

The Congregational Nurse and Health Ministry Program of Forsyth County

The Congregational Nurse and Health Ministry Program fosters community partnerships to promote, develop, and support health ministries in and through faith communities.

The Congregational Nurse and Health Ministry Program serves as an advocate and community resource for the promotion of holistic health through faith communities within Forsyth County. Congregational nursing and health ministries integrate medical knowledge, behavioral science, and pastoral care with the practices of a faith community to improve the health of citizens.

The Congregational Nurse and Health Ministry Program of Forsyth County is based on a volunteer model. Nurses and lay persons from the participating congregations are volunteers within their own faith community. The program is open to any congregation and welcomes religious and ethnic diversity and strives to meet the needs of the under-served in our community.

The program respects the individual needs and culture of the various faith traditions in our community; therefore each congregation has the ability and capacity to create their own program to serve their members and the community where they are located.

Congregational Nursing Philosophy

Congregational nursing is a recognized specialty practice that combines professional nursing and health ministry. Congregational nursing emphasizes health and healing within a faith community through:

Spirit - The spiritual dimension is central to congregational nursing practice. Personal spiritual formation is an ongoing, essential component of practice for the congregational nurse and includes both self-care and hospitality, through opening the heart to self and others.

Professionalism - The congregational nurse role reclaims the historic roots of professional nursing. Aspects of health and healing found in many faith traditions are embodied in the role of the congregational nurse. The congregational nurse practices under the American Nurses Association Scope and Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics.

Shalom - The congregational nurse understands health to be a dynamic process that embodies the spiritual, psychological, physical, and social dimensions of the person. Shalom, God's intent for harmony and wholeness, serves as a foundation for understanding health.

Community - The congregational nurse, in collaboration with the pastoral staff and members of the congregation, participates in the ongoing transformation of the faith community into sources of health and healing. Partnerships with other community health resources foster new and creative responses to health and wellness concerns.

Role of the Congregational Nurse (also known as Parish Nurse or Faith Community Nurse)

Integrator of faith and health - assists people to achieve a higher level of wellness by connecting the close relationship between spiritual and physical health.

Health counselor- discusses health concerns with members of the congregation and makes home or hospital visits as needed. Congregational nurses do not perform "hands on" nursing care.

Health educator- promotes an understanding of the relationship between lifestyle, attitudes, faith, and well being.

Referral advisor- helps people utilize community resources and services in addressing their health needs.

Recruits and coordinates volunteers and support groups within the congregation to support the health ministry objectives of the congregation.



**The Shepherd's Center
of Greater Winston-Salem**