

United Reformed Church

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN THE HEALING MINISTRY

1. Healing ministry is based on prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Those exercising the ministry must be prayerful, of good standing in the church and recognize that they are not 'Healers' but represent the church fulfilling its commission and be willing to learn and seek guidance. They need to be pastorally sensitive and know how to listen.
2. There must be clear accountability, both in the local church situation and denominationally, those involved should be authorized by the church. Any records must be kept subject to the Data Protection Act.
3. Confidentiality is essential and the person's consent obtained before being shared with another party. This must be adhered to especially in the prayer group situation.
4. There must be respect for the person receiving ministry. People have a right to know what is being provided. Those ministering need to have an open non-judgemental approach.
5. There are issues of safety in this ministry and it is recommended that those ministering do so with a colleague, especially when visiting a member of the opposite gender. When prayer with the laying on of hands is ministered this should be done with the recipient's consent and understanding of what is being offered. Touch must be appropriate and it is usually inappropriate to lay hands on the affected part, hands laid on the head acknowledge the Lord's healing touch in body, mind, and spirit for the whole person including the affected part.
6. The personal conduct of those ministering is very important for they are the Lord's ambassadors, so attention to personal spirituality, learning about the healing ministry, good practice, personal conduct, hygiene, gentleness and humility are important.
7. An understanding of one's own limitation is essential, and to know when a person should be referred for specialist help, maybe to an accredited counsellor, for medical advice or other.
8. **Deliverance ministry:** Those engaged in the healing ministry may come up against the need for deliverance ministry in someone seeking help. This ministry should not be undertaken by those without training within this area. Help in this may be obtained from the Synod Healing Advisor. Ecumenical collaboration may be helpful. The Synod Healing Advisor should be consulted before any deliverance ministry takes place. Any aspect of healing or deliverance in which there is an interfaith dimension should be carried out in the presence of someone with intimate knowledge of, and sensitivity towards, the non-Christian faith concerned.
9. Professional boundaries with health care professionals and chaplaincies should be adhered to. Although prayer is the basis for this ministry, we recognise that healing can come from many sources, and that prayers are frequently answered through the skills of those in health care professions.
10. Seek to co-operate with others in the church situation, caring professions and with other denominations. Respect their codes of practice. Seek to create a healing environment around you.