

What is Parish Nursing?



Parish nursing complements whatever health provision can be made through the NHS. Most of our nurses work part-time within the health service in addition to their parish nursing work and so they are already linked in through their clinical practice.

However, for their parish nursing hours, they are line-managed by the church or charity that appoints or employs them. They remain accountable to the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and they follow the Code of Practice that all registered nurses follow. This commits them to confidentiality, respect for the individual, professional standards, teamwork, and appropriate documentation of their practice. Information is not shared unless the consent of the client is given. The only exception to this would be where harm to the client or others might be caused by not disclosing information to an appropriate person.

Each parish nurse has a professional supervisor or mentor, with whom they meet every two months, and who is normally also a nurse employed in the NHS. They also have a spiritual mentor. For reasons of confidentiality, these are normally people who do not know the congregation.

One of the early tasks of a parish nurse is to begin to build relationships with the local GP practice and health professionals in the area. As confidence builds, referrals may be made to and from the primary care team or other health providers, or other appropriate third sector agencies.

Where a church or charity wishes to be commissioned for NHS or Public Health work, they may engage with the Clinical Commissioning Group for their area or the Public Health Officer in local government. The work of parish nurses and their volunteer teams may help to reduce hospital admissions and thus be an attractive holistic approach. However, the faith element to parish nursing should not be compromised since it is our firm belief that spiritual care is extremely important in health promotion, community cohesion and disease management. Adherence to the "Faithworks Charter" may help to inspire confidence that churches will be very careful to ensure that vulnerable people are cared for with respect for the values and beliefs they hold.

Parish Nursing is all about supporting people and communities towards whole person healthcare. It can happen through a local church of any denomination, and people can be referred to their own faith community if they so desire. [Click here](#) for more information about the nature of parish nursing.

Whole person healthcare is about the person's overall well-being, which includes spiritual, physical, mental and social aspects of health.

All Parish Nurses are registered nurses and are appointed or employed through a local church. Most of them continue to work for the NHS and we value our links with all NHS and other relevant professionals.

Parish Nursing Ministries UK promotes this exciting concept and helps churches and nurses to develop it.

www.parishnursing.org.uk