



#### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING ACTIVITIES

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## CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE SCOPE OF SERVICES

Christian Science nursing is grounded in the theology of Christian Science, as found in the Bible, especially the word and works of Christ Jesus, and as explained in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy. This Scope of Services is intended to clarify what individuals may expect when engaging the services of a Christian Science nurse. It touches briefly on the main aspects of, and ethical considerations related to, those services.

Christian Science nurses provide loving support and skillful practical care for those relying exclusively on Christian Science for healing. This Christian Science nursing care is provided together with spiritual support through prayer, usually given by a Christian Science practitioner listed in *The Christian Science Journal*. It supports the individual's informed and voluntary decision to rely on the teachings of Christian Science with an expectation of healing.

The founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, established the authority and standard for the Christian Science nurse in 1908, in the *Manual of The Mother Church*. (Page 49, Article VIII, Section 31):

**Christian Science Nurse.** SECT. 31. A member of The Mother Church who represents himself or herself as a Christian Science nurse shall be one who has a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice, who thoroughly understands the practical wisdom necessary in a sick room, and who can take proper care of the sick.

The cards of such persons may be inserted in *The Christian Science Journal* under rules established by the publishers.

Individuals advertising in *The Christian Science Journal* and *The Herald of Christian Science* have presented satisfactory evidence that they fulfill the requirements in this By-Law. They are generally self-employed and/or employed by a Christian Science nursing organization.

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**The care provided by the Christian Science nurse includes:**

- Expectancy: Accepting a case with the expectancy of complete and quick healing;
- Reassurance: Offering loving reassurance of God's tender care, ever-presence, and omnipotence; faithfully and consistently acknowledging each individual's spiritual perfection;
- Inspiration: Providing assistance that enables an individual to study the Bible, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* and other writings by Mary Baker Eddy, and additional literature published by The Christian Science Publishing Society, including the *Christian Science Quarterly Bible Lesson*, through reading and other assistance, and ensuring the individual receiving care has uninterrupted time for prayer as needed;
- Surroundings: Maintaining an atmosphere that is conducive to spiritual healing and supportive of harmonious care and needs of rest;
- Assessment: Discerning needs and assessing appropriate care, considering the individual's awareness of their own needs and ability to communicate them.
- Encouragement: Giving Christian encouragement to support the appropriate expression of activity and vitality;
- Communication: Assisting with specific communication needs (including those related to hearing, vision, speaking, etc.) as well as helping the individual maintain contact with their Christian Science practitioner, family members, and others;
- Cleanliness: Assisting with personal care and bathing: assisting with all necessary care to minister to the needs of cleanliness and comfort;
- Mobility: Assisting with mobility, including assisting with standing, walking, moving, transfers, and settling, with or without mobility aids or comfort items;
- Nourishment: Preparing and modifying food; assisting with feeding; giving appropriate encouragement to eat;
- Cleansing/bandaging: Cleansing, covering, and bandaging, to provide for cleanliness, protection, support, and comfort;
- Instruction: Instructing the individual and/or other caregivers in how to provide appropriate care.

**The care provided by the Christian Science nurse does not include:**

- Making a medical diagnosis or prognosis;
- Recommending or administering medication, drugs, dietary supplements, or medicated, herbal, vitamin-based, or alternative remedies;
- Using or administering medically-oriented techniques or technology, such as, but not limited to, administering food or liquids with medical equipment (e.g., intravenous feeding);
- Engaging in manipulation, massage, physical therapy, or caring for those who are relying on these services;

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- Providing services for those taking any medication, currently under medical care and/or treatment, or using any devices that are typically utilized under the supervision of a medical professional (e.g. feeding tubes, internal catheters, or oxygen devices).

**Standards of ethics for Christian Science nurses:**

- Upholding the integrity of the ministry of Christian Science nursing through the active study and practice of Christian Science in their daily lives;
- Only providing care that is consistent with the theology of Christian Science and the scope of services of a Christian Science nurse;
- Respecting the dignity, autonomy, and right to self-determination (e.g., care and treatment of their choice) of each individual for whom they provide care;
- Safeguarding the confidentiality of personal information and the right to privacy in accordance with the law;
- Maintaining professional boundaries with individuals receiving care, their families, and substitute decision-makers (e.g., no overfamiliarity, providing personal favors, or sharing personal or intimate information outside of one's scope of work);
- Not assuming the role of the Christian Science practitioner on a case; and guarding against actual or potential conflicts of interest (e.g., not serving as the patient's power of attorney or health care proxy; and not accepting gifts);
- Providing care that is free of unlawful discrimination;
- Committing to continued professional growth and competence;
- Assuming only those Christian Science nursing duties and responsibilities for which one has acquired and maintained necessary understanding, skills, and abilities;
- Being law-abiding.

Fundamental to the ministry of a Christian Science nurse is active, prayerful affirmation of everyone's innate spirituality and responsiveness to God's harmonious government. This spiritual witnessing undergirds each aspect of the care a Christian Science nurse renders.

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