

BPA Statement on Damar Hamlin and SCA COMMITMENTS AND ACTION PLAN

January 13, 2023

SHORT TERM TARGETS:

- Encourage BPA members and people in their networks to donate to non-profit organizations dedicated to reducing the incidence of Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) which disproportionately affects the Black community.
- Promote up to date Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training to all physicians of the BPA, particularly those who serve as physicians for sporting events, as we know that decreased time to CPR and rapid AED use significantly improves survival after SCA.
- In organizational presentations and lectures to communities of the African Diaspora, intentionally address the stigma surrounding mental illness and seeking mental health care and support; and continue advocacy efforts for improved access.

LONG TERM TARGETS:

- Partner with Black owned Mental Health First Aid training companies to increase awareness and decrease stigma of seeking mental health treatment, thereby reducing the risk of SCA in our community.
- Work with non-profit organizations to increase the availability of AEDs in underserved communities.
- Seek partnership with the American Red Cross and other organizations to increase AEDs and CPR training and implementation programs to schools and community centers in communities with large populations of Minoritized individuals so as to reduce the incidence of death from SCA in these environments.
- Call upon our colleagues, particularly in Consult and Liaison psychiatry to increase research and development of clinical practice guidelines for assessment and treatment of SCA related psychiatric diagnoses, and ways to improve quality of life after suffering SCA.
- LONG-TERM: Advocate for pre-performance sports physicals to be performed by qualified physicians, and to include both EKGs and mental health screening.
- Advocate for professional athletes to work with qualified sports attorneys and financial planners to secure the financial futures for themselves and dependents in the event of a career or even life ending event, thus reducing anxiety, which can impair athletic performance.