

Peter Phillips and colleagues think prayer triplets are time well spent

'A cord of three strands'¹

We first met as a medical prayer triplet in November 2007. The thought of dragging myself out of bed at about 6.30 to cycle in the cold and dark to a friend's house for 7am prayer was not an opportunity I necessarily relished when we first started. I have to say the three of us – GP, dermatologist and geriatrician – have been pretty regular in attending our monthly Wednesday morning meetings. One of the advantages of having three rather than two is that there's a sense of not wanting to let the side down.

We rotate among our three homes which are sufficiently close to cycle to (or drive if running late), then leave for work at about 8 am. We start with breakfast and a general chat and lapse into issues at work as well as family and church matters. There's usually plenty to pray about arising from that, as we all have our ups and downs, on both personal and professional levels.

Whereas other church groups often provide mutual prayer support, non-medics do not necessarily understand the issues and frustrations which concern us in the health service. A medical triplet can get down to the nitty-gritty of the problems which we need to

share with each other and with God. The close relationship which develops within the group allows other personal, family and church matters to be shared in prayer. Then there is the joy of having prayers answered – sometimes with dramatic results!

This is just one example of a prayer group for health professionals. A weekly multidisciplinary prayer group in the hospital chapel can also be very rewarding, and sometimes feels like the best use of my time in the working week. The possibilities are endless according to whatever time, place, frequency or occupational group suits you.

So why not approach some colleagues and float the idea of forming a prayer triplet? I'm sure you will reap rich rewards through being closer together with colleagues and with God.

Peter Phillips is a geriatrician and writes for GP Owen Thurtle and dermatologist Sam Gibbs. All live and work in Ipswich

reference

1. 'A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.' Ecclesiastes 4:12