

leaving  
so soon?

# parish nursing

**Anne Taylor** continues our regular feature looking at alternatives to clinical nursing

**C**urrent healthcare pressures are extreme and, for some practitioners, have become untenable. However, the untold value Registered Nurses (RNs) contribute has never been more clearly

demonstrated. But this can leave us struggling with treasuring our profession at a time when we are least able to practise holistically (let alone safely). But before you decide to give up your Registration, have you thought about Parish Nursing?

Parish nurses are RNs employed or volunteering within churches or Christian organisations using a place-based practice model to create holistic health. Parish nurses have the autonomy to co-design their ministry according to local population health needs within both the vision of the church or Christian charity for whom they work and their scope of practice.

The role is focused on health promotion and education, supporting people in need, underpinned by intentional spiritual care and rooted in a biblical understanding of health as concerned with wholeness and balance, not simply the absence of disease or an isolated focus on the physical or psychological.

The impact of parish nursing is astonishing. We hear so many stories of lives saved and transformed. For example, one individual in treatment whose NHS support stopped during the pandemic became very depressed and, at times, suicidal. Regular contact with their parish nurse at a food distribution point resulted in them feeling much safer.

Another lady who attended a chair exercise class regained more movement in her shoulder than for many years after just a few weeks. 'She is thrilled she can now lift her arm above her head.' The same parish nurse

worked with someone who had never had a job to gain employment.

Another parish nurse supports people with healed leg ulcers discharged by the District Nurse so that tissue viability is sustained. This reduced both suffering and pressure on the NHS. Crucially, intentional spiritual care is present in each of these encounters.

Parish nursing operates according to the NMC Code and requires an RN with a minimum of three year experience (ideally more) to complete the Certificate in Parish Nursing. When setting up parish nursing, the church or charity comes into partnership with Parish Nursing Ministries UK to ensure that the necessary governance is developed, accreditation gained, and regular clinical supervision and support is provided.

If you are tempted by the prospect of using your Registration within a proven holistic model of practice within the vision of the church, contact us via [enquiries@parishnursing.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@parishnursing.org.uk) for an information pack and details of our next Explore Online event or visit [parishnursing.org.uk](http://parishnursing.org.uk) 🌸

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