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## **Eleanor Thornton Selected for HHS Region III Health Equity Council**

Fairfax, Virginia – Visionary Consulting Partners’ President and Chief Executive Officer Eleanor Thornton, a service-disabled veteran and nationally recognized community outreach and health education specialist, was selected by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health to serve on the National Partnership for Action (NPA) Region III Health Equity Council. The NPA is a public-private initiative that seeks to mobilize a nationwide, comprehensive, community-driven, and sustained approach to combating health disparities and to move the nation toward achieving health equity.

Thornton is one of 35 members chosen to represent Region III—Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia—because of her lifelong personal commitments to promote optimum health, better manage chronic diseases and reduce health disparities.

Individuals from the public, non-profit, and private sectors who are knowledgeable about and possess expertise regarding the social determinants of health were chosen through an open nominating process. Council members represent communities impacted by health disparities, state and local government agencies, tribes, healthcare providers and systems, health plans, businesses, academic and research institutions, foundations, and other organizations.

HHS recently released the [National Stakeholder Strategy for Achieving Health Equity](#) and the [HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities](#). These documents outline the federal commitment for addressing health equity and closing the health gap for racial, ethnic, and underserved communities. They will be used by HHS agencies to assess the impact of policies and programs on racial and ethnic health disparities, and to promote integrated approaches, evidence-based programs and best practices to reduce these disparities. Specifically, the National Stakeholder Strategy called for 10 Regional Health Equity Councils (RHECs) whose members would serve as leaders and catalysts to strengthen health equity and enhance collaboration between stakeholders, align initiatives and programs, and leverage assets to more effectively accomplish health disparity reduction goals. Each of the 10 councils covers the same geographical territory as an [HHS region](#).

Thornton said, “I am honored to serve. My corporate vision is to work hand-in-hand with fellow health advocates to improve the health status of communities and reduce health disparities.” She added, “I have always advocated for, provided and promoted quality services for all citizens, with a special emphasis on the underserved and our nation’s veterans and their families. I fully support the goals of the National Stakeholder Strategy and the HHS Action Plan. The health of the nation depends on our success and I look forward to contributing to this collaboration.”

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Founded in 2008, Visionary Consulting Partners designs, implements and manages comprehensive, sustainable chronic disease, behavior intervention, and health education and promotion programs by engaging communities and leveraging health IT. We strive to improve the health status of communities and reduce health disparities. Our master certified health education specialist and certified project and health information management professionals have an impressive track record which includes work for the federal government, military, foundations and the private sector. From post-Katrina New Orleans to Ft. Hood following the shootings, we've answered the call of the nation during difficult and challenging times. Visionary is a verified service-disabled veteran- and woman-owned small business, and SBA certified as an 8(a) and Small Disadvantaged Business. Visionary is also a participant in the HHS Mentor-Protégé Program. CEO Eleanor Thornton, a master certified health education specialist and certified asthma educator, is a member of the HHS National Partnership for Action [Region III Health Equity Council](#). Chief Operating Officer Mike Thornton, Sr., a retired Air Force chief information officer, certified health information management and project management professional, is a member of the Board of Governors of the National Military Family Association and a co-chair of the HIMSS Diversity Business Roundtable.