Cancer Support Community
Catholic Health Association of the United States
Center to Advance Palliative Care
Children's National Hospital
Coalition for Compassionate Care of California
The CSU Shiley Haynes Institute for Palliative Care
Fire & Water Consulting
GO2 for Lung Cancer
Hospice Action Network
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Motion Picture & Television Fund
Mount Sinai Health System
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
National Palliative Care Research Center
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Oncology Nursing Society
Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition
Physician Associates in Hospice and Palliative Medicine
St. Baldrick's Foundation
Trinity Health