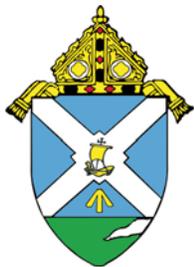
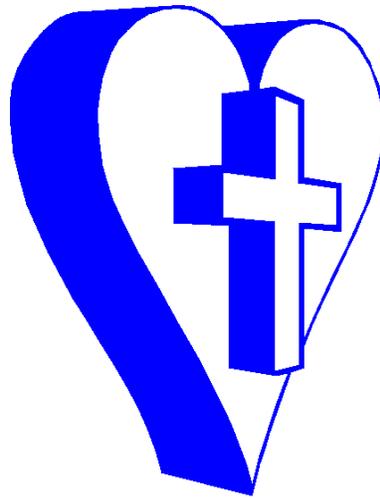


Parish Nursing Guidelines

A Healthy Presence in the Parish

Diocese of Green Bay, WI
May, 2000
(Revised September 2009)



Cover Page
for
Parish Nursing Guidelines
A Healthy Presence in the Parish

- Title of Document: Parish Nursing Guidelines
A Healthy Presence in the Parish
- Table of Contents: A five page resource document and appendixes for parishes to use as a guide in the establishment and functioning of a Parish Nurse Program.
- Purpose: To assist parishes in developing a health and wellness ministry based on the integration of body, mind, and spirit through a Parish Nurse Program.
- Scope: Defining of a Parish Nurse ministry, suggestions for establishing a Health and Wellness Committee, requirements for a parish nursing position, the role of the parish nurse, and insurance liability issues.
- Applicability: For parishes of the Diocese and for those pastoral staff and parish volunteers interested in developing a Parish Nurse and/or health ministry program.
- Authority: Director of Stewardship and Pastoral Services

Draft of the Parish Nursing Guidelines: Stewardship and Pastoral Services requests your comments and suggestions to make these guidelines more helpful. 920-272-8310 or toll free @ 877-500-3580 Ext. 8310.

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I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly.

John 10:10

Parish Nursing: A Healthy Presence in the Parish

In recent years, parish nursing has become a fast growing dimension of the Catholic health ministry. The Parish Nurse is a visible symbol of the parish's healing and health ministry. Parish nurses recruit, train, and support volunteers to enhance the well-being of the parish as stewards of the parishioners' health.

The Gospel accounts are filled with stories about the healing ministry of Jesus. A parish nurse can assist the parish in expanding its potential as a healing community. Through parish based health ministry, parishioners can become more involved in their own healthcare as well as fulfilling the Gospel call to preach, teach, and heal.

People often need support in order to develop or change lifestyle habits that affect their health. Through this ministry, the parish can be instrumental in providing that support. The parish nurse can also assist parishes with aging populations in taking a proactive approach in planning for the future needs of the community.

Parish nurses provide a Catholic approach to health and wellness in the context of a faith community by attending to the needs of the whole person in mind, body, and spirit. As members of the Parish Team, they become a link between the needs of the individual parishioners, the parish community, and the healthcare delivery systems in the community. The parish nurse assists the pastoral team in tending to the diverse needs of each member in the parish and is supervised by a designated member of the Parish Staff.

The decision to add a parish nurse is usually made and supported by the pastor/parish director, the pastoral team, and the pastoral council often guided by a Health and Wellness Committee within the parish structure. The Parish Nurse is supervised by a designated member of the Parish Team.

Introducing a parish nurse ministry to your parish: A Health and Wellness Committee

Forming a Health and Wellness Committee as a part of the Social Concerns Committee can guide the parish in determining whether to develop a Parish Health Ministry.

The Health and Wellness Committee is a group of volunteers from the parish concerned about health from a Catholic holistic perspective that gives shape to a parish nurse ministry. The Health and Wellness Committee strives to see that parishioners receive support and encouragement from the parish to move toward the concept of whole-person health. The committee members should view individuals as a complex but integrated whole—body, mind, and spirit all woven together. In all activities, the Committee seeks to promote an understanding of the interconnectedness of values, beliefs, behaviors, and well-being.

Suggestions for Establishing a Health and Wellness Committee

A group of 6 to 10 people is an appropriate size for a Health Committee to share the responsibility and make the necessary decisions. It is helpful to have representation from diverse groups within the parish, i.e., married, single, teenage, disabled, minority, adult, older adult, health, business, and social service professionals. The Health and Wellness Committee should have representation on the Social Concerns Committee so that the Pastoral Council is informed of their activities.

There are some basic steps that will assist a parish in developing a Health and Wellness Committee. Each parish will need to modify the steps to their own parish needs.

1. Engage the interest and support of your parish leadership team
2. Present the concept to the parish council and obtain their endorsement and support
3. Form a core group of people which is representative of the existing health ministry programs at the parish
4. Determine how health ministry can be a part of your parish outreach and evangelization by reviewing your parish mission statement and Scripture
5. Develop a mission statement that provides a vision for your group
6. Evaluate and prioritize the healthcare needs of your parish
7. Identify and prioritize goals for action flowing from your needs assessment
8. Review the identified needs and select one or two projects and develop a plan to address it
9. Determine who to invite to participate in planning, implementing, and evaluating the goals and projects
10. Keep others informed about your activities. Maintain a liaison with the parish council and the pastoral team
11. Work with staff and committees to determine resources to meet the identified needs of a parish health ministry and whether the parish should obtain the services of a Parish Nurse
12. Be aware of the health services in your community to avoid duplication and increase networking
13. Build a support network among pastoral staff, parish leadership, volunteers, and others
14. Evaluate parish health ministries periodically and ask for feedback. Modify your goals accordingly

Parish Nurse Position Requirements

All parish nurses must be a graduate of an accredited school of nursing and be currently licensed as a professional registered nurse in the state of Wisconsin. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of three years of nursing experience and be willing to actively participate in continuing education programs relating to parish nursing.

All parish nurses must complete a parish nurse preparation program. These programs are offered routinely at different nursing colleges throughout the state. Some nurses may also choose to or be requested to complete the Diocesan Commissioned Ministry Leadership Formation Program to gain a deeper understanding of scripture and theology.

It is the responsibility of the Parish Nurse to insure that all services delegated within the scope of professional nursing to a less skilled assistant are in compliance with the State of Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

The parish nurse is responsible to verify and maintain documentation that all services are delegated to individuals with appropriate licensing, certification, and/or training.

The Role of the Parish Nurse

The role of parish nursing is to provide leadership as a facilitator of preventative and restorative health care within the parish. The Parish Nurse ministers holistically to individuals and families to promote wellness of body, mind, and spirit. Parish Nurses serve as members of the parish staff and become a link between the assessed needs of parishioners and the healthcare delivery systems within the community at large.

The parish nurse combines the skill of nursing and some aspects of pastoral care. The parish nurse functions in a preventative capacity, offering education, health consultation, pastoral care, as well as resource and information referrals. Combining the roles of medicine and ministry, parish nurses add a vital resource to the healthcare continuum and enhances the Church's healing role at the parish level.

A parish nurse's duties are usually determined by the needs of the parish and under the advisement of the Health and Wellness Committee. These duties may include hospital visitation, follow-up of recently discharged patients, coordination of shut-in visitations, health consultant, and locating such services as hospice, home health care, or home-delivered meals. A parish nurse often provides health education by offering classes such as nutrition, exercise, parenting, and advance directives. When appropriate, health monitoring and screening for blood pressure, cholesterol, glaucoma, diabetes and personal health assessments can be provided.

Pre-Screening for Parish Nurses and Volunteers

A parish health ministry program and the nature of parish nursing can present potentially high risks and the Parish could be held liable for failure to verify credentials and perform background checks. Verification of credentials and background checks *must be* performed on all parish nurses who are employed or do volunteer parish nursing.

A credential check must:

Verify that the parish nurse has a valid license as a registered nurse in the State of Wisconsin

A parish nurse background check must include verification of the following:

Past employment references and personal references
A criminal record background check
Driver record check

It is the responsibility of the parish nurse to verify and maintain documentation on appropriate licensing, certification, and/or training for all volunteers in the parish health ministry program.

Professional Liability and Insurance Issues

There are many liability concerns associated with a parish health ministry program. In general, parish nurses do not directly provide nursing care. They do educate parishioners about health issues, provide referrals, and coordinate volunteers. Under these circumstances, a parish nurse could be held liable based on failure to make appropriate referrals, give proper advice, or provide adequate supervision of volunteers.

If a parish chooses to employ a parish nurse or utilize the services of a volunteer nurse, the parish and the parish nurse **are covered** under the Green Bay Diocesan Insurance Plan. Listed below are the insurance requirements and guidelines for parish health ministry.

1. The individual must be a Registered Nurse preferably with a BS or MS degree in nursing from an accredited school of nursing.
2. The individual is currently licensed in the State of Wisconsin.
3. The individual has signed the application for liability coverage for parish work.
4. The individual has completed the Marquette University School of Nursing Parish Nurse Program or its equivalent and received a certificate of completion.
5. The individual has three to five years of nursing experience.

6. The individual actively participates in continuing education in parish health nursing.
7. The individual has a valid Wisconsin Driver's License.
8. The individual maintains automotive liability insurance.
9. The individual possesses current CPR Certification.
10. The individual receives supervision as determined by pastor/parish director.
11. The Parish Nurse does not provide a medical diagnosis. Appropriate procedures should be followed for referral to physicians and other healthcare providers as needed.
12. All activities delegated within the scope of professional nursing to a less skilled assistant are in compliance with the State of Wisconsin's Department of Regulation and Licensing.
13. The Parish Nurse does not dispense or administer medications, do blood tests, or other invasive procedures.
14. The Parish nurse keeps accurate records on all parishioners/clients. Even though a Parish Nurse may be reporting to the pastor/parish director or other delegated staff member, these records are to be kept confidential unless otherwise released with the parishioner's/client's written permission.
15. All abuse involving minors must be reported to the appropriate governmental agency.

All nurses, employed or volunteer, are **mandated** to fill out an insurance registration form (attached) with the Diocese within 10 (ten) working days after they begin providing services to the Parish.

Please note that there is no insurance coverage through the Diocesan Insurance Plan for a physician participating in a parish's health ministry program.

Appendix II

Parish Nurse Job Description

Job Summary: Provides leadership as a facilitator of health within the parish focusing on the holistic integration of the body, mind, and spirit. Acts as a Health Educator, Personal Health Counselor, Facilitator and Resource Person, Referral Agent, and Volunteer Coordinator. Participates as a professional member of the ministerial team combining nursing expertise with theological concepts to fulfill the mission/goals of the parish by witnessing to the healing ministry of Jesus.

Education, Experience and Licenses

Graduate, state-approved School of Nursing, Bachelor's degree preferred
Minimum of three-five years of nursing experience
Completion of a Parish Nurse Program accredited by the International
Parish Nurse Resource Center
Current Registered Nurse Licensure from the State of Wisconsin
Current CPR certification
Proof of automotive insurance

Knowledge, Abilities, & Skills

Awareness of his/her own spiritual and faith commitment
Knowledge of holistic health concepts
Effective communication skills
Ability to assess individual health needs and plan appropriate interventions
Understanding the church's role in health care
Knowledge and understanding of community resources
Ability to work with other professionals

Responsibilities

Promotes Health and Wellness.
Provides group education and support groups for issues such as grief, caregiving, and weight loss
Acts as a liaison between parish and community agencies.
Keeps current with changes in community resources and healthcare practices.
Acts as a personal health counselor to discuss health concerns with parish members.
Makes home, hospital, and nursing home visits to monitor health status and provide support.
Coordinates and trains volunteers to assist with various programs and needs of individuals.
Maintains appropriate confidential documentation of services provided.
Prepares an annual report of services and operates within an annual budget.
Participates in parish meetings as requested by pastoral leadership.
Writes articles for the bulletin or newsletter to promote the understanding of the relationship between life-style, attitudes, faith, and well-being.
The Parish Nurse has knowledge of and is in compliance with the Code of Ethics of Nursing and the State of Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing. The Parish Nurse does not dispense or administer medications, do blood tests, or other invasive procedures. The Parish Nurse does not take the place of or compete with existing community or parish resources. Appropriate procedures should be followed for referral to physicians and other healthcare providers as needed.

Appendix III

Resources Available

Marquette University College of Nursing

Parish Nurse Preparation Institute
P.O. Box 1881
Milwaukee, WI 53201-1881
414-288-380

An eight day institute for registered nurses to develop the knowledge base necessary to prepare for parish nurse practices, to enrich spirituality, and to develop a support system in the field of parish nursing.

Concordia University – Wisconsin, Nursing Department

1200 North Lake Shore Drive, 9W
Mequon, WI 53092
414-243-5700

In conjunction with the health ministries of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Concordia offers a variety of parish nurse programs---including courses, introductory conferences, workshops, and the parish nurse distance learning program.

Marian College

45 National Avenue
Fond Du Lac, WI 54935-4699
920-923-7154

A Parish Nurse program designed for registered nurses to facilitate a personal understanding of spirituality, an awareness of the dimensions of the parish nurse ministry, and an exploration of the roles and implementation of the parish nurse ministry.

International Parish Nurse Resource Center

475 E. Lockwood Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63119
314-918-2559
www.parishnurses.org

This organization provides information, publications, consultation, and referrals for parish nursing.

Catholic Health Association of the United States

4455 Woodson Road
St. Louis, MO 63134-3797
314-427-2500

This national organization is involved in advocacy, education and research, and consists of more than 1,200 Catholic healthcare sponsors, systems, facilities, and organizations.

Diocese of Green Bay

Stewardship & Pastoral Services
1825 Riverside Drive
P.O. Box 23825
Green Bay WI 54305-3825

Toll-free from 920 and 715 area codes, 1-877-500-3580, Ext. 8300
Other codes call 920-272-8300.