

HOW TO START & MAINTAIN A HEALTH MINISTRY

By learning how to cluster and collaborate efforts, local congregations can have successful whole-health programs.

1. Network with sister churches in your area. Discover strengths and needs within each congregation with assessment tools developed for congregations. Put resources together.
2. Set attainable goals. Learn how to make short and long-range plans for your health ministry that will promote spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being with-in your faith community.
3. Be flexible! Remember, God works in God's good timing. Prayerfully evaluate and make adjustments periodically.

For more information:

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Partially funded by the United
Methodist General Board of
Global Ministries.



HELPFUL WEB SITES:

1. *General Board of Global Ministries: Health & Welfare Division, United Methodist Church:* www.gbgmumc.org (click on health and



welfare ministries under the "program units" drop-down box).

2. *International Parish Nurse Resource Center (IPNRC):* www.parishnurses.org (education, research, and support).

3. *Health Ministries Network:* www.healthministries.info/modules.html (a not-for-profit interfaith organization committed to encouraging, supporting, developing whole person ministries in faith communities in the upper Midwest).

4. *Health Ministries Association:* www.hmassoc.org (international membership organization encourages, supports leaders integrating faith and health).

Congregational Health Ministries is a ministry of
the Office of Creative Ministries, The Missouri
Conference of the United Methodist Church



Health Ministry Through Clustering & Collaboration

Presented by Congregational Health Ministries

Register for our Saturday Workshops
10 am to 2 pm on Saturdays. Cost: \$15.00
(plus \$5.00 each additional person from same church)

HEALTHY SPIRITS, MINDS, AND BODIES



WHAT IS A HEALTH MINISTRY?

Although the church has always been connected to the health and healing of individuals and faith communities, health ministries have evolved over the past 25 to 30 years in various faith traditions. Below are some basic definitions regarding the current practices:

Health Minister – A health-minded individual on the church staff (paid or volunteer) who provides, facilitates, or coordinates holistic health services to individuals and groups. A health minister does not have to be a registered nurse, but might be a nutritionist, health educator, licensed professional nurse, or other health professional.

Volunteer or paid Faith Community/Parish Nurse (FCN) – An RN who has taken a basic FCN preparation course and who promotes whole health in the congregation and community. FCN may/may not be considered a staff member, but usually sits on the church administrative council and is part of a health committee.

Health Committee – Helps promote programs/projects coordinated by the FCN or health minister to be successful.



WHAT WOULD IT COST TO HAVE A HEALTH MINISTRY PROGRAM?

Cost varies depending on several factors: Is the FCN or health minister paid? If a volunteer, will the church budget support continuing education and travel expenses? Will the FCN/health minister need a phone line, desk, or locked file cabinet?

WHAT ARE THE FUNCTIONS OF A FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE?

1. Health educator
2. Health counselor
3. Referral source for congregational and community resources
4. Facilitator of support groups



5. Coordinator of resources and recruiter of volunteers

6. Interpreter of faith & health relationship

“Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.” Jeremiah 17:14

BENEFITS OF HAVING A FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE/HEALTH MINISTRY PROGRAM:

Healthy communities begin with healthy individuals. A church that promotes spiritual, emotional, relational, financial, and physical wellness will assist members and the local community in achieving the rich and joyful lives God wants for us. We need healthy witnesses to make disciples who actively follow Jesus Christ!

EXAMPLES OF HEALTH MINISTRY ACTIVITIES/PROGRAM IDEAS:

Relationship building: couples, parent/teen, member/member conflict resolution, etc.

Stress management: Prayer groups, exercise (Yoga, Thai Chi, walking), Mom’s day out, provide labyrinth, etc.

Emotional support: Grief support, divorce recovery, widow/widower support, caregiver support

Forgiveness or reconciliation focus: Sermon series, Sunday worship focus on these topics, etc.

Physical support: Provide a meal/clothing ministry

Financial wellness education, or money/investment management seminar

Health fair/health screenings

Health education: Smoking cessation classes, chronic disease self-management, diabetic support, education on health topics like cancer, arthritis, heart disease, Alzheimer’s, etc.

School support: Kids’ afterschool program or GED classes, sponsor local school with supplies or reading buddies, etc.

Support to local agency that provides direct basic services: Food pantry, newborn layettes to a local hospital, women’s shelter support with toiletries or adopt a room, pregnancy care center, P.E.T. ministry, etc.

