

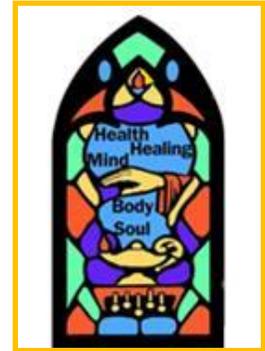
MERCY PARISH NURSE & HEALTH MINISTRY PROGRAM

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES (RN) and HEALTH MINISTERS (Non-RN)

FACT SHEET

Support of Health Ministries for the Well-Being of God's People in Body, Mind & Spirit

Churches are, and have always been, places of healing. Through communities of faith, we understand the meaning of wellness: harmony of body, mind, and spirit and living in right relationship with God and with each other. Health ministry can make a difference in peoples' lives through actions for health promotion, illness recovery, and support during difficult seasons of life. With caring and compassion, one can reaffirm the faith community's role in ministering to the needs of individuals, families, and groups. Both professional nurses and lay persons can be called to serve as instruments for God's healing touch.



This program builds on the corporal and spiritual works of Pittsburgh Mercy and the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy, founded in 1831. The "walking nuns," who arrived in Pittsburgh in 1843, visited people in their homes to care for the poor, the sick, and the uneducated. These tenets have transitioned into broader scopes of care, now known as *Faith Community Nursing* and *Health Ministry*. While faith community nurses and health ministers serve in many practical ways, they are also helping individuals recognize how God is present in their daily lives, giving strength, meaning, and hope. Well-being is a focus, transpiring with or apart from curing.

What does a Faith Community Nurse (FCN) or Health Minister (HM) do?

In fulfilling their healing mission, they work with pastors, volunteers, and caregivers to help meet the needs of congregations and the communities they serve. They have several roles:

- H – Health advisor/counselor
- E – Educator on health issues
- A – Advocate/resource person
- L – Liaison to faith and community resources
- T – Teacher of volunteers and developer of support groups
- H – Healer of body, mind, spirit, and community environment.

Is Health Ministry open to all faiths?

Yes. The name "*Parish Nurse*" was the initial name given by the Rev. Dr. Granger Westberg in the mid-1980s in Chicago as a revival of the outreach done for centuries by religious orders, such as "*Parish Deaconesses*." As the movement linking hospitals and churches grew, parish nursing became a

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recognized, salaried and non-salaried, professional nursing specialty by the American Nurses Association with its own Scope and Standards of Practice, and Westberg Institute's *Foundations of Faith Community Nursing Curriculum*. The specialty practice of *Faith Community Nursing* continues to grow with new specialty-focused professional societies, faith-based research, journal publications, Faith Community Nurse (FCN) practice networks, and global population emphasis. Along with this national and world-wide expansion, the title of 'parish nurse' has been changed to 'Faith Community Nurse' or other titles congruent with one's faith community and culture such as, 'Church Nurse,' 'Congregational Nurse,' 'Jewish Congregational Nurse,' or 'Muslim Crescent Nurse.'

What does the Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program at Pittsburgh Mercy offer?

- Provision of FCN and HM education via the Westberg Institute's curriculum in a hybrid format with both live virtual learning and on-line modules.
- ANCC approved continuing education units for professional nurses.
- Individualized workshops to area faith communities for volunteers in health ministry and visitation ministry.
- Bimonthly E-Newsletter, materials, ideas, information, and resources to support or mentor FCN and HM best practices.
- Networking opportunities for area FCNs/HMs and those seeking to serve through social media, symposium, and annual retreat with spiritual growth and development opportunities.
- Advocacy with representation at professional organizations such as the Health Ministries Association, Nursing Division of the Spiritual Care Association, Nurse Christian Fellowship, and local ecumenical groups.
- Provision of the nationally recognized Mercy Parish Nurse Electronic Documentation System and Administrative Database with free ongoing technical support.
- Consultation to FCN, HM, and those inquiring about health ministry and/or spiritual care.

For more information, contact:

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Website and Social Media:

Find **Pittsburgh Mercy** and **Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program** at www.pittsburghmercy.org Follow Pittsburgh Mercy on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

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