

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND PARISH NURSING/HEALTH MINISTRY

If you want to use your time wisely in offering health ministry programs in your congregation, you would do well to offer an evidence-based program. What is an “evidence-based program?” It is one that is designed for particular outcomes (such as reducing falls) and is developed based on solid research. It has been reviewed by experts in the field and rigorously evaluated in studies, and usually is “endorsed” by a federal agency or a respected research organization and included in their list of effective programs. An evidence-based program will include a complete curriculum, which individuals such as RNs and/or other health ministers can be prepared (in a day or two) to offer in other settings, such as a congregation.

Here are several examples of evidence-based programs currently being offered by parish nurses and/or other health ministers affiliated with Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries. For more information about offering one of these programs in your congregation or community, contact Sandy Madsen, Education Coordinator, at sandym@npsnm.org.

POWERFUL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS

There are 678,000 caregivers in Oregon, approximately 1.25 million in Washington, and millions more nationwide. In fact, most women (for the majority of caregivers are women, although growing numbers are men), can expect to spend 28 years of their lives with direct caregiving responsibilities. This evidence-based six-week self-care education program based on the program by Dr. Kate Lorig at Stanford University, was developed through Legacy Health in Portland and has since become independent. It uses an outstanding curriculum, which can be offered by health professionals or trained lay people, supporting those who are caregivers for others in their family or community. PTC supports self-care behaviors, such as increased exercise, relaxation and medical check-ups; management of emotions, aiming for reduced guilt, anger, and depression; increased self-efficacy (confidence in coping with caregiving demands), and increased use of local community resources. More info at: www.powerfultoolsforcaregivers.org.

A MATTER OF BALANCE

This eight-week evidence-based program, which meets once or twice weekly for two hours per session, and is led by trained leaders (health professions or lay), addresses the fear of falling that leads to curtailment of activity by older adults. This program is based on data showing that a majority of falls occur during routine activities, that falls are usually not caused by just one issue, a large portion of falls are preventable, and that being inactive results in loss of muscle strength and balance. Being inactive can also compromise social interaction and increase the risk for isolation, depression, and anxiety. Finally, fear of falling can actually *contribute* to falling. This program helps participants find ways to change the environment to reduce fall risk factors and learn simple exercises to increase strength and balance. More information at the Center for Healthy Aging at the National Council on Aging at: <http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=32&ElementID=489>

LIVING WELL WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS (The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program)

Living Well with Chronic Conditions is another evidence-based program developed by Stanford University, which can be taught by trained individuals (health professionals or lay) within a congregation or other community-based setting. This six-week workshop provides tools for living a healthy life with chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, arthritis, asthma, or heart disease. Through weekly sessions, the workshop provides support for continuing normal daily activities and dealing with the emotions that chronic conditions may bring about. More information at

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/ChronicDisease/LivingWell/Pages/Index.aspx>

ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION EXERCISE PROGRAM

This on-going evidence-based program was developed by the Arthritis Foundation in 1997, and was updated several times, most recently in 2009. Classes are conducted by trained and certified instructors in partnership with a local Arthritis Foundation chapter. The instructors are usually health or fitness professionals who have attended an 8-hour training workshop about this particular program. They offer a weekly exercise program, based on the needs of the group, choosing from 90 exercises designed to reduce pain and stiffness, and help maintain or improve mobility, muscle strength, and functional ability, which can be done while seated, standing, or lying down. Activities also include endurance-building activities, balance exercises, relaxation techniques, and health education segments. Other goals are to encourage socialization, reduce depression, and improve daily quality of life. More information at

<http://www.healthagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=32&ElementID=482>.

NOTE: The Arthritis Foundation has several other programs available, including their “Walk with Ease” and “Tai Chi” programs. More information at: <http://www.arthritis.org/walk-with-ease.php>.

PEARLS

Community-Based Education and Strategies for Dealing with Depression

This evidence-based program for helping older adults, and adults of all ages with epilepsy, deal with minor depression was developed by Dr. Ed Wagner at the University of Washington and is being offered through Harborview Medical Center in Seattle. Training for leaders is available in Seattle, and their 186 page toolkit is available for free download from their website. Support is provided through eight in-home visits over six months, using a team approach, partnering PEARLS counselors from existing service providers (such as congregations) with medical and mental health professionals currently working with those being served. PEARLS uses structured behavioral therapy and positive event scheduling to resolve depression. The counselor helps the client name and write down the factors contributing to his or her depression, and to develop and evaluate solutions. More information at <http://www.pearlsprogram.org/> and at http://www.cdc.gov/prc/pdf/PRC_PEARLS-depression_story.pdf.