

Parish Nursing is recognized by the American Nurses Association (ANA) as a specialty practice. The classes are offered throughout the year by Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries in partnership with Schools of Nursing and hospitals.

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The Benefit of Health Ministry to Your Congregation

What is Health Ministry?

The congregation as a place of health and healing is the foundation on which Health Ministry and Parish Nursing is based. Healing means to be made whole. The wholeness God intends for us encompasses body, mind, and spirit. Health is a gift of God. In order to be good stewards of this gift, congregations need to encourage people to take responsibility for their own health and to be of service to their neighbor. Health Ministry and Parish Nursing address not only how a person heals but also asks, "What keeps people well and how can we assist in that process?"

What is a Parish Nurse?

A Parish Nurse is a registered nurse who has taken the Basic Preparation Class for Parish Nurses to use her/his skill in Health Ministry. Whereas most health disciplines are trained in one aspect of medical care, Parish Nurses are trained to nurture the whole person - body, mind, and spirit. Parish Nurses work in partnership with pastors, churches, hospitals, social service agencies and the community. Parish Nurses focus on prevention, wholeness, and wellness. In many congregations, the Parish Nurse is the Health Ministry team leader.

Sponsors



What is a Health Minister?

A Health Minister is a person in the congregation (other than an RN), who has taken the Basic Preparation Class for Parish Nurses. His/her individual skills/gifts are added to the Health Ministry Team and are often guided by a Parish Nurse or Health Ministry team leader. The Health Minister's skills are assessed and used where most appropriate and helpful. Ministers also are encouraged to go through the Parish Nurse course to better understand and direct the Health Ministry Team.

What are Parish Nursing Functions?

- **Health Educator** - Seeks to provide an understanding of the relationship between lifestyle, attitudes, faith, and well-being. This can be done individually but is usually group focused by arranging health topic classes, workshops and discussion groups or through health fairs. Parish Nurses focus on Prevention and Wellness, rather than "hands-on care."
- **Personal Health Counselor** - Providing individual consultation and support at home, at church, and during hospital or care facility visits. Many Parish Nurses offer regular blood pressure screenings.
- **Referral Agent** - Connects people with community resources, services, and other sources of information and assistance.

- **Trainer of Volunteers** - Pulling people together in Health Ministry for congregants to use their gifts and minister to each other. The Parish Nurse does not need to "do it all" but assists the minister(s) by helping to build a team to help in the church.
- **Developer of Support Groups** - Bringing people together in commonly shared times of need such as dealing with Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, etc.
- **Health Advocate and Liaison with Community Resources** - Opening doors to care and services, assisting congregants through the health care and community resource maze, while also bring resources into the congregation.
- **Integrator of Faith and Health** - Nurses speak both the language of health care and spirituality, which is unique to the profession of nursing. This bridge provides congregants with an opportunity to speak about the deeper spiritual dimensions in life with someone able to connect this with their overall health.

What Does Basic Parish Nurse Trainings Involve?

The Basic Preparation for Parish Nurses and Health Ministers is 40 contact hours of training in how to build a health ministry in your church. The curriculum is endorsed by the International Parish Nurse Resource Center.