

# What can a Faith Community Nurse bring to your church?



## Are your church's pastoral care needs growing?

It could be due to rising stress, mental health issues, relationship breakdown, isolation and loneliness, early discharge from hospital, increasing chronic conditions, disabilities, or the growing needs in our ageing population. A Faith Community Nurse (FCN) can assist the church to effectively meet the needs of your congregation and outreach in your local community by adding a health dimension to pastoral care. Adding an FCN increases your ministry's depth, scope and reach, because nurses bring comprehensive health and care knowledge and skills that others in your pastoral care team may not have. FCNs provide intentional care of the whole person body-mind-spirit, to promote health, prevent disease, injury and abuse, and support people experiencing illness to manage their condition and optimise their health and wellbeing and adding value to your church's pastoral care.

## A Faith Community Nurse brings your church:

- ♥ nursing knowledge/skills combined with personal qualities and Christian faith to bring compassionate, knowledgeable and faith-filled support to people
- ♥ a deeper level of focused whole person support (physical, social, emotional and spiritual) to promote wellbeing
- ♥ support for people as they navigate health, aged and community care services so they locate the right resources at the right time
- ♥ broader scope to enhance pastoral care and enable helpful outreach
- ♥ the gift of time, presence, and attentive, careful listening

To learn more about Faith Community Nursing [click here](http://www.afcna.org.au)

## Your Faith Community Nurse brings these core functions:

Health promotion  
Education and counselling  
Advocacy and referral  
Listening and visiting  
Training and coordination  
Hope and spiritual care

"Nurses are the most trusted profession in Australia. Our FCNs are afforded a special respect by the whole community."

"My FCN found help so I could stay in my own home. She taught me how to manage my diabetes, talking me through everything until I understood. Now I am in control of it!"

## This is what pastors, priests and churchgoers say their Faith Community Nurse brings to their church

"Our FCN combines compassionate and informed care with her Christian faith, to create a special holistic pastoral care response that I as a pastor cannot achieve."

"The FCN has excellent people skills. She is a great listener, paying attention to location of underlying issues. She supports, prays, teaches and helps people with practical information we don't have."

"Our FCN has the eyes of a hawk and the courage of a lion. She has peripheral vision to assess what's going on. She is not afraid to go to the difficult and deeper places with people during pastoral conversations."

"Our FCN considers the whole person. People open up to her easily and quickly. She finds their strengths and internal motivators and instead of focusing on their problems she works with their strengths to find ways to move forward."

[www.afcna.org.au](http://www.afcna.org.au)



## Does it have to be a nurse?

At AFCNA we are often asked 'Why does it need to be a nurse?' To find answers we ran focus groups and here are the top 10 attributes in three key areas where participants believe nurses bring unique contributions to their church: knowledge, skills and personal qualities – including the nurse's personal Christian faith.

### Unique knowledge nurses can bring to your church

1. 'Multilingual' in the languages of faith, health and community care
2. Holistic approach to health – body, mind, spirit
3. Broad health knowledge spanning many fields
4. Able to provide care management in a person's home
5. Make ethical decisions based on shared Christian values
6. Understand how to navigate systems to get resources/services
7. Can successfully navigate transition between services with people
8. Understand health promotion and illness/injury/abuse prevention
9. Can effectively translate information and knowledge for people
10. Work to a professional standard and are accountable to regulatory laws

### Unique skills nurses can bring to your church

1. Build relationships using refined interpersonal and communication skills
2. Coordinate care creatively - consider person's preferences and offer options
3. Able to answer person's questions or find out answers
4. Manage care using goal setting, coaching, monitoring and evaluating skills
5. Able to locate the right resources and make timely referrals
6. Work with/for the person, advocating and mediating (at their request)
7. Case management skills to talk to service providers with/for the person
8. Sound teaching skills to make information accessible
9. Good problem solving skills
10. Recognise person's social context and plan care accordingly

### Unique qualities nurses can bring to your church

1. Trust and integrity as the most trusted professional in Australia
2. Focus on quality of life for the whole person with an emphasis on spiritual care
3. Compassionate attitude – demonstrate 'fruit of the spirit' in their care
4. Have a shared faith and common values with the person
5. Provide a Christian perspective that ignites hope and alleviates fear and suffering
6. Share religious activities to provide spiritual care, e.g. pray, read Bible, communion
7. Demonstrate spiritual maturity to sit in difficult spaces with humility and patience
8. Rely on God and the power of the Holy Spirit to maintain stability under pressure
9. Accessible because they are part of the faith community
10. Give time and presence to listen and be with people which systems can't provide

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For more information get a FREE 'Introducing Faith Community Nursing' booklet by emailing [afcna@outlook.com](mailto:afcna@outlook.com) and providing your name, church, contact details and phone numbers, and we will be in touch. © AFCNA 2020