

Questions Churches Frequently Ask about Faith Community Nursing (FCN)

What are suggested qualifications of an Elim Faith Community Nurse?

- Licensed Registered Nurse
- Completion of 36 hour FCN Preparation Course
- Strong interpersonal communication, organization, time management and caring skills
- Self-directed with ability to work independently as well as on a team
- Maintain confidentiality as required; high ethical standards and personal integrity
- A personal relationship with Jesus Christ

What will be the cost to our church?

- Ideally FCN's are salaried part time for their role, but in many churches they serve as unpaid (volunteer) staff.
- Additional benefits may include: FCN preparation course, liability insurance, professional license, mileage, an office and office supplies.
- Budget expenditures may include: Education, support group materials, equipment (e.g. blood pressure/first aid kits), resource library.

What would a Faith Community Nurse do in our church?

Each church will have different needs. Here is a list of potential responsibilities.

- Provide education and health counseling.
- Facilitate educational classes.
- Encourage members to care for each other by connecting needs with those who can help.
- Offer resources, referrals, advocacy and a listening presence to people who have health needs.
- Promote healthy followers of Jesus Christ by encouraging them to take responsibility for their own health.
- Nurture, support and interact with people from the beginning of life to the end.
- Assist in visiting members in their homes and in hospitals.
- Identify, recruit and train care-giving volunteers.
- Develop support groups.
- Provide safety measures in the church building.
- Provide outreach to the community.

Our church is very small and has mostly younger families. Why would we need a FCN?

- FCN's minister in all sizes of congregations and to all ages. Health and wellness needs do not discriminate to size of the church or the ages of the congregants.

Does Faith Community Nursing duplicate Stephen Ministry & Befrienders?

- These ministries complement each other and they often use each other as referral sources.
- When a FCN client needs longer term one on one contact, a Stephen minister is contacted.
- When a Stephen Ministry client has health concerns/questions they are referred to the FCN.

Why don't we just send our people to their own health care provider?

- Health care providers often have limited time to spend with their patients – both in the office and when they are hospitalized. A FCN has time to develop relationships and provide sensitive spiritual care and meet psychosocial needs.
- FCN clients often come to the FCN first as they have earned their trust. The FCN in turn can refer them to appropriate health care settings.
- Persons in need often turn to their church for direction.
- Effective health care requires more than medical treatment of illness. A FCN helps with health needs that the health care provider cannot address. A FCN in a church offers spiritual insights and encouragements along with health advocacy, education and referrals.
- A FCN does not replace the health care professional, but complements, collaborates and partners with other health professionals and care that is already being provided.
- Our clients often have multiple health care providers and a FCN can facilitate communication between caring providers.
- Often people do not have insurance and the FCN facilitates finding affordable medical help and direction in finding an insurance plan that fits their needs.

What liability insurance does the FCN and church need?

- The church's liability insurance covers the church for any liability resulting from the care a nurse may provide on church property or off church property (e.g. Retreat, small group meeting, etc.).**
- Nurse Professional Liability covers the nurse personally under the same scenario. Without Nurse Professional Liability coverage, the church would still be covered, but the individual nurse would not be. **

Do HIPPA regulations apply to a Faith Community Nurse?

- No, because Faith Community Nursing is not a health care plan or a health care provider that shares health information for billing or insurance purposes. It is not a clearinghouse of medical information nor does it offer medical information to any clearinghouse.*
- A FCN must maintain confidentiality of all sensitive information unless permission is granted to share with clergy and/or church members. Faith community nurses are professionals and must practice nursing ethics in all they do. As members of a faith community, these nurses must also demonstrate respect for the membership and maintain each person's privacy.*

For additional information about Faith Community Nursing and available FCN preparation courses, contact Joanne Hall, Elim Faith Community Nursing Director at fcn@elimcare.org, 952-259-4461 and web sites at www.elimcare.org/fcn; <http://www.facebook.com/EFCANurseNetwork>



**International Parish Nurse Resource Center*

***Steve Budd, Brotherhood Mutual*