Parish Nurse Ministry

What is a Parish Nurse?

Parish nurses are registered nurses who practice whole body health for self, individuals and the church community using nursing knowledge combined with spiritual care. The role of a Parish Nurse allows a unique ministry of health to members of a congregation. Parish nursing allows the congregation to reclaim its role of health and wholeness.

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Parish Nursing is recognized by the American Nurses Association as a specialized practice.

Parish Nurses have RN licensure.

Parish Nurses go through 36-40 hours of education.

Some things a Parish Nurse does:

- Help members integrate faith and health
- Maintain privacy of those they serve.
- Answer general health questions, such as “How long is the incubation period for chicken pox?”
- Help persons understand post-surgery instructions.
- Help persons get set-up with various social agencies (housekeeping aids, home nursing care, Hospice, support groups).
- Help persons make a list of questions to ask the doctor.
- Help persons understand medical procedures.
- Visit persons in their home if they are not able to get out.
- Organize health education programs and screenings in the church.
- Listen to those they serve.

Some things a Parish Nurse does NOT do:

- Diagnose, prescribe, do any invasive procedures, or in any way take the place of the pastor or physician.
- Give daily baths or perform tasks assigned to other home health persons.
- Prescribe or supply medications.
- Give injections. However, Parish Nurses can arrange for other health professionals to provide immunizations for recommended groups.
- Give the impression a Parish Nurse can make health problems go away, but try to help persons understand what is happening and respond in ways that maximize their potential to live abundantly.