Whereas, In the early 1990s, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) developed regulations and interpretive guidelines for the nursing facility (NF) medical director’s role: “to ensure that the facility provides appropriate care as required; monitors and implements resident care policies; provides oversight and supervision of physician services and the medical care of residents; plays a significant role in overseeing the overall clinical care of residents to ensure to the extent possible that care is adequate; evaluates situations as they arise and takes appropriate steps to try to correct the root cause, if possible; consults with the resident and his or her physician concerning care and treatment, if necessary; and ensures the support of essential medical consultants as needed;” and

Whereas, There is minimal public awareness of these guidelines, nor is there a public listing of NF medical directors. Therefore, when there are deficiencies in clinical care of NF residents or NFs’ failure to implement resident care policies, the NF residents and their families do not have ready access to NF medical director to request remediation of such deficiencies by overseeing and coordinating clinical care of affected residents; and

Whereas, When such deficiencies in the clinical care of NF residents occur resulting in adverse clinical outcomes, the residents and their families are forced to seek remediation by complaining to their state public health departments bypassing the NF medical director, thereby eliminating an opportunity for early interventions to ‘correct the root cause’ and to improve quality of care for all NF residents; and

Whereas, Some NFs may elect to engage medical directors for the sole purpose of referring admissions to their facilities, or medical directors without adequate training or knowledge of geriatric medical principles, bioethics, and the complex regulatory framework in which skilled nursing facilities operate, potentially resulting in bad outcomes and a lack of quality control in these NFs; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association advocate for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to promote health care transparency and consumer access to quality health care by hosting a public listing of medical directors of all nursing facilities (NFs) in the country. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

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