



August 2008

Dear Nursing Home Leaders and Consumers:

AAHSA is proud to be a founding leader of the *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* campaign. This unprecedented initiative – launched less than two years ago – has already been successful in improving quality of life for residents and staff in nursing homes; engaging key stakeholders in collaborating on quality improvement; and improving and demonstrating to policymakers that voluntary quality improvement is effective.

AAHSA is participating in the *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* campaign because we believe that elders and vulnerable citizens who need nursing home care deserve the very best, and because we believe their families and communities deserve confidence that nursing homes can provide the very best. We acknowledge a moral commitment to society that we can accept no less than healthy, affordable, and ethical nursing home care for all Americans and those who care for them.

The *Advancing Excellence* campaign is proving that the talent, the knowledge and even the resources to make quality care an automatic expectation are available. As providers, we know that we must earn the public's trust through quality improvement and transparent accountability.

The *Advancing Excellence* campaign is unprecedented because we are working together and sharing responsibility for improving the quality of life for residents and staff in America's nursing homes. The campaign's leadership models a new relationship paradigm that includes consumer advocates, nursing home providers, key sectors of government, quality improvement organizations, nurses, medical experts, and others.

Each stakeholder organization involved in the campaign is working aggressively, cooperatively and collaboratively to improve quality of care and quality of life in America's nursing homes.

Advancing Excellence is in alignment with AAHSA's Five Big Ideas ... our transformational agenda: Quality, Transitions, Talent, Finance, and Technology. *Advancing Excellence* also complements and enhances Quality First by providing opportunities for nursing homes to benchmark and measure quality improvement. *Advancing Excellence* is consistent with the recommendations of the National Commission for Quality Long-Term Care to expand voluntary efforts and encourage providers to participate in them to improve quality.

AAHSA, our State Association partners and our nursing home members are embracing the *Advancing Excellence* campaign.

William L. Minnix, Jr.
President & CEO