

**Empowering Nurses In Churches:  
Primary Stroke Prevention Outreach**

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**METHODS**

**WHO:** Nurses

- Active or retired
- Parish/Faith Community Nurses
- Volunteer in church

**WHY:**

- Desire to improve health of own community using experience, skill & knowledge
- Saw need and opportunity to increase stroke awareness
- Trained to “carry the message” back to own congregation

**WHAT:**

- Simple Powerpoint program
- Short segments to address risk factors and warning signs of stroke
- 1-4 volunteer trainers

**WHERE:**

- Training occurred in hospitals or local American Heart Association office

**HOW:**

- Brief – able to present in <3 hours to audience
- Use of updates as “talking points”
- Format easily reproduced/adapted to fit nurses’ style and congregation’s needs
- Resources provided (saves time, consistent message)

**ABSTRACT**

Nurses rise to meet the educational needs of their community about serious health problems, particularly stroke and hypertension. Outreach to their community is often done as a volunteer or parish nurse in their congregation. However, the need exists for a consistent message and program style which can be individualized to fit the style and culture of the nurse and congregation. This is important for underserved communities and rural areas with limited access to large medical centers.

A simple and concise format which provides tools for stroke awareness will enable nurses to incorporate their experience and expertise into their teaching efforts. A “Train The Trainer” program format incorporates “talking points” and strategies for implementing education programs, and provides updates on risk factors and warning signs of stroke. In addition, identifying available education materials and community resources can enhance the likelihood of utilization and success of their program.

**•GOALS and OBJECTIVES:**

- Utilize program format for a “Train The Trainer” workshop for nurses volunteering in church for stroke prevention with their congregation
- Identify educational materials for community/congregational presentations on stroke prevention and awareness
- Demonstrate two strategies for enhancing stroke prevention efforts in congregations

**Success Story**

**“A Parish Approach to Stroke Awareness”**

- Proactive learning arms woman with knowledge to save her life
  - Mother of 9, grandmother of 20
  - Recognized symptoms of stroke while on vacation in York, England
    - Facial numbness and left-sided weakness
    - Taken to hospital 10 treatment – minimal deficit
    - Hospital staff “amazed” at level of stroke knowledge – “Does everyone in America know as much about stroke as you do?”
      - Response: “No, I just had a course on stroke at my church in Oklahoma”
- Finished stroke education class at parish 1 month prior to stroke
  - Desire to protect herself from stroke by
    - Recognizing symptoms – call EMS
    - Addressing risk factors
  - “Be knowledgeable and know the warning signs of stroke, and be able to get to the hospital right away.”

**“Nurses In Churches” Update**

**Blood pressure and stroke update for parish and congregational nurses**

**Program components:**

- Hypertension Update
- How to Take Accurate Blood Pressure
- Setting up Blood Pressure Screening
- Diabetes and Metabolic Syndrome
- Stroke
- Cholesterol and Nutrition

**Community Resources**

- American Heart Association
  - Stroke Risk Assessment forms
- Literature for blood pressure, warning signs and symptoms of stroke, and risk factors
- Local Hospitals provided RNs as presenters
- State Health Department

**Bibliography**

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