

7 Steps to Begin a Baptist Nursing Fellowship Group

Baptist Nursing Fellowship

"A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead . . . But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and, when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'" Luke 10:30b, 33-35.



Why Begin a BNF Group?

The Samaritan man went out of his way, even using his own means to help a fellow traveler. He didn't turn a blind eye to the traveler's plight, rather he stepped into his pain, cared for his wounds, and made provision for his continued healing.

Christian healthcare professionals understand that true healing is a matter of body, mind, and spirit. This is the unique knowledge that you possess. It encompasses the total person, and you speak life, truth, and health into the wholeness of humanity.

A BNF group in your church or community provides focus, collaboration, and unity with other like-minded health professionals. BNF projects enable you to model your faith, as well as share the gospel. People are transformed in body, mind, and spirit.

Our healthcare system is complex and people need your help. Begin today to pray and call others to pray with you about beginning a BNF group.

Seven steps to get you started:

One: Pray First

- Talk to others who may be interested.
- Invite them to pray with you and ask them to share with others in their circle of influence.
- Plan a prayer gathering and invite everyone who has expressed interest. Keep it simple and convenient. Consider meeting during the Sunday School hour or have a sandwich lunch after church. Pray more. Talk less.

Two: Find Resources

- Contact your state WMU Baptist Nursing Fellowship coordinator. Register for the next Parish Nurse Class in your area.
- Check out the resources on the national BNF web page: www.wmu.com/bnf

Three: Schedule a Planning Meeting

- Send personal invitations. Look online for free group email invites. Text or email reminders one week out and also the day before.
- Share what you learned from state and national BNF leaders. Discuss available resources.
- Ask for a commitment and set-up teams to:
 - Publicize
 - Recruit
 - Do a community needs assessment.

Four: Assess Community Needs and Resources

- Search the web for your area's population demographics. Are there enough service agencies for the scope of the demographic data?
- Where are the gaps in necessary services? Are there acute care hospitals, mental health services, rehab services, physicians, dentists, home health services, child protection services, homeless shelters, domestic violence services, adult day care, substance abuse programs, and feeding programs?
- Is transportation available to access needed services?
- Are there adequate spiritual resources? How many churches? Community Bible studies?
- Where are the pockets of poverty? Of immigrants?
- Assess your congregation from multiple perspectives. Look at member demographics. What are the age groups? What are their predominant health concerns? What gifts and strengths do they have? Is there a willingness to serve alongside you?

Five: Publicize and Recruit Members

- Make a flyer for the organizational meeting. Consider meeting in the local hospital or library's community meeting room.
- Ask local hospitals and clinics to post your flyer where employees can see it.
- Mail flyers to medical clinics and other healthcare providers.
- Invite the healthcare professionals in your church.
- Ask your association office to publicize the meeting.

Six: Meet and Plan

Before the meeting:

- Invite the state BNF coordinator to speak.
- Make one-page handouts describing the duties of officers and team leaders. Your state BNF office should be able to assist you with this.

At the meeting:

- Get contact information from all attendees.
- Present the community assessment results. Discuss some ways your group can meet identified needs.
- Elect officers and recruit team leaders.
- Decide how often your group will meet. Determine the what, when, and where for your first project, and pass a sign-up sheet for volunteers.
- Serve healthy snacks.
- Follow-up with an email or text a thank you to attendees.

Seven: Implement Projects, Evaluate and Celebrate

- Stay in contact with project team leaders. Ask:
 - Do you have enough volunteers for your project?
 - Have all the details been communicated to volunteers?
 - Do you have all the supplies you need?
 - Send email or text reminders to volunteers a week out and the day before your project.
- Take fifteen minutes before packing up to evaluate. Document comments for your next project planning meeting.
 - What worked?
 - What didn't work?
 - What could we do differently to make it better?
 - Where did you see God at work?

It's okay to begin small. The most important thing is to begin. God is with you. He is for you. He loves it when you step out in faith and serve Him among those who have no advocate and no means to access health-care. He will make your heart sing as you minister as the heart, mind, and hands of Jesus.