



Faith Community Nursing | Frequently Asked Questions

Who is a faith community nurse?

Faith community nursing is a specialty practice of nursing and a professional model of health ministry:

- The title “faith community nurse” is a universal term and addresses practice within a broad range of faith communities. Other titles used include “parish nurse” or “congregational nurse”.
- The historic roots of health and healing come from the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- The faith community nurse uses their knowledge to promote wellness of body, mind, and spirit.
- **The roles include:**
 - Assisting individuals to integrate their faith and health
 - Providing health education and health-related counseling
 - Helping individuals find support groups and services within communities
 - Serving as an advocate for health

Who can be a faith community nurse?

A faith community nurse must be a currently licensed RN and have completed a recognized foundations faith community nursing preparation course. Other individuals, such as LPN/ LVNs, retired RNs, therapists, health educators, may volunteer to assist with the health ministry, but the activities of the team would be under the supervision of the faith community nurse.

What are examples of faith community nursing activities?

The faith community nurse may provide the following:

- Offers comfort and prayer during times of crisis and celebration
- Refers parishioners to various support services including older adult programs or grief support
- Offers tips related to maintaining a healthy lifestyle in the parish newsletter
- Coordinates seminars on stress management or infant massage
- Provides screening for hypertension

The faith community nurse’s focus is on the intentional care of the spirit. The nurse does not provide “hands-on” nursing care. Their work is not a substitute for pastoral care, medical assistance, community health nursing or social services. Faith community nurses work in partnership with others to advocate for the health and wellbeing of the congregation.

What is the congregation’s role?

The faith community nurse required the ongoing support from the congregation, health cabinet wellness committee and clergy. **Keys to success include:**

- Well-prepared nurses educated in the specialty practice of faith community nursing and committed to wholistic health
- Clergy and lay professionals eager to work on a team
- An active health cabinet / wellness council
- A congregation / faith community willing to become involved in the care and support of others
- Financial, spiritual, and emotional support

For additional information about faith community / parish nursing and available foundations of faith community nursing preparation courses, contact Dr. Jean Bokinski, Director of the Parish Nurse Ministry Program, Concordia College. bokinski@cord.edu. Visit our website at ConcordiaContinuingStudies.com/parishnurse.