

Spheres of societal transformation

HEALTH



Rationale/Background

God created man distinct from the animals as a unity of non-material (non-physical) and material (physical) components that both affect the presence or absence of health (Gen. 1:26-28, 2:7). The worth of an individual person is determined by his creation in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). The health care worker must have a thorough knowledge of the Bible practically applied to his/her personal and professional life (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 3:1). The Bible is the final authority for health, medical care, and medical ethics (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 3:1).

The term "medical missions" should now give way to a new term – CHRISTIAN TRANSFORMATIONAL HEALTH MINISTRIES. The emphasis must shift from "medical" to "health," with health being the basic goal, although this still includes curative care as a part of the goal. Caring for sick people is at the center of any healthcare ministry, for it is the urgent felt need of all peoples. The overall goal of Christian health ministries is health: promoting the health of people and communities, and restoring health to those who are ill. It likewise includes training competent healthcare workers to make healthcare available to all people. Transformational health includes development in all areas of human life. Christian health professionals should serve people as whole persons and communities as whole communities.

The operating mode should be partnerships between Christian people and groups without national or cultural barriers. Ultimate control should be by the Spirit of God as all partners seek together to be obedient to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Vision Statement

Transformational health promotes a network of persons and organizations who are committed to collaborating together to implement a biblically wholistic healthcare ministry that transforms persons, communities and nations physically, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.

Mission Statement

The goal of wholistic healthcare is to promote the transformation of persons who will transform their communities. Transformed communities in turn will transform their nation through the seamless combination of curative medicine, emotional and spiritual healing, the promotion of health through health and development education, evangelism and discipleship, building relationships of trust, education, and community-based development. By promoting the wholeness of persons and communities and by building into the culture the values of trust, compassion, sacrificial care, and cooperation, this will transform a nation from the inside out, with communities having common ownership of the process and outcome. This will contribute to changing national health policies,

making healthcare practice ethical through awareness building and preventing health care from being reduced to purposes of commercialization.

Desired outcomes

- Changing culture
- Promoting wholeness
- Bringing change to communities
- Providing models for government health services
- Demonstrate effective approaches to the HIV/AIDS pandemic
- Impact on medicine
- Establishing a network of people doing transformational health to learn from each other

Major objectives

- People's lives must be improved for the better physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially.
- There should be an improvement of at least 50 percent in individual health indices.
- One goal of a transformational healthcare program is to reproduce Spirit-filled people, who are capable of reproducing themselves in others; both in spiritual and physical terms.
- The program must be integrated into the community infrastructure.
- The program should continue on and expand to adjacent areas through local initiative.
- The program should be locally self-funded as much as possible from the beginning.
- All people should see the program as their own and not as belonging to an outside agency.
- People should be taking responsibility for their own health.
- Other organizations will be establishing their own integrated transformational healthcare program.

Principles

Health

1. Health: Perfect health is a biblical concept that has been experienced only by Adam and Eve prior to their sin (Gen. 2:17b; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22).
2. Optimal health is achieved through spiritual regeneration, biblical obedience, and current medical knowledge, the latter always under the authority of the Bible (Neh. 8:10b; Ps. 90:10; 2 Cor. 5:17; Exod. 15:26; 1 Kings 3:14; Ps. 38; Prov. 3:7, 8; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
3. Healing may occur through the body's natural processes, God's supernatural act, concurrent with or entirely separate from standard medical intervention (Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 10:34; 1 Thess. 2:9, 10; 1 Tim. 5:23; Jas. 5:14-16).
4. The Family's Responsibility: The primary responsibility for health maintenance, disease prevention, and medical care resides with the family, as it is defined biblically (Gen. 2:24; Exod. 20:12, 14; Eph. 5:22-6:4).
5. Mental Health: Spiritual regeneration and biblical obedience are absolutely essential to a biblical concept of mental health (Eph. 4:9-16; 2 Tim. 1:7; James 1:6-8).
6. Longevity: Increased longevity generally results from obedience to specific biblical commands (Ps. 90:10; Prov. 3:7, 8; Eph. 6:2, 3).

Disease and death

1. Sin and Disease: The ultimate cause of all disease, deformity, disability, and death is the sin of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:17b; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22).
2. Death: Spiritual death is immeasurably worse than physical death (Matt. 10:28b; Rev. 20:14, 15).
3. Sins and Disease: Medical problems are very frequently caused by personal sins (Prov. 23:19-21, 29-34; 1 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10).

Health care workers and the practice of medicine

1. Priestly Calling: The health care worker has a priestly calling because health involves the whole person (Luke 4:18; Heb. 12:13; 1 Peter 2:9).
2. Role Model: The health care worker should maintain a lifestyle that is an example of spiritual and physical health (Phil. 3:17; 1 Tim. 3:1-13).
3. Wholistic Medicine: Health care workers should provide resources for disease prevention and health maintenance, as well as therapeutic and rehabilitative measures, and demonstrate the interrelatedness of these areas (Luke 10:30-37; 1 Cor. 6:19,20; 1 Tim. 4:8).
4. Competence: Christian health care workers should achieve and maintain high levels of professional competence (Matt. 5:48; Rom. 12:1, 2; 2 Thess. 3:11, 12).
5. Spiritual Dimensions of Illness: The treatment of the spiritual dimension of illness by health care workers is ethical (Matt. 5:29, 30, 6:25-34, 10:28; 1 Cor. 13:3).
6. Responsibility for Health Education: The primary responsibility for health education resides in the family, the Church, and the health care community.

Issues at the beginning of life

1. Beginning of Human Life: Individual human life begins with the fertilization of the human egg with the human sperm (Gen. 4:1; Num. 11:12; Ps. 51:5).
2. Fertilization: fertilization of the wife's egg by her husband's sperm is the biblical pattern of reproduction (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6).
3. Abortion: Induced abortion is murder except to save the physical life of the mother, and participation at any level is sin (Exod. 20:13, 23:22-25; Ps. 51:5, 139:13-15; Jer. 1:5).
4. Genetic Engineering: Alterations of human genes before or after birth should be strictly limited to the correction of clearly defined disease or deformity when sufficient evidence exists that the potential benefit to the person clearly outweighs any harmful effects or the possibility of death (Gen. 4:1; Ps. 51:5).

Issues at the end of life

1. Euthanasia: Euthanasia, either by deliberate action or by inaction, is murder (Exod. 20:13).
2. Treatment of the Terminally Ill: Only the patient's physician, in consultation with other health care workers, the patient, and the patient's family, is able to assess ethical treatment or non-treatment of the terminally ill (Jas. 5:14-16).
3. Sustenance for the Terminally Ill: The image of God in all patients and the love that Jesus Christ calls us to give to all people determine the quality of care and comfort of the terminally ill (Gen. 1:26, 27; Matt. 25:32-46).
4. Suicide: Suicide is a violation of the Sixth Commandment (Exod. 20:13).
5. Organ Transplantation: Transplantation of human organs is ethical when biblical standards govern the treatment of both donor and recipient through deliberate peer review (Matt. 19:12; John 9:1-3; Acts 3:1, 2). The premature pronouncement of a patient's death in order to obtain his donor organs is murder (Exod. 20:13; 1 Cor. 13:3).

Drugs and drug abuse

1. Therapeutic Drugs: Drugs may be used under the proper supervision of health care workers in diagnosis and treatment (Luke 10:34; 1 Tim. 5:23; James 5:14b).
2. Psychotropic Drugs: Health care workers should work to prevent drug abuse and dependency with patients who require drugs that affect the mind or senses (Prov. 20:1, 23:29-35; Eph. 5:18; 1 Peter 4:4).

3. Substance Abuse: Abuse of such substances as drugs and alcohol involves physical disease, spiritual bondage, and distorted personal relationships (Prov. 23:29-35; Eph. 5:18; Gen. 9:20-23, 19:30-38).
4. Psychic Modalities: Use of any psychic or supernatural means in diagnosis or healing, other than prayer to God according to biblical instructions, is a dangerous exposure to occult and Satanic powers (Deut. 18:10-12; Isa. 8:19; Matt. 24:24; Rev. 9:21, 21:8).
5. Meditation: Conscious, rational meditation on God's attributes and biblical content is a necessary dimension of health (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2, 19:7, 119:50).

Conclusion/ Summary

God has a plan for the health of the peoples of the world. Yet God works primarily through his people, and we are his people. We can pray, therefore, as did the People of Israel, "God, be gracious to us and bless us and make your face shine upon us, so that your ways may be known on earth and your saving health among all nations". The Lord calls each of us, who are ministering in his name, to deal with people as whole persons, physically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially. The starting point and center of good health is our Lord Jesus Christ.

To be continued...

*Taken from **Transform World Manual**
Transform World Connections*

A call to transformation: transformational streams are becoming one fast-flowing river for the healing of the nations.

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