

Deb Zimmermann, is the Chief Clinical Officer and principal of *Leaders in Care*, a company dedicated enhancing clinical performance in health care settings, improving workplace safety, and creating a healthy work environment for clinicians. She served in the United States Army Nurse Corps, practiced as a nurse practitioner, and for 25 years served in executive positions in New York and Virginia. She is the past chairperson of the ANCC Commission on Magnet®, currently a member of the DAISY Foundation Boards of Directors, and a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She chairs the AONL Foundation Board of Directors, co-chairs the AACN-AONL Academic Practice Council and serves on the AONL Diversity and Belonging Committee.

Zimmermann was recognized by the New York Organization of Nurse Executive and Leaders for her partnership with the New York State Board of Nursing, state legislature, college deans, and healthcare association on academic progression for nurses and the introduction of legislation advancing educational requirements for registered nurses on baccalaureate education which passed into law in December 2017.

As chair of the Magnet® Commission, Zimmermann introduced and facilitated approval of Magnet® standards on education, innovative models of nursing across the care continuum, and nurse sensitive outcome measures. She is currently working with the Virginia Board of Nursing and academic leaders on the redesign of clinical nursing education and collaborating with AACN and AONL leaders.

As a chief nursing officer, Zimmermann led teams which reduced mortality, decreased hospital acquired infections, improved access, achieved an 82% BSN prepared workforce, enhanced nurses' role in hospital governance, instituted a transition to practice fellowship for advanced practice nurses, and reduced lost employee workdays caused by workplace violence. She led listening forums on racism in healthcare and introduced policies on care for the LGBTQ community. Zimmermann worked with community leaders on equitable access and education on the COVID-19 vaccine and served as lead investigator on a national grant highlighting sustainable healthcare innovations introduced during the pandemic.

STATEMENTS

1. Statement describing the significant issues facing AONL and potential strategies to address them.

The pandemic amplified racial disparities, gaps in health care equity, and the wellbeing of clinicians caring for its citizens. AONL is positioned to develop a shared agenda with public and private sector stakeholders in achieving health equity through the removal of regulatory and policy barriers to practice; implementation of new practice models across the healthcare continuum; and approval for payment parity of nurse-led programs proven to enhance the health of disadvantaged populations. AONL is perfectly positioned to lead (with employers, nurse and healthcare organizations) a national call for the implementation of structures, systems, and evidence-based interventions to promote clinician well-being.

2. Statement describing the applicant's perspective of diversity, equity and inclusion and strategies AONL can take to demonstrate its commitment.

Today, we better understand the scope of health disparities and the importance of dismantling racism as a path to achieving health equity and inclusion. For our nation's health, we must eliminate structural and institutional racism. AONL can advance equity by: (i) joining forces with academe in dismantling the structures which disadvantage a specific racial group or chronically favor others in nursing program admission criteria; (ii) supporting the development of leaders who build, empower, and create environments that honor individuality and unique clinician contributions; (iii) ensure a diverse nursing workforce and; (iv) fund research on nursing's role in improving health outcomes, and health equity.