

Health and Wellness Ministry: Why Should the Church Get Involved?

“Why is it that among a group of people who are exposed to the same health threats some stay well while others become ill? Current studies have begun to address this question and the answers all point to factors that have to do with faith. This makes the issue a spiritual one and Christians need to claim their authority to address it with the resources of the Christian faith.”

The Lafiya Guide
The Association of Brethren Caregivers

Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). Having abundant life involves balance among the spiritual, emotional, physical, social, intellectual, occupational, and environmental dimensions that make a person whole, with God as the center and guiding force in each.

The Bible encourages wholistic health in relation to human beings. Health is seen as a gift from God, and is a gift that deserves our attention! In Luke 9:2, Jesus instructs His disciples to “Preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.” We do not question the first mission given us, neither should we question the second. **By this declaration, the Christian Church should be in the health business.**

When we see the word “healthcare,” we tend to think of fixing sick people. Healing ministries have always been vitally important to the church. However, the unique challenge for the Church today is the promotion of health and wholeness. This is especially true in light of the number of health problems and issues that have strong social, moral, psychological, and spiritual origins. **The Christian Church must answer the call to minister health and healing to all, and to provide “whole-person” healing ministry.** It is also important that the Christian Church teaches its congregants how to maintain health and prevent disease.

To be healthy, however, we must promote wellness in **all** areas of our lives. Living well is everyone’s responsibility. We are the primary decision-makers, leaders, and actors in achieving wellness. Our life together as a community—the way we manage the life dimensions mentioned above—is the key to our wholeness, that is, our spiritual, relational, and physical well-being. **It is out of our response to God’s abundant love for us that we can choose to be good stewards of all our gifts, including our health and wholeness.**

Christian must get more involved in health and wellness ministries. In the African-American community specifically, the Church still serves as the most trusted and respected institution, and has a significant influence on the daily lives, values, and personal life choices of a large percentage of the community. Therefore, the local African-American church, and really all churches, is both a logical and **ideal medium through which to provide health ministry and to empower people to assume responsibility for their own health.**