

## **Portfolio Review for Parish Nurses**

### Introduction

*Scope and Standards for Faith Community Nurses* states that parish nurses are registered nurses with specialized education for this unique area of practice. There are many and diverse educational programs available for parish nurses including the various modalities offered through Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, Wis. In spite of the various offerings available there are some nurses who wish to be parish nurses – and are practicing in a limited parish nurse role – who have not completed any educational program. Some of these nurses state they have prepared by self-directed readings. A directed portfolio review would provide an opportunity to document their preparation assure compliance with the standards for practice.

*Scope and Standards for Faith Community Nurses* is consistent with other professional nursing codes and identifies evaluation as an important component for professional growth and development. A portfolio review offers a unique opportunity for the practicing parish nurse to benefit from a comprehensive evaluation process.

A credentialing committee with participants from Health Ministries Association and American Nurses Association are working to develop a format for eventual credentialing for specialists in parish nursing. It is anticipated that a portfolio review will be the required format.

Practicing parish nurses sometimes have to relocate due to job transfers or career changes of family members. A well developed portfolio will assist as they introduce the concept of parish nursing to the pastor and leadership in a new congregation.

The Portfolio Review is being offered to parish nurses who are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) or parish nurses that serve a congregation within the LCMS. Members of the portfolio review committee are Parish Nurse District Representatives: Karen Hardecopf (NID), Hope Knight (OK), Marla Lichtsinn (PSW), Parish Nurse Educator, Janice Spikes (KS), clergy, Rev. Rocky Mease (KS), and the Coordinator, LCMS Parish Nursing, Marcia Schnorr.

## Process

1. The parish nurse interested in completing a portfolio review will contact the Coordinator, Parish Nurse Ministry (LCMS) and complete an interview. The review process will be explained as part of the interview.
2. A portfolio review fee of \$200 is payable to LCMS Health Ministry with “Parish Nursing Portfolio” on the notation line and mailed to Tracy Quaethem, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.
3. Upon receipt of the payment, the applicant will be contacted by the Coordinator, Parish Nurse Ministry and given the names of the assigned reviewers. Any procedural questions will be clarified. Appropriate theological readings will be mailed to the applicant.
4. The parish nurse will complete the portfolio according to the guidelines provided and submit three copies (one for each reviewer and one extra) to Dr. Marcia Schnorr, 1225 Springdale Drive, Rochelle, IL 61068.
5. The portfolio reviewers will complete the review and forward the portfolio and a copy of the reviewer’s comments to the Coordinator, Parish Nurse Ministry who will document completion of the portfolio review and request a certificate of completion. Upon request from a portfolio reviewer, the coordinator will provide an additional review. All materials will be returned to the applicant.
6. A certificate acknowledging successful portfolio review will be awarded to the applicant from LCMS Health Ministry.

## Content

The portfolio should be put into a binder with tabs to identify each section. The portfolio shall include the following:

1. **Cover letter** that should state the purpose for the portfolio review
  - ✓ Documentation of self-directed learning in lieu of completing a parish nurse preparation course.
  - ✓ Peer review for an already established parish nurse ministry. (Please include a statement regarding your nursing and parish nursing education).
  - ✓ Brief description of your congregation and community
2. **Theological framework for parish nursing.**

Parish Nursing is an extension of Christ's healing ministry and this should be reflected in the ministry of the parish nurse. The portfolio should include

- ✓ Evidence of Christ-centered health-related activities.
- ✓ Profession of faith.
- ✓ Statement identifying regular participation in the sacrament, active worship, service, and prayer life.
- ✓ Summary of the videos, *Theology of Mercy for Parish Nurses* (Rev. John T. Pless) and *Caring for God's People* (Rev. Dr. Daniel E. Paavola) available on-line at <http://video.lcms.org/archives/category/health-ministry>.

**3. Personal philosophy of parish nursing.**

- ✓ Describe the difference between “a nurses in the congregation” and a “parish nurse” (include what parish nursing is NOT compared to what parish nursing IS).
- ✓ Tell how the church's nurture of your personal spiritual growth has helped to influence you as a professional nurse and the distinction of serving as a parish nurse (use examples of specific activities such as Bible Study participation, ministry involvement, and church attendance).

**4. Description of a typical day, week, or month.\***

- ✓ Demonstrate (or can describe) key roles in parish nursing and health ministry: integrator of faith and health, health educator, personal health counselor, referral agent, facilitator/trainer of volunteers
- ✓ Apply basic nursing interventions (e.g. learning facilitation, active listening, presence, touch, spiritual support, emotional support, counseling, values clarification—see Appendix A of Solari-Twadell, McDermott: *Parish Nursing: Development, Education, and Administration*)
- ✓ Include evidence of recognition of dual competencies of health ministry/parish nursing, and incorporates continuing personal/professional growth

**5. Model for practice with advantages and disadvantages.**

- ✓ The nurse should include the advantages the church, pastor and staff will benefit from if they include the ministry of the parish nurse.
- ✓ The nurse will compare congregational and institutional models for practice and determine which will be most appropriate at this time for the nurse and the congregation.

- ✓ The nurse will compare salaried and unsalaried models and identify the reason for selecting the present model of practice.
  - ✓ This area could include past prevention programs, outlines from presentations to groups, and a list of possible programs the nurse has researched. (See also #8)
  - ✓ This area could include an explanation of congregational assessments, environmental assessments and sample congregational questionnaires could be included.
  - ✓ The nurse could include an honest description of the challenges from previous congregations that may impact the model for practice.
- 6. Description of team ministry as it relates to parish nursing.**
- 7. Description of congregation and community.\***
- ✓ Describe rationale for assessment.
  - ✓ Describe methods for assessing congregation and community: observation, interviews, surveys, research and incorporation of information available to public (public health data, govt. demographics)
  - ✓ Set goals and objectives. Assess existing resources. Develop implementation plan and process for evaluating impact of proposed interventions.
- 8. Description of health education as a role for parish nursing. (Provide a comprehensive example of one educational offering provided.)**
- ✓ Document a health-related presentation to a church or community group.
  - ✓ Provide evidence of a congregational health activity (i.e. health assessment survey, health fair targeting a particular age group or over the lifespan, topics written for bulletins or newsletters)
  - ✓ Describe health education provided during home, hospital, and/or nursing home visits.
- 9. Description of health counseling as a role for parish nursing. (Provide a complete description of one way that you include this role in your practice.)**
- ✓ Describe how you handled one-to-one counseling.
  - ✓ Include situations that have led to joint counseling with the pastor.
  - ✓ Discuss situations in which the parish nurse would ask that the confidential information be shared with the pastor.

- ✓ Describe how documentation has been handled in present or previous congregations.
- ✓ Discuss the plan for documentation and activity reporting to the pastor.

**10. The use of volunteers in the health ministry in your congregation. Include methods for recruitment, types of services provided, equipping them for service, and methods for acknowledging their contributions.**

- ✓ Describe how volunteers are generally sought in the congregation that you serve compared to how you specifically recruit them using methods such as face to face, newsletters, telephone or personal letters. (Are volunteers used to “fill a spot” or requested for their interest, skill, or passion?)
- ✓ Specifically indicate which programs, ministries or types of services are provided for the congregation and community by a network of volunteers through the parish nursing ministry.
- ✓ For one of the above programs, ministries or type of services describe in detail how the volunteers are initially trained, encouraged in service, including the continuing education and evaluation process, and how they are recognized for their service.

**11. Listing of community resources that you have referred congregants to as well as community resources in which you have provided an outreach.**

**12. Discussion of how faith and health are integrated. [How do #8-11 differ--because you are a parish nurse—from similar activities provided by nurses who are not parish nurses?]**

- ✓ Include in the discussion how the term “wholistic” makes a difference.
- ✓ Describe the compatibility between science and religion that a parish nurse creates.

**13. Overview of continued professional development.**

- ✓ Describe pertinent continuing education from the past 3 years.
- ✓ Include District parish nurse meetings and courses from the past 3 years.
- ✓ Identify available district or state-wide parish nurse meetings and/or annual updates.
- ✓ Explain the need for discipline specific continuing education as well as parish nurse education.

14. If the portfolio review is being done to demonstrate mastery through self-directed reading, an annotated bibliography of at least five sources that were used should be included.
- 14a. If the portfolio review is for program review, please include a section for bibliographic references used in the parish nurse ministry.

**Some recommended readings attached.**

**15. Goals for the future**

- ✓ Identify 2 to 3 goals for further initiation and/or development of parish nursing in your congregation (or other site for your parish nurse ministry).
- ✓ State the goals in measurable format, identify how you plan to implement, and how you will evaluate whether they have been achieved.

**16. Three letters of reference**

- ✓ One letter should be from your pastor. If your congregation has a pastoral vacancy, please include a letter from the interim pastor. If you do not have an interim pastor, please submit a letter from the chairperson of your congregation, the chairperson of the Board of Elders, or the chairperson of the committee or board to whom the parish nurse would be accountable.
- ✓ If your LCMS district has a parish nurse representative, please include a letter from her/him. The Coordinator, Parish Nurse Ministry will provide you with this information during the initial interview. If this position is vacant, please substitute a letter from another LCMS parish nurse. If you do not know other LCMS parish nurses, names will be suggested. [The purpose of this letter is to intentionally provide a mentor or peer as you continue to develop your parish nursing.]
- ✓ The final letter may be from anyone of your choosing who is able to speak to your parish nurse ministry.

**SOME RECOMMENDED READINGS**

American Nurses Association & Health Ministries Association (2006).  
*Faith community nursing: Scope and standards of practices*. Silver Springs MD: nursesbooks.org

Anthony, MJ & Estep, J Jr. eds. (2005) *Management essentials for*

*Christian ministries.* Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Cardill, D. *Beyond the resume: How to compile your nursing portfolio.*  
[http://www.dcardillo.com/articles/beyond\\_resume.html](http://www.dcardillo.com/articles/beyond_resume.html)

Hickman, JS (2006) *Faith community nursing.* Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Lipson, J. G. and Dibble, S. L. (Eds.). (2005) *Culture in Clinical Care.* San Francisco: UCSF Nursing Press

McCain, P. T. et al (Eds.). (2005) *Concordia The Lutheran Confessions.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

Steinke, PL (1996). *Healthy congregations: A systems approach.* Herndon VA: The Alban Institute Inc.