



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDICINE

VICTOR J. DZAU, M.D.

President

October 17, 2017

Dear Colleague:

In a climate in which the value of scientific research and evidence-based policy is too often questioned, the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) remains committed to its central mandate of providing independent, objective, evidence-based advice on matters of medicine, health, biomedical sciences, and health policy. As you know, we have a new strategic plan and we are currently in the planning stages of a fund-raising campaign. Building on our core scientific advisory function, the strategic plan adds an emphasis on health equity and highlights a global focus in addition to our longstanding domestic charge. The implementation of our strategic goals will require a vibrant culture of philanthropy from individuals like you to provide the essential resources necessary to carry out such a bold new plan. Please join me this year in making a gift to the NAM Annual Fund. As you know, the NAM receives no government appropriation, and all of the following activities were initiated by the unrestricted funding that you provided to the NAM Annual Fund.

- Launched in 2015, Vital Directions for Health and Health Care has been a tremendous success. The initiative assembled and mobilized a broad and distinguished group of experts—over 150 of the nation’s preeminent health, science, and policy leaders—and produced a robust and comprehensive body of expert literature for policymakers and health influencers at all levels. With the Vital Directions framework in place, the NAM has leveraged the strength of the publications and expert authors through its outreach and dissemination efforts to policy makers. Senior members of Congress and HHS leaders have been briefed. We are now working with state entities, to provide a focused assessment of how states are performing against the backdrop of the Vital Directions priorities, and what actionable steps need to be taken at the state level to make collective national progress. To begin, the NAM is determining current state performance across the Vital Direction priorities, the extent of geographic variation in progress, and strong examples of success and best practice. We envision convening a one-day symposium to help answer the questions and seed further work.
- Although initiatives are underway to combat the opioid epidemic at the federal, state, and local levels, many remain largely fragmented and siloed from one another in their approaches. The NAM, working in collaboration with the Aspen Institute, is developing a framework for an Action Collaborative that would seek to integrate strategies to help mitigate the crisis. Most recently, at the request of the National Governors Association, the NAM convened a group of experts and field leaders to explore clinicians’ roles in addressing opioid misuse and addiction and to develop a guide to assist the nation’s governors as they work with clinicians to counter the opioid crisis. The resulting special publication *First, Do No Harm: Marshaling Clinician Leadership to Counter the Opioid Epidemic* is informed by, and builds on, initiatives and guidelines that have been stewarded by various stakeholder organizations providing leadership in addressing these issues.

- Population aging presents a great opportunity and untapped resource for societies globally. For this opportunity to be realized in the U.S. and around the world, there will need to be a paradigm shift around aging from one focused on decreasing mortality to one focused on advancing healthy longevity and prolonging healthspan. Part of the NAM's *Healthy Longevity Grand Challenge*, the *Global Roadmap for Healthy Longevity* will spearhead this shift and identify the way forward. We plan to bring together thought leaders across science, medicine, healthcare systems, engineering, technology, and policy to provide a comprehensive assessment of the challenges and opportunities presented by global aging.
- The Emerging Leaders Forum, established in 2016, is dedicated to increasing the NAM's engagement with exceptional early-career professionals working in biomedical science, health care delivery, health policy, and related fields. The forum facilitates opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and innovation among the emerging leaders, NAM members, and experts across sectors. Forum members also provide valuable input and feedback to help shape NAM priorities and sustain the Academy's impact and reputation as a national leader in advancing knowledge and accelerating progress in science, medicine, policy, and health equity.

Every day the NAM and its members make important strides toward improving people's lives by advancing science, accelerating health equity, and providing independent, authoritative, and trusted advice nationally and globally. Your gift to the NAM Annual Fund enables us to fulfill our mission, while also leveraging gifts and grants from major philanthropists, corporations, and foundations. I encourage you to join me in donating to the NAM Annual Fund, and ensuring we achieve our vision of a healthy future for everyone across America and the globe.

Sincerely,



Victor J. Dzau, M.D.

P.S. Thanks to your dedicated philanthropic support of the NAM, last year we once again had the highest giving participation rate amongst the three academies at 27%. Let's continue this trend and make 2017 a record setting year with 100% member participation, even if the contributions are modest. Your contributions at any level truly help to sustain the NAM's momentum and impact.