

## Presence under Pressure: Incorporating Intentionality into Blood Pressure (BP) Ministry

**Purpose of initiative:** In 2017, the American College of Cardiology, the American Heart Association and several other collaborators issued an updated *Guideline for the Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Management of High Blood Pressure in Adults*. As community based screeners, Faith Community Nurses (FCNs) are well situated to make an impact on the millions of people in the United States with hypertension. Under the new blood pressure classifications, an estimated 46% of adults in the United States would be considered hypertensive. In response to an increase in questions regarding blood pressure ministries, a comprehensive education and resource program was developed and implemented in a Southeast Michigan Faith Community Nursing Partnership Program.

**Design:** Twenty-one (21) individuals attended a training course on the new BP guidelines addressing issues specific to faith communities. In a pre- post-test evaluation, participants were evaluated on their awareness of new guidelines and BP measurement technique. A guidebook, one-page BP recommendation reference guide, documentation cards and device calibration were available as resources. A follow-up survey at 3-5 months assessed the usefulness of supportive tools for BP ministries in faith communities.

**Outcomes:** Eighteen (18) paired tests showed significant improvement in knowledge following the education session ( $p=0.002$ ). For the evaluation, respondents shared a "change to practice" they had hoped to make based on the new information. The top responses for the question included: education for screeners (4), flat feet (4), 5-minute wait (3), documentation (3), and share this information with all health ministry (3). Eleven (11) congregations participated in the follow-up survey. The most useful resources included the Blood Pressure Ministry Guidebook (73% of congregations using), the BP recommendation reference guide (73%) and BP documentation cards (64%). At 9 months post-intervention, the hospital based biomed department had calibrated 49 devices.

**Implications for practice:** Confidence and intentionality are important for Faith Community Nursing practice. With the right tools, knowledge and intentionality, FCNs can provide support for people suffering from hypertension, many of whom have yet to be identified.

**Available Resources:** If you would like an e-copy of the Blood Pressure Ministry Guidebook or the 1-page Blood Pressure Recommendations Reference Guide, visit the poster booth or contact Angela at [angela.combs@stjoeshealth.org](mailto:angela.combs@stjoeshealth.org)

