



Potential Roles and Responsibilities of a Parish Nurse:

- *Integrator of Faith* and health and participates as a member of the ministerial staff
- *Personal health Counselor*, including home, hospital, and skilled care visits
- *Health Educator* for individuals as well as the congregation and the community to encourage healthy lifestyles
- *Trainer of volunteers* within the congregation
- *Developer or Coordinator of support groups*
- *Referral Agent* developing awareness of local medical and social service resources
- *Health Advocate* assisting families and individuals in making decisions about health, life transitions and personal well-being

For More Information and Resources:

Scope and Standards of Faith Community Nursing, 3rd Edition. American Nursing Association. Silver Spring, MD. August 2017.

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The Church Health Center,
Memphis, Tenn. and Westberg
Institute for Faith Community
Nursing.

www.churchhealthcenter.org

www.westberginstitute.org

ELPNA web site:

www.elpna.org

Evangelical Lutheran Parish Nurse Association



How to Call a Parish Nurse to Serve Your Congregation

Parish Nurse Ministry A Call to Serve

Faith Community Nursing is defined as: "The specialized practice of professional nursing that focuses on the intentional care of the spirit as well as the promotion of the whole-person health and the prevention or minimization of illness within the context of faith community and the wider community". (Scope and Standards, 2017)

Qualifications and Definition:

- A Parish Nurse (PN) is a Registered Nurse, ideally with a Bachelor of Science degree and is actively licensed to practice in a given state and who serves as a member of the staff of a faith community. (Scope and Standards, 2017.)
- The PN should have a minimum of three to five years of clinical nursing experience
- The PN candidate is required to complete a Foundations of Faith Community Nursing Course allowing *credentialing* in this nursing specialty.

The American Nursing Association designated Parish Nursing as a specialty of nursing in 1987. In 2005, the term Faith Community Nursing and Parish Nursing to be used interchangeably. Men as well as women registered nurses are called to serve.

How Can a Parish Nurse Ministry Benefit Your Congregation?

- A Parish Nurse becomes a healing presence as she visits and serves the congregation.
- The PN serves as a member of the Pastoral Team to assist in meeting the needs of the congregation and the leadership of the church.
- Congregational members are assisted to achieve personal health goals through educational initiatives.
- The isolation of individuals is addressed during times of illness as well as in health.
- Personal responsibility is connected with spiritual motivation by planning activities to promote whole person health.
- Support and resource information is provided in a health care environment that is increasingly complicated to navigate.
- PN raises awareness of spiritual relationship to the physical and mental health of the individual.
- PN ministry serves as a community outreach of the congregation to demonstrate the congregation's mission and vision.

Steps to Establishing a Parish Nurse Ministry

- Prayerfully consider calling a Registered Nurse to serve on your ministerial team
- Place a "call to serve" in your church bulletin to generate interest and define this new health ministry using the qualifications outlined.
- Consider pros and cons if position will be a member or non-member and if position will be in a paid or non-paid model. Both are acceptable although a paid model allows for more accountability.
- Develop a PN budget to include mileage for travel, education and professional liability insurance.
- Select the nurse through an interview process asking all candidates the same questions. Requesting a spiritual autobiography is a helpful tool
- Develop a specific job description to include hours of work, specific tasks, paid stipend or non-paid model and who will be PN's supervisor
- After selection of an RN validate or make arrangements for the Foundations of Faith Community Nursing Course. One resource may be found on Westberg Institute Website:
www.westberginstitute.org