

The Sheffield Diocesan Advisory Group
for Healing and Wholeness

Healing and Wholeness Handbook



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***The Sheffield Diocesan Advisory Group
for Healing and Wholeness***

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The group includes acute, mental health and hospice chaplains, a parish nurse, and a retired parish priest.

Our aim is to encourage healing to be a central part of the ministry and mission of the Diocese and to resource safe healing practices.

**We want to help you in your healing ministry - whatever it looks like,
so we can learn together and enable the sharing of ideas so please get
in touch!**

Healing.ministry@sheffield.Anglican.org

Perhaps flourishing does not always depend on the state of our physical health. Healing is not just about getting better it is about our state of mind too...

"Health is not a condition of my body but the power of the soul to cope with the varying conditions of the body."



Healing can be many things

- Prayer
- Walking alongside
- Thorough listening
- Giving time... offering or inhabiting sacred space with others
- A hug, a smile, laughter
- Sharing a cup of tea or coffee
- Different sorts of prayers for different occasions
- Working in partnership with clinicians
- the basics: sleep, diet, exercise, etc

Theological understanding of Health

Healing and saving have the same word in biblical texts.

The most powerful ministry is about **embodiment**. Jesus spent more than 70% of his ministry healing. He calls us to go out and preach the gospel and heal the sick. Healing ministry is theology in action, it is missional and crosses boundaries.

In 2013 Pope Francis tweeted: *Miracles happen. But prayer is needed! Prayer that is courageous, struggling and persevering, not prayer that is a mere formality.*

Christian healing involves the whole person:

body, mind, and spirit.

- When Jesus healed the blind man, he anointed his eyes
- When he healed the paralysed man, he forgave his sins
- When he healed the woman of bleeding, he called her “daughter” and restored her to the community

Christian healing ministry is central to our everyday core ministry, it seeks to relieve the hurts of those suffering and to bring them back into the community of people and God.

It is our response to Jesus, who said,

“Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest. ...”

and follows in the tradition expressed in the letter of James:

“If any of you are sick, they should call for the elders
of the church, and the elders should pray over them,
anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord ...” James 5:14

Healing Ministry Toolkit...

- Empathetic, prayerful listening
- Formal prayers
- Creative prayer
- Prayer without words
- Laying on hands and anointing
- Sacrament of confession

- A safe environment
- Time, space
- Being alongside people
- Really listening
- Informed confidentiality within safeguarding guidelines
- Prayerful, respectful and competent practitioners, working in pairs, seeking consent before touching, accountable to PCC
- Clarity in what is offered
- Modelling rather than doing prayer
- A calm human presence through which God’s grace can flow

Some useful Prayers

In our anxiety, you Lord
In our pain, you Lord
On our hopes, you Lord
In those who will treat us, you Lord
In our healing, you Lord
In our peace of mind, you Lord;
In our recovery, you Lord;
In our families, you Lord;
Only you, always You, faithfully you
Blessed are you Lord, who heals the sick,
Blessed are you Lord, who binds up wounds,
Blessed are you Lord, whose care knows no end,
Humble we look to you for safekeeping and salvation
For there is no other in whom we can so confidently put our trust. Amen

Circle me, Lord, with your loving
presence,
Keep fear without and calm within,
Keep fear without and hope within,
Keep fear without and love within,
This day and always
Amen

Peter Graystone in “A World of Blessing” compiled by Geoffrey Duncan

A Blessing for someone with Alzheimer’s Disease

Lord, we ask your blessing on this confused mind.

You know that the experiences and knowledge of a lifetime are locked away inside a complicated mechanism to which this disease has inappropriate keys.

Keep this troubled one safe in confusion, happy in forgetfulness, aware in lucidity and secure in the environment of constant care.

Where there is fear and anger surround (Name) with your peace.

When despair strikes, give him/her your glimmer of hope.

When there seems to be no response, probe deep into the apparent emptiness of the mind with the reassurance of your love.

And when everything seems hopeless and this disease has full control, we commit her/him to your eternal compassion and care. Amen

Marjorie Dobson in “A World of Blessing” compiled by Geoffrey Duncan

See also the link to the Church of England liturgy in the resources section

Guidelines for Christian healing

The Church of England requires that all who offer this ministry should be adequately trained and informed.

Such training includes a sound and up to date knowledge of:

- Safeguarding practice and reporting protocol
- Training in listening skills
- Knowledge of and respect for medical professionals.
- Prayerful preparation and regular supervision

Guidelines for Christian healing can be found on the Healing and Wholeness web page: www.stpeterscollege.org.uk/healing-wholeness

Guidelines for Good Practice in Christian Healing Ministry

The House of Bishops' Guidelines should be the first point of reference for every parish. These are below and available on the Gloucester diocese website:

www.gloucester.anglican.org/living-faith/healing/house-of-bishops-guidelines-for-healing-ministry/

The practical guidelines below have been gathered from various sources and supplement the House of Bishops' Guidelines.

1. Authority and accountability

- (a) The House of Bishops' Guidelines should be followed.
- (b) PCCs must ensure that this ministry is only carried out with the knowledge and permission of the incumbent of the church or, in the case of vacancy, the Archdeacon.
- (c) Due training and authorisation should be given to those practicing this ministry.
- (d) Work with others in a team, meet often, pray together and be accountable to leaders.
- (e) Try, as far as possible, to be in partnership with the medical professions. It can be especially useful to have the advice of mental health specialists.

2. Safeguarding and confidentiality

- (a) Safeguarding training is available on the Sheffield Diocesan website.
www.sheffield.anglican.org/safeguarding
- (b) Be trained to a minimum of Foundation (C1) level with regular updates and a full knowledge of local arrangements for reporting.
- (c) Ensure confidentiality but be aware that any criminal or illegal activity or any disclosure of potential harm to others will need to be disclosed to the safeguarding officer.
- (d) Domestic abuse awareness training is recommended.

3. Safe recruiting

- (a) Safe recruiting is used for everyone. This should look at the emotional stability and prayer life as well as kindness and goodwill.
- (b) Safe recruiting training is available on the Diocesan website.

4. Training

- (a) Listening skills – worth updating regularly.
- (b) Unconscious bias awareness.
- (c) Training in issues listed below is for awareness and to help recognise where further help is needed. Each of these areas of ministry requires specialised care. Awareness of these issues may be helpful to the healing Minister, but no diagnosis must be attempted or presumed.
 - (i) Mental health First Aid
 - (ii) Bereavement Counselling
 - (iii) Alcohol and substance abuse

5. Practical guidelines

- (a) The space
 - (i) Should be warm and easily accessible.
 - (ii) Try to provide a place with open visibility so no one feels insecure.
 - (iii) Nearby, well signposted toilets are desirable.
- (b) Personal Care
 - (i) You too are a child of God, and this ministry can be demanding, so personal prayer and the support of peers and/or a spiritual director must not be neglected.

- (ii) From time to time life presents us with different challenges which may mean you need to take a break from this ministry. Take care to receive God's healing for yourself, you are valuable.
 - (iii) As a Minister of Christ take care of your appearance and personal hygiene.
- (c) At the time of ministry
- (i) Work in pairs.
 - (ii) Explain confidentiality rules.
 - (iii) Be aware that cultural differences may give a different world view from your own.
 - (iv) Use clear, appropriate language. Be aware of the hard of hearing, those for whom English is not their first language, work out whether formal or informal language is appropriate and avoid jargon and 'churchy' language.
 - (v) Ask open questions and avoid leading the person.
 - (vi) Never challenge anyone's gender identity, sexuality or alternative faith.
 - (vii) Beware of language that may give the impression that it is the person's fault that they are unwell, or that they do not have enough faith.
 - (viii) Ask for permission to touch eg for laying on of hands.
 - (ix) Never offer quick fixes. Most often we do not know the result of the prayers, that is God's work.
 - (x) Never give promises or tell someone they are healed.
 - (xi) Never advise anyone to stop taking prescribed medicines.
 - (xii) Reassure the person of God's love and care, especially if they feel healing isn't happening.
 - (xiii) Leave space for prayerful reflection. Silence is often useful.
 - (xiv) Know when and how to refer someone to another agency and only do so with their permission.
 - (xv) Always refer someone who talks of evil spirits or possession to a member of the clergy, or to the Diocesan Deliverance Advisor (Canon Geoffrey Harbord).

Resources

Web-based

- The Church of England liturgy: www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/wholeness-and-healing/
- House of Bishops Guidelines can be found on the Gloucester Diocese website (hard to find on Anglican.com): www.gloucester.anglican.org/living-faith/healing/house-of-bishops-guidelines-for-healing-ministry/
- Safeguarding information and training dates: www.sheffield.anglican.org/safeguarding
- Health information and evidence based guidance: www.nhs.uk/
- Listening Skills: www.sageandthymetraining.org.uk/
- Acorn Christian Healing: www.acornchristian.org/
- Guild of Health and St Raphael: www.gohealth.org.uk/
- Renew Wellbeing: www.renewwellbeing.org.uk/
- Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries: www.sanctuarymentalhealth.org.uk
- safeTALK: Suicide Alertness For Everyone: various providers online
- Mental Health First Aid: various providers
- Mental health advice and support www.contemplativeoutreach.org/practice/
- Guild of All Souls prayers page, and bereavement support section, including support agencies etc. www.guildofallsouls.org.uk/prayers.html
www.guildofallsouls.org.uk/bereavement-resources.html
- Support for those recovering from trauma and also has great training resources for those seeking to support those recovering. www.carolynspring.com/
www.rethink.org/
- Centring prayer/ lectio divina etc. www.sheffieldflourish.co.uk/

Books

- A Time to Heal Handbook - The Development of Good Practice in the Healing Ministry, Archbishops' Council (printed on demand)
- Slow Down, Show Up and Pray: Simple Shared Habits to Renew Wellbeing in Our Local Communities Paperback, Ruth Rice– 8 Jan. 2021
- Prayers and Ideas for Healing Services, Ian Cowie Wild; Goose Publications 2001
- Healing – its Place in Evangelism, Edmund Wilbourne; Grove Booklets on Evangelism, 1988
- A world of Blessing, compiled by Geoffrey Duncan; Canterbury Press, 2000
- Praying for the Dawn: A resource book for the ministry of healing Ruth Burgess & Kathy Galloway (eds) wild goose publications. The Iona Community 2000 reprinted 2007
- Healing Liturgies for the Seasons of Life Abigail Rian Evans www.wjkbooks.com 2004
- Sowing in Tears: How to Lament in a Church of Praise, Paul Bradbury; W 193 www.grovebooks.co.uk

Finally, please note this is not an exhaustive list, but we hope it is helpful.