

why CMF for nurses?

Pippa Peppiatt explains
Connect & Grow, Speak & Serve

What does it mean, in practice, to serve God in our nursing or midwifery careers? It may mean serving God by being a 'good nurse'; striving to be caring and compassionate. Perhaps patients or colleagues will notice something distinctive about us and ask what our motivation is. It may mean using nursing as a tool to share the gospel, talking about our faith with patients when they ask us. Alternatively, we may have gone into nursing with a clear desire to work in the developing world as a missionary nurse, or serve the poor and needy in the UK.

All of these are valid ways to serve God through nursing, but what do we do when these desires conflict – when our desire to share our faith interferes with our desire

to be seen as a 'good nurse'. What about when ethical issues give us difficult decisions?

The purpose of the Christian Medical Fellowship (CMF) is to help you integrate your Christian faith with your nursing or midwifery career – so that you know who you are in Christ and serve him through your work; to help support and equip you so that you're not just a nurse who happens to be a Christian, or a Christian who happens to be a nurse, but a real Christian nurse. This is exactly what CMF is for!

Church and CU will help you to grow as a Christian; nursing school will help you be a better nurse; CMF will help you at the interface. Connect and Grow, Speak and Serve are four ways CMF can help you thrive as a Christian nurse:

Connect

Local groups are a great way to meet regularly with others and work out what it means to be a Christian in nursing or midwifery – a place where you can encourage, pray and support one another.

We can provide speakers for ethics talks, debates or evangelistic events. We have resources to help you organise Freshers' events, run a series in Christian medical ethics, or just help your Reps plan a programme that's tailored to what your group members want.

The National Conference (April) and Student Conference (February) are the biggest events of CMF's year with delegates from all over the UK, Ireland and several other countries. There are top speakers on issues at the interface of Christianity and medicine/nursing, with

excellent seminars ranging from 'caring for the dying' to 'nursing on the mission field' and 'suffering'. There is also the chance to meet with hundreds of like-minded Christian medics and nurses to worship our great God together.

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The opportunity to meet with qualified nurses for socials and other events is also key. We run regional day conferences, a student summer school and international mission track, and have international partnerships with organisations like Nurses Christian Fellowship International.

Grow

There is a bewildering array of issues that confront Christians in healthcare, and it is vital that we are able to give a Christian response to them. Assisted suicide and euthanasia, alternative medicine, embryo research, cloning and stem cells, abortion, contraception and fertility treatments, the ethics of sharing your faith with patients – the list goes on!

The Bible has much to say on all of these topics, but sadly you can't just open a concordance and look up 'stem cells'. It takes a lot of wise application of the principles of Scripture in order to bring them to bear on these very modern dilemmas. CMF provides reliable, practical resources that will help you understand the issues at stake, and apply biblical wisdom.

Our regular publications of *Triple Helix*, *Nucleus*, *Spotlight* and *CMF Files* are all designed to address these issues. We also publish books such as *Matters of Life and Death* (ethical issues at the beginning and end of life), *Hard Questions about Health and Healing* and *Mad, Bad or Sad?* (Christian views on the nature of psychiatric illness). All these resources can be found on our website: www.cmf.org.uk

We also offer courses such as *The Human Journey*, and day conferences on different subjects such as overseas mission (*Who is my neighbour?*).

We're committed to helping train nurse and midwife leaders.

As well as offering specific support when needed, we run an annual Student Leaders' training to help leaders get to grips with the issues they are facing in their groups. Other nurses are invited to be part of our Nurses Advisory Group, trained to write articles, or get involved in international work.

Speak

CMF wants you to be equipped to speak confidently and with conviction about what you believe, and why.

To this end, we provide training days that will equip and empower you to be a witness where God has placed you as a nurse or midwife. Training may be a speaker to your group, or day and weekend conferences such as **Confident Christianity** and *Saline Solution*.

Help engage with our culture, government and professional bodies and keep up to date with the latest legal and political agendas affecting

healthcare. Christian nurses and midwives have the unique opportunity to help shape society by engaging in the media and the democratic process to ensure that good laws are protected and bad ones prevented or restricted. CMF provides press releases in response to ethical news and announcements. We make submissions to government consultations on future law changes – members add strength to our voice as we speak out in the public square.

Serve

Here are some of the opportunities for you to serve within CMF:

- Pray – knowing what's happening you are better able to pray
- Your subscriptions and gifts help pay for CMF's work
- Consider being a student leader or a graduate supporter of a group
- Write articles for *Spotlight*, *Nucleus*, or the website
- Consider speaking at a seminar or become a nurse trainer of *Saline Solution*
- Develop a passion for medical mission and join our International Mission Track for students
- Do an elective or short-term mission in the developing world

Summary

These are some good reasons why I believe all Christian nurses and midwives need CMF.

All of us face hard decisions about how to prioritise our time, resources and efforts. Some of us will give more to church, CU, or other valid interests. But each of us should consider this carefully – what are the unique gifts and opportunities that God has given you to help build his kingdom? Another way to put this is to ask, 'what is it that only you can do?'

For those of us who are Christian nurses or midwives, we are given particular opportunities for God's kingdom that few others have. We need to take this seriously and ask how our careers can be used most effectively for his glory. CMF is here to help you in this, and to build a movement of healthcare professionals passionate for the glory of God in and through our vocations. 🌱

