



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

December 9, 2010

Patricia Quinlisk, M.D., M.P.H.  
State Epidemiologist and Medical Director  
Iowa Department of Public Health  
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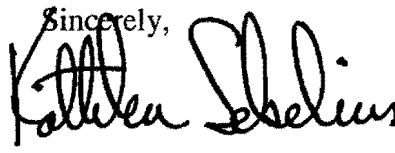
Dear Dr. Quinlisk:

Thank you for your September 22, 2010 letter transmitting recommendations approved by the National Biodefense Science Board (NBSB) following discussions of the recommendations developed by the Disaster Mental Health (DMH) Subcommittee to assess the Department's progress in its efforts to better integrate mental and behavioral health into emergency preparedness and response activities.

Please extend our appreciation to the NBSB and to the DMH Subcommittee for their comprehensive and informative work on these critical national concerns. The Department appreciates receiving these recommendations and the full report. This effort is an important step toward continuing to improve and advance empirically based approaches to disaster mental health and community resilience. The Department will give serious consideration to the Board's recommendations.

Please convey my sincere appreciation to the NBSB members and the DMH Subcommittee members for the report entitled *Integration of Mental and Behavioral Health in Federal Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery: Assessment and Recommendations*. Mental health is a critical component to emergency preparedness and response. It is my intention to maintain a focus on the emotional and behavioral aspects of the work we do here at the Department of Health and Human Services.

I look forward to future updates on this important issue.

Sincerely,  
  
Kathleen Sebelius