



## UMC Health Ministry Network Fact Sheet

### UMC Health Ministry Network

- Strategic Council composed of experienced United Methodist parish/faith community nurses who guide and support the development of health ministry initiatives in The United Methodist Church.
- Collaboration between the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits' Center for Health and the General Board of Global Ministries' UMCOR Health.

### Health Ministry and the Wesleyan Tradition

- The Reverend Doctor Granger Westberg began parish nursing in the late 1980s.
- Health ministry is not a new concept for the Church: one-third of Jesus' ministry was devoted to healing, and faith traditions are the forerunners of caring for those who are ill and suffering.
- John Wesley presented lifestyle guidelines to enhance wellness and healing in his book, *Primitive Physic*.
- The Wesleyan tradition uplifts health and wholeness for all.

### Parish/Faith Community Nursing—A Specialized Practice of Practitioners who:

- Maintain an active license as a registered professional nurse in the state where s/he practices.
- Attend a basic education program with content specific to faith community nursing.
- Are members of the church staff who coordinate health ministry programs:
  - Unpaid (volunteer) models and paid models
  - Clergy support and teamwork are important for successful health ministry initiatives; the parish nurse is neither an independent nor a replacement for clergy.
- Provide "*intentional care of the spirit*" in conjunction with nursing skills and knowledge.
- Guide the congregation toward "*the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities; prevention of illness and injury; and alleviation of suffering in the context of the values, beliefs, and practices of the faith community.*"
- Uphold professional nursing standards set forth in the Scope and Standards of Practice for Faith Community Nursing by the American Nurses Association and the Health Ministries Association, Inc.
- Are catalysts for both congregational and clergy health/wellness.

### Parish Nurses' Role in Health Ministry

- Reflect the needs of the community and includes a wholistic approach focused on physical, emotional, spiritual, social, financial and environmental health.
- Guide others in taking positive action regarding wellness, prevention and treatment of illness, and in navigating the health care system and community resources.
- Are skilled listeners and communicators who assist clergy in visiting and maintaining a reassuring presence to those suffering or experiencing life transitions.
- Churches often have wellness-related or caring ministries that can provide a foundation for initiating a parish nurse program.

### Resources

- Contact the UMC Health Ministry Advisor: [umchmadvisor@umcor.org](mailto:umchmadvisor@umcor.org)
- Visit the UMC Health Ministry website: <http://www.gbophb.org/cfh/umchmn/>
- Read *Health Ministry for United Methodist Clergy and Congregations*: <http://www.gbophb.org/assets/1/7/4380.pdf>