

Parish Nursing

Initial Information pack for enquiring Churches and Christian organisations

Produced by Parish Nursing Ministries UK

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This is the initial information pack has been written for Churches and Christian organisations interested in the idea of developing a Parish nursing service. More detailed information is available, should the enquirer decide to proceed further.

Welcome to this information pack about the ministry of Parish Nursing.

Here at Parish Nursing Ministries UK (PNMUK) we passionately believe that Parish Nursing¹ is a ministry “for such a time as this.” (Esther 4.14b). We are not alone: there are some fifteen thousand parish nursing ministries operating successfully in twenty three countries around the world and over ninety active in the UK. Like us they firmly believe that healing, health and wellbeing, are an essential part of any church or Christian organisations mission. If you agree then do carry on and read this Information Pack

Many churches and Christian organisations in the UK today want to engage in meaningful social action by reaching out to people in their local communities regardless of background or beliefs. At the same time, there are significant numbers of registered nurses and midwives who are looking for a way to align their Christian beliefs with their professional role. Both these goals can be achieved through a ministry of parish nursing (and where appropriate midwifery) with healing health and wellbeing at its heart.

The Information Pack has been developed for individuals, churches and Christian organisation who are making an initial enquiry about parish nursing ministry and answers our most frequently asked questions. The information provided is by no means exhaustive and much more detail is available for those who pursue an enquiry further.

Ros Moore

CEO Parish Nursing Ministries UK

¹ Please note that for brevity the term nurse and nursing is used throughout to denote nurse and midwife, nursing and midwifery in all care settings. This includes all fields of practice (adult, child, mental health, learning disabilities) and holders of specialist public health and community nursing and midwifery qualifications such as health visiting, school nursing, community midwifery, community psychiatric, paediatric and learning disabilities nursing, practice and district nursing.

What is Parish Nursing?

Parish nursing is a form of health ministry focussed on improving and maintaining the wholistic health and wellbeing of congregations and local communities. The theological basis for health ministry is evident in both the old and new testament and manifest in the life of Christ. By working in partnership with PNMUK, most Churches or Christian organisation will be able to engage positively with parish nursing ministry.

Why use the term 'Parish'?

The term 'parish' has several possible meanings. It can mean a local council's geographical area, an identified group of people or section of the population, or signify a link with a church of some sort. We find it useful because it suggests that the health care being offered is not just for church people and Christians, it is for everyone in the locality.

How can churches or Christian organisations engage in parish nursing ministry?

In order to engage in parish nursing ministry, the church or Christian organisation will establish and lead its own bespoke **parish nursing service**. The service is led by a **certificated parish nurse** working **alone** or supported by a **parish nursing team** which may comprise one or more parish nurses, a selected group of volunteers and including, if appropriate, other healthcare professions or occupations. This must be done in partnership with **Parish Nursing Ministries UK (PNMUK)**. This is because we have spearheaded the introduction of parish nursing ministry in this country and since 2004, have helped set up over a 100 parish-nursing services in churches of all denominations across the UK. We are also the European arm of the Westberg Institute, the international association for parish nursing worldwide. **As a result, we are recognised as the national leadership and quality assurance body for parish nursing in the UK and Europe.** We are responsible for setting and assuring national standards for all aspects of parish nursing ministry, parish nursing professional practice, and through our unique accreditation scheme, for recognising churches and Christian organisations as **PNMUK accredited parish nursing service providers. Appendix A describes the different phases involved in journey to becoming a PNMUK Accredited Parish Nursing Service. Churches or Christian organisations that are not PNMUK partners and PNMUK accredited should not use the parish nursing title, model, approach or resources.**

What can a parish nursing service do?

Once a church or Christian organisation decides to set up a parish nursing service they will secure the services of a **currently registered nurse** who, following completion of our internationally validated mandatory preparation for practice course, becomes a **certified parish nurse**. With a clear spiritual element to all its activities, a parish nursing service might:

- **Help people to maintain their health and wellbeing** by providing health education to people of all backgrounds or defined social or demographic group;
- **Help people to recover their health and wellbeing** by providing short-term or transitional care and support to people with a temporary illness, disability or health need;
- **Help people to remain independent or self-manage their long-term health care** by providing individual or group interventions for people who are socially isolated or have enduring health conditions that require lifelong treatment;
- **Help people in the final stages of life** by providing non-specialist palliative care to people nearing the end of life.
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If the church or Christian organisation has a clear mission to serve a particular group (e.g. older people, asylum seekers, homeless people, children and families, carers, or refugees), or to address a pressing health need in their community (e.g. social isolation, dementia, mental health, healthy living) then the parish nursing team and the services they provide, can be targeted towards that area.

What won't a parish nursing service do?

Parish nursing services should always be health focused and not try to replicate or replace the care provided by the NHS (or other public bodies) by offering statutory nursing services, invasive procedures or medical treatments. Nor will the service put pressure on people to change their spiritual or religious beliefs or join a particular Christian or other faith based group or organisation.

How does a parish nursing service relate to the NHS?

Through the parish nurse, the parish nursing service will seek to establish formal links with local General Practice surgeries and other community health providers. Once that relationship is established, and if the client agrees, staff from the local General Practice or other health and care providers may wish to establish a system for making and receiving referrals. Over the last few years we have seen the relationship between local parish nursing services, the NHS, Local Authorities, develop significantly and a growing number of our accredited providers have formal referral and reporting systems in place.

What are the likely benefits of having a parish nursing service?

Our data and research² shows that Parish nursing is effective in bringing together spiritual care and social action in a truly integral way and has evidence based benefits for everyone involved.

Benefits for the Local Community	Benefits to the Church or Christian Organisation
<p>Parish nursing reaches a wide variety of age groups and backgrounds, about a third of which are people who do not attend church. Yet, given the opportunity, these people often welcome a prayer or the opportunity to talk about faith issues in a respectful way.</p> <p>PNMUK service user questionnaires show that parish nursing improved physical and mental health, helped people to manage their health conditions, join social activities suggested by the nurse and are extremely pleased with the care they receive.</p>	<p>Raises the profile of the church or organisation in the community; Increase volunteering around the ministry;</p> <p>Enables churches to engage in a wider and more holistic range of community interventions;</p> <p>Doubles the amount of church time spent with non-church people.</p>

Can churches do this ecumenically?

It is possible to work with other churches to enable a service to be delivered. Parish Nursing Ministries UK can provide guidance on the various ways in which this can be done.

What is the role of a parish nurse?

Parish nurses use their skills in promoting and managing individual and community health to offer preventative and supportive healthcare to congregations and local communities. They work within the same legal professional and statutory framework as other UK registered nurses. As registered nurses they are able to work with the wider health and care system establishing strong inter-professional relationships with other health and care professionals in the community and the church. If the patient or client so desires, the parish nurse can also bring the gift of Christian prayer and practices.

² Wordsworth, H. A., Rediscovering a ministry of health; Parish nursing as a mission of the local church. Wipf and Stock, Oregon, 2015.

The parish nurse is responsible to the church or Christian organisation for the leadership and management of the parish nursing team and the day-to-day delivery of a high-quality service. Because it is a specialist area of practice involving the intentional integration of faith with the practice of nursing, the nurse will act as a health advocate for the congregation and community, educating and motivating people to take positive action regarding wellness, prevention, and appropriate treatment of illness whilst facilitating social and spiritual connections with God, one another, and the community. The type of service the church or Christian organisation decides to offer then determines the nature of the activities and type of care the parish nurse might offer.

Is a parish nurse a paid post or volunteer post?

Nearly one third of parish nurses in the UK are in paid posts. We have found that this encourages recruitment and retention and ensures that the service is properly resourced. However, if there is someone in a local congregation or organisation that is willing, and feels called by God to engage in parish nursing on a voluntary basis, this is also acceptable. Volunteers still need to receive expenses, be financed for training and require the same formal management arrangements as those who are employed. Some contribution towards the costs of NMC re-registration and insurance is also common. We advise churches and Christian organisations to put money aside on a regular basis to replace a voluntary position with a paid post at some point in the future.

Should a parish nurse be a Christian? Must they attend the host church?

It is possible to use the government's "Genuine Occupational Requirement" legislation in order to ask that applicants for a parish nursing post to be a Christian believer, providing that their job description includes the need to offer Christian prayer when asked to do so. With regards to the parish nurse attending the host church, we advise that they commit to attending the congregation's main worship service periodically to promote engagement.

How is a nurse prepared for the parish-nursing role?

In order to practice as a parish nurse in the UK, the nurse must be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and ideally bring at least 2 years post registration experience to the role.

Please see the footnotes for information about lapsed NMC registrants and other registered health professionals^{3 4}.

Before taking up the role, an aspiring parish nurse must be certified as a parish nurse. They do this by successfully completing our five-day, internationally validated "Preparation for Parish Nursing Practice" course, which is offered at least three times a year. Once certified, the parish nurse must then undertake sufficient continuing professional development to maintain and enhance their parish nursing competences and meet the NMC's registration requirements in the three years that follow. PNMUK supports all these processes through the provision of our professional leadership, education training and development services.

³ Regardless of past experience or background, nurses or midwives who are not currently NMC registered cannot be the parish nurse or practice as a parish nurse in a team. They can be involved in an assistive capacity providing they are working to a parish nurse with a current registration.

⁴ If the church or Christian organisation wishes to recruit **a registered health professional to the team who is not a nurse**, providing they are registered with the HCPC or appropriate statutory regulator, they too can apply to attend the PNMUK accredited role preparation programme after which they may join the team in a specialist role (for example receiving referrals from the Parish Nurse or leading on elements of the service to which their specialist skills apply). Whilst there would be parity between any registered professionals involved, and every professional would be accountable for their own practice, the overall lead for the management and governance of a parish nursing service should be a lead parish nurse. If the individual is not registered with the HCPC or appropriate statutory regulator, then they can occupy an assistive position within the team. PNMUK recognises the value of multi-professional teams and will provide any necessary support, advising churches and Christian organisations on how to accommodate these practitioners within the service. Please note that this does not apply to registered midwives who work to the same professional standards and regulatory regime as nurses. They can be recruited as a "Parish midwife" and lead a parish midwifery team.

How is a parish nurse regulated?

All nurses and midwives in the UK are registered with, and regulated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (<https://www.nmc.org.uk>). Parish nurses are no different. Their work and practice must adhere to the NMC Code and comply with all the professional standards and guidance. A parish nurse can be held to account by the NMC if there is evidence of misconduct or poor practice. To remain registered the parish nurse must revalidate every three years. We provide all parish-nursing services with practical support, resources, policies and guidelines they need to ensure compliance with the NMC's regulatory regime.

Who provides professional leadership to a parish nurse?

PNMUK is the professional leadership body for parish nurses. By developing the knowledge and evidence base, setting standards for practice and providing mandatory role preparation and on-going education, training, development and support, we enable the parish nurse to provide safe, high quality health care within a Christian ethos.

Who leads, manages, and supports a parish nurse?

Leadership, management and supervision:

The management and delivery of the service, including the line management of the lead parish nurse, is the responsibility of the host church or Christian organisation. The lead parish nurse usually has a designated line manager and acts as line manager for any other members of the parish nursing team. There should also be an identified committee or group of people within the church or organisation who takes responsibility for the strategy, oversight, governance, fundraising, and resourcing of the parish nursing service and for assuring the nurse has spiritual support via a mentor or director to help build spiritual resilience

Parish nurses will also need access to professional supervision usually from a senior nurse in good standing with the NMC. The choice of professional mentor or supervisor is personal to each nurse. However as part of the partnership agreement with affiliated churches or organisations, PNMUK offers individual and group supervision activities that promote reflection and shared learning with other parish nurses in the region.

What about insurance?

There are two types of insurance needed, and PNMUK can give further information on these:

- **Public indemnity** for a church or Christian organisation. This should already be in existence, and may not incur an extra premium, but the insurer will need to know that a parish nursing service is being planned and will ask for details.
- **Professional indemnity for the nurse(s):** This is mandatory for the purposes of nurse registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. If a church or Christian organisation becomes the employer, it will need to provide adequate professional indemnity insurance, and quotes will need to be sought. If a nurse is a volunteer or self-employed, it may be offered by their membership of a professional association, e.g. The Royal College of Nursing.

How much does it cost to set up and run a Parish Nursing service? Who funds it?

The cost of providing a parish nursing service is the responsibility of the Church or Christian organisation. They usually raise the money from church funds, through local fundraising, or by applying for grants from various funding organisations. Indicative costs for setting up the service are described below but can vary depending on the size and nature of the service.

The costs associated with the partnership with PNMUK and progression through the 5 phases of the journey to becoming a PNMUK Accredited Parish Nursing Service are set out in Appendix A. These figures are accurate at the time of publication, but are subject to annual revision.

However we are a small charity operating on a not for profit basis and subsidise many of the services we provide to the partner churches and Christian organisations with whom we work.

1. Costs of the Partnership with Parish Nursing Ministries UK:

Churches and Christian organisations in Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the journey set out in Appendix A, have access to our 'Development Services' and are charged one off or 'Pay As You Go' contribution for each phase. This means that a church or organisation only pays for the inputs they receive at a given point. For example, at the Expression of Interest Phase 1 we ask for a flat contribution of £120. This helps us to recover some of the costs of a visit from one of our regional advocates and the administration and resources we provide. According to our current partners our development services have been absolutely critical in helping them set up their parish nursing service and well worth the money.

Churches and Christian organisations in Phase 4 and 5 of the journey will have become formal partners of PNMUK, and therefore in receipt of our *Professional & Quality Services* for which they are charged a 'Standard Annual Contribution'. This has been described in feedback from our partners, as outstanding value for money.

We also charge for the 'Parish Nursing Preparation for Practice' 5 day course and the subsequent certification of the nurse.

2. Cost of Equipment:

As a minimum, the parish nursing service will need a personal lockable filing cabinet for patient notes (or secure electronic device if electronic records are to be kept); mobile phone; secure access to a laptop or PC; stationery, leaflet printing and business cards. Depending on the type of service being provided, equipment such as weighing scales and BP monitor (annually calibrated) may also be required.

3. Costs associated with the parish nurse(s) post – volunteer/employment and regulatory expenses:

Costs will include resources for recruitment, a salary (between £12-£15.00 per hour), employer pension, National Insurance, public and professional insurance, and costs of travel, Internet, and telephone. We also recommend setting an annual training budget to cover the costs of NMC registration fees and to pay for any on-going training and continuing professional development required for the role. This should include attendance at our annual symposium and participation in quarterly regional networking and supervision meetings with one of our staff and other parish nurses. As stated already volunteer parish nurses require similar HR and financial inputs but will not attract salary costs.

What are the next steps for Churches or Christian Organisations?

Representatives of a Church or Christian organisation who would like to consider this ministry further, without making a full commitment at this point, are invited to complete and return **Appendix B Expression of Interest Form (Phase 1)**. On receipt, we will arrange for a PNMUK Advocate to visit and provide the further information needed. As noted previously, we ask for a contribution of £120 to cover the cost of this, payable to Parish Nursing Ministries UK. Please fill in the form Appendix B and return as instructed. The visit usually takes between 1 to 3 hours and involves a presentation to leaders and members of the church or organisation followed by a Q&A session. If, however, a Church or Christian organisation would like to move directly to the **Active Commitment (Phase 2)** they should email the office (admin@parishnursing.org.uk) and we will provide the necessary paperwork and support.

What are the Next Steps for Aspiring Parish Nurses without a Ministry?

Registered nurses or midwives, who aspire to become a parish nurse but have yet to secure the backing of a church or Christian organisation ready to provide the ministry or who wish to consider parish nursing in the future, can apply to attend the role preparation programme course (for professional development) at their own expense. Please download the application form from our website and send it as directed with a covering letter stating your reasons for wanting to apply. We will then arrange an interview.

Further reading

- Caiger, B. "Walking Alongside; The Essence of Parish Nursing", Trafford publishing, Victoria, Canada, 2006.
- Patterson, D. "The Essential Parish nurse", Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, 2003.
- Wordsworth, H. "Rediscovering a ministry of health: Parish nursing as a mission of the local church." Wipf and Stock, Oregon, US 2015

Appendix A The Journey to Becoming a PNMUK Accredited Parish Nursing Service



ENQUIRY PHASE (0)

A church or Christian organisation contacts PNMUK for information about parish nursing and receives an Initial Enquiry Pack.

Cost: £0.00



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST PHASE (1)

Having read the Enquiry Pack, a church or Christian organisation contacts PNMUK expressing an interest in setting up a parish nursing service but with no firm decision. PNMUK sends out an advocate to explain the implications of having a parish nursing service before they decide to go ahead or not.

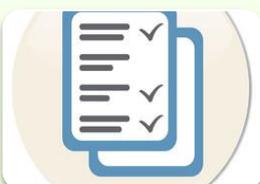
Cost: One off pay as you go contribution of £120.00



ACTIVE COMMITMENT PHASE (2)

If the church or Christian organisation feels ready, it makes an active commitment to progress. PNMUK, then allocates a regional coordinator to help the church or organisation develop a bespoke plan for the service. The regional coordinator will continue to work with the church/organisation during the next phase and beyond.

Cost: One off pay as you go contribution of £180.00



SERVICE START UP PHASE (3)

The church or Christian organisation becomes a recognised partner of PNMUK and works with their regional coordinator to get a parish nursing service fully operational. PNMUK provides a range of high quality resources and inputs at this phase. This includes a review of readiness, help with communications, support for the appointment of a nurse, and the subsequent training and professional certification of that person.

Cost: One off pay as you go contribution of £220.00

Parish Nurse Certification: Course cost of £595.00



ACCREDITATION PHASE (4)

Ideally within six months of service start-up, the church or Christian organisation goes through the PNMUK parish nursing service accreditation process, which evidences the quality and sustainability of the new parish nursing service. The additional costs involved in this process are included in the first years annual fee.

Cost: Annual contribution £595.00



ASSURANCE & RE-ACCREDITATION PHASE (5)

Over the next three years PNMUK provides a range of essential quality improvement and professional services to support the host church or Christian organisation and its parish ensure it remains safe and sustainable.

Cost: Annual contribution £595.00. Re-accreditation of the service takes place in Year 4.

Appendix B Expression of interest Form

By completing and signing this form I am confirming that the church/Christian organisation (named below) wishes to engage in further exploration of parish nursing and requests a visit from a Parish Nursing Ministries UK Regional Advocate.

I confirm that the church/Christian organisation will make a contribution of £120.00 payable to Parish Nursing Ministries UK (PNMUK) to cover the cost of the visit, recognising that the church/organisation are not committing themselves to any further involvement after this stage.

Name of Lead Church or Christian organisation Address Email Address for administration Telephone No.	
Denomination (if relevant)	
Name of Person Completing This Form Job Title Email Address Telephone No.	
Name of Minister/Church Leader /Organisational Director (if different from the person named above):	
Signature of the Person completing the form	
Date:	

I would like to suggest the following three potential dates and times for the 1-3 hour meeting with the PNMUK Regional Advocate:

Proposed Date	AM	PM
1.		
2.		
3.		

Next Steps Please sign and date this form and indicate your method of payment of £120

- I enclose a cheque payable to Parish Nursing Ministries UK
- I have made a BACS payment to Parish Nursing Ministries UK, Lloyds account 00802640 sort code 30-92-55, using the name of the church/ Christian organisation as my reference
- I consent to the information given being used by PNMUK for proceeding through the development pathway to set up a Parish Nursing service and keeping me informed and engaged. *All data will be stored securely and not passed to third parties. Our Privacy Policy can be accessed on our website www.parishnursing.org.uk*

Then return your form by email to: admin@parishnursing.org.uk or by post to The Administrator, Parish Nursing Ministries UK, The Hope Centre, 26 North Street, Peterborough, PE1 2RA. You should also keep a copy for your own records. PNMUK will then confirm receipt of the form and remittance and one of our staff or the regional advocate will contact you to finalise the meeting.