**TOPIC: Raising Awareness to Mental Health within Black Communities related**

**to the Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19**

**SUBMITTED BY: New Jersey Nursing Students Inc., Trenton, NJ**

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WHEREAS, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected black communities and revealed racial disparities in access to mental health and treatment services (Chatters et al., 2020; Ibrahimi, 2020); and

WHEREAS, African Americans are experiencing trauma and mental health issues due to socio-economic pressures and disparities in health care and ongoing difficulties accessing health care services (Fortuna et al., 2020); and

WHEREAS, communities of color disproportionally make up essential workers and structural inequities and social determinants of health are influenced by implicit bias and racial discrimination (Ibrahimi et al., 2020); and

WHEREAS, outcomes in society based on race affect communities of color, resulting in unmet need for mental health support (Alang, 2019); and

WHEREAS, the effect of racism and racial trauma on mental health in communities of color exacerbate both mental health status and create distrust between community members and health providers (Sneed et al., 2020); and

WHEREAS, Racial bias in treatment blocks access to healthful lifestyles and appropriate health care among consistently marginalized groups — particularly people of color (Burkett et al., 2017); and

WHEREAS, the inequality and lack of cultural competence and responsiveness in mental health

treatment impact the provision of mental health services in the Black community (Thompkins et al., 2020); and

WHEREAS, the major stigma in the black community related to mental health issues and around therapy to preserve strength causes delay in mental health treatment (Thompkins et al., 2020); and

WHEREAS, marginalized groups in challenged communities face struggles to access mental health care and resources to be diagnosed correctly and find therapists who can relate on a cultural and personal aspect (Thompkins et al., 2020); and

WHEREAS, racial discrimination is pervasive and persistent,

can result in toxic stress and trauma, negatively impact mental health and lead to mental health disparities (Burkett, 2017); therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the National Student Nurses’ Association (NSNA) encourage its constituents to expand funding for community mental health programs that serve underserved communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, the need for those belonging to marginalized ethnic groups — to consult on their communities’ mental health support needs and promote them as decision makers in healthcare contexts; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the NSNA encourage psychiatric nursing professors to educate their students about confronting the issues of systemic racism and discrimination in marginalized communities’ mental health support to build trust between community members and health providers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that nursing schools include anti-racism and critical race theory education in their curriculum and community-driven practice in reducing unmet need in mental health service systems for communities of color; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the NSNA send a copy of this resolution to the American Nurses Association, the National Black Nurses Association, the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, the National League for Nursing, the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the World Psychiatric Association, and all other deemed appropriate by the NSNA Board of Directors.

Resolution References

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