

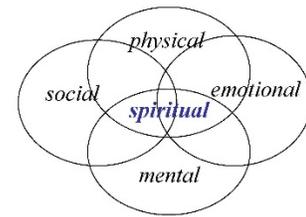
# Health Minister Awareness FACTSHEET

## Health and Wellness Ministry

Many congregations in the African American community support a Health and Wellness ministry (organized formal health ministry) to address the health of its' faith community members and their surrounding communities. African American communities bear a burden when it comes to health disparities, inequities and inequalities.<sup>1 2</sup> Health Ministries incorporate the faith community's values, beliefs, and its practices in order to encourage congregants toward an environment of whole person health.<sup>3</sup> Overall Pastors in the U.S. with Congregational Health Ministries reported that more positive health-promoting and health-supporting outcomes were associated with their health ministries and that members had made health-promoting lifestyle changes.<sup>4</sup> Health ministries also work towards issues that affect their communities such as social justice, religious education, volunteer visitors, hospitality, and youth ministries.

## Health & Wellness

*focus on "whole" health.*



## Health Ministers

Health Ministers are members of the community who have been identified or called to help their faith community connect their faith to their health. They have received training through [Wesley Theological Seminary's Heal the Sick Program](#). Ministers come from different faiths, professions, faith-based organizations, public health, and hospitals. Health Ministers play a vital role and are recognized as health navigators (connecting congregants to resources) wellness coaches, outreach workers, health educators, and health ambassadors. Many Health Ministers are the starting point to their congregants seeking out healthcare providers or services. They have built a trust that allows them to engage congregants in health conversations. Health Ministers have a holistic view of health, connecting the mind, body and Spirit. They believe in the role of the faith community in improving the health and wellness of their community. Pastors with Congregational Health Ministries reported that more positive health-promoting and health-supporting outcomes were associated with their health ministries.<sup>5</sup>

## Partnering with Health Ministers and the Faith Community

The DC Community Health Needs Assessment (2016) identified the faith community as a trusted entity and partner in healthcare. Healthcare organizations that have formed partnerships with neighboring health ministries have assisted with health fairs, health education topic events, and screenings. Benefits to forming partnerships with both include:

- A community resource that is an extension to help with emphasizing health promotion and disease prevention amongst the congregation and community
- An established system of trust with their congregation and community
- Ability to develop relationships and maintain contact with communities as members become older and more diverse<sup>6</sup>

## References

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3. Health Ministries Association (n.d.) What is Health Ministry? Retrieved from: <https://hmassoc.org/about-us/what-we-do/>
4. Catanzaro, A. M., Meador, K. G., Koenig, H. G., Kuchibhatla, M., & Clipp, E. C. (2007). Congregational Health Ministries: A National Study of Pastors' Views. *Public Health Nursing, 24*(1), 6–17. <https://doi-org.proxy-hs.researchport.umd.edu/10.1111/j.1525-1446.2006.00602.x>
5. Hale, W. D., & Bennett, R. G. (2003). Addressing Health Needs of an Aging Society through Medical-Religious Partnerships: What Do Clergy and Laity Think? *Gerontologist, 43*(6), 925–930. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy-hs.researchport.umd.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ824332&site=eds-live>

## Additional Resources

- <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/heal-the-sick/>
- <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/heal-the-sick/>
- District of Columbia (2016) Community Health Needs Assessment. Retrieved from:
- [http://www.dchealthmatters.org/content/sites/washingtondc/2016\\_DC\\_CHNA\\_062416\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.dchealthmatters.org/content/sites/washingtondc/2016_DC_CHNA_062416_FINAL.pdf)
- Kazandjian, M. (2018). Early Serious Mental Illness Guide for Faith Communities. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors.
- Taylor, R. J., Ellison, C. G., Chatters, L. M., Levin, J. S., & Lincoln, K. D. (2000). Mental Health Services in Faith Communities: The Role of Clergy in Black Churches. *Social Work, 45*(1), 73–87. <https://doi-org.proxy-hs.researchport.umd.edu/10.1093/sw/45.1.73>

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<https://forms.gle/gHSWsCczLw4eSKeE7>

**For questions or additional information please contact**

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