

CARMELITE HEALTH CARE GUIDE

PHILOSOPHY

The following statements provide a guiding philosophy for our health policies and procedures:

Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We must take reasonable care of them, taking into account the needs of others and the common good. (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2282)

Health (promotion) is not limited to the treatment of a disease or bodily ailment, but embraces (promoting) the physical, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions of the human person. (Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services)

As individuals, we show respect for our own life and dignity when we adopt lifestyles that enhance our health and well-being, (seeking) to reject personal habits that can threaten our health. Christians (also) have the duty to address threats (to health) such as those which are rooted in the structures of society. (Health and Healthcare: Pastoral Letter of the American Catholic Bishops)

Illness, suffering and death are part of life. As religious, we believe that the paschal mystery proclaims victory over death, but we also believe that it is precisely in vulnerability that we encounter Christ. A true theology of the cross enables us to resist (illness and death) when that is appropriate and to accept them when that is appropriate. In order for members of religious communities facing illness to become prophetic witnesses, religious communities themselves must give witness to faithfulness and care. (A Vision of Life, Health, Sickness and Death for Religious -prepared by the Joint CMSM/LCWR Task Force on Health Care for Religious)

We will strive to give particular attention to working with our members to promote a healthy, well-rounded and holistic lifestyle that nourishes and fosters good physical, mental and spiritual health. (Goals and Objectives of the 2005 Provincial Council, Carmelite Province of the Most Pure Heart of Mary)

POLCIES

1. The Provincial Council has the responsibility of designating personnel with expertise to assist the Province and its members with concerns relating to the physical and mental health of our members and the special well-being needs of individuals and communities. The Provincial Treasurer and Assistants in the Provincial Office have and will continue to function as specialists overseeing our health care issues. In areas of the Province where there is the need, Health Ministers or Nurse Advocates who could provide ongoing hands-on assistance may also be recruited to join the team.
2. However, as faithful stewards of the Lord's gift of life, all members are expected to live healthy lifestyles, eating and exercising appropriately and avoiding excesses that could be harmful to their wellbeing. Each member should regularly see a physician, a dentist or other appropriate health care providers, undergo age-appropriate testing and address health problems and overall wellness strategies in a timely manner.
3. Superiors do have a fraternal responsibility to be concerned about the health status of members. Hopefully, members will freely share in confidence with the appropriate superior about any health situations or plans. Superiors who are concerned about the welfare of individual members and its impact on the Carmelite community, may feel it necessary on occasion to undertake an informal or a formal intervention.

4. Members should try to use healthcare providers who accept the coverage offered by the insurance Medical benefits linked to each member. However, a member may need to consult with specialists who do not accept such. If a significant expenditure might occur as a result of such a need, the member should try to first alert the Provincial Treasurer's Office or the Provincial Treasurer.
5. For men working outside the geographical US, health care coverage will also be maintained in the States should medical procedures need to be undertaken here.
6. Members are encouraged to work collaboratively with our Provincial Office in submitting bills and in the procurement of medications. Mindful of our common desire to be good stewards of our resources for the sake of our continuing mission, everyone is encouraged to use generic (as opposed to brand) medications when that is possible.
7. The transplantation of major organs should be a matter for discussion between the member, his health care team and the Provincial. Factored in to such a discussion should be an awareness of the need for many others in the broader community to receive such organ donations which often are not readily available.
8. If a member requires Home Care for an extended period, his community needs to seriously evaluate what setting will provide the best therapeutic option for the member and the community. When a member is challenged by a significant illness, many communities along with the ill member have discovered that the best care and attention can be found in appropriate licensed facilities. If the member does relocate to such a facility, every effort should be made to keep the member closely connected with his Carmelite community, including arranging a return if and when his condition so improves.
9. A Wholistic Living Carmelite Website will be maintained that provides updated beneficial information about health and wellness resources. Included on this site will be a Directory of Healthcare Resources, listing highly recommended programs and placement options in the major geographical areas of our ministry.
10. The following criteria will determine the selection of any long term nursing home stay, if a member needs such a placement. First and foremost, the facility must be able to provide the care needed to address his medical condition. The facility must also be licensed and have an excellent rating. If possible, the facility should be under Catholic auspices and be able to offer our member a private room. Finally, if possible, the facility should be open to receiving Medicaid funding at least after the first year of admission. Every effort will be made to place the member in a location and a place of his choosing.
11. The Province will continue to search for Assisted Living and Nursing Home options that could allow Carmelites needing such who wish to live in a setting that would accommodate several Carmelites to do so. Through its Healthcare Ministry staff, the Province will be open to dialogue with other Religious Orders regarding approaches to the many issues involved in health care for Religious.
12. Every member must have on file with the Provincial Office, a Healthcare Power of Attorney. Preferably, the document should give the Provincial durable power of attorney when the member is unable to make informed decisions regarding his healthcare. Along with the Healthcare Power of Attorney, a statement allowing the Provincial or his designee to access medical records as needed may facilitate timely decision making and treatment decisions.
13. Especially because of available resources at this time, the Province has made an ethical decision not to utilize Medical Assistance for routine healthcare coverage despite the fact that our members could qualify for such.
14. At the discretion of the Provincial Treasurer, there will be audits and reviews to ensure the Province is experiencing the best management of its healthcare dollars for its expenditures.
15. Health can often affect driving abilities. Our commitment to a pro-life stance in all we do obligates everyone to ensure all our drivers can safely operate motor vehicles A professional evaluation is required after someone

has been involved in two accidents, reached the age of 75 (and every five years thereafter) or has obvious impairments that would hinder him from safe driving. If someone needs to stop driving, the Community should guarantee within reason some means of readily available transportation for such a member.