As Adventists, we have a unique opportunity to maximize the expertise of different Adventist health institutions with the intention to have a greater impact in reaching individuals and communities. Adventist educational and healthcare institutions have for over one hundred years extended the healing ministry of Christ to many in need through hospitals, clinics and healthcare facilities. Thousands of people every day come in contact with our hospitals—many more than the number who attend our churches once a week. What a terrific opportunity for ministry! It is the intention of NAD Health Ministries to come together and re-evaluate ways in which we can partner with our hospitals and educational institutions to fulfill the mission given to us by God and assist people to “choose a full abundant life” in Christ. The vision of having “every church be a center for health, healing and wholeness” can be accomplished more effectively if we join hands in teaching and exemplifying God’s health principles for abundant living.

Adventist health institutions have over the years demonstrated their commitment to mission and are eager to find new ways to collaborate with the churches in the North American Division. Recently, Adventist Health, Adventist HealthCare and Adventist Health Systems have given support to the newly launched Adventists InStep for Life initiative by financially sponsoring our efforts and providing resources for education on child obesity. Likewise, our educational institutions, such as Loma Linda School of Public Health, have pledged collaboration. God is moving and calling us to pray and to seek unity in our health work. He promises that His Spirit will be poured out as we seek renewal, reform and revival of our mission. “If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves, pray, seek, crave, and require of necessity My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land” 2 Chronicles 7:14, Amplified Bible.
Health Ministries Resources

• **Adventists InStep for Life Toolkit.** Free resource for leading your church in the fight against childhood obesity. Check out the new website, www.adventistsinstepforlife.com, to download your copy and access additional information, ideas, and stories of how others are getting involved.

• **Let’s Move Faith and Communities Partners Calls** are a great resource as you focus on childhood obesity prevention in your church. Recent topics include information on starting a community garden, how to get involved with summer feeding sites, and the Presidential Active Lifestyle Awards. To receive notification of upcoming calls, please email Deloris Bailey at Deloris.Bailey@nad.adventist.org.

• **Community Transformation Grants.** The US Department of Health and Human Services has made over $100 million available in funding to help communities implement projects proven to reduce chronic disease, violence and injury, and improve mental health and equity. The goal is to engage communities to work together to build sustainable, effective change around healthy eating and physical activity. Twenty percent of these funds will be dedicated to rural communities that face particular challenges in resources and implementation. For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/communitytransformation.

• **The Natural Remedies Seminar,** June 19-26, 2011, is one of three annual seminars offered at the Wildwood Lifestyle Center and Hospital in Wildwood, Georgia. The seminar consists of five days of intensive training for persons wishing to have a solid base in medical missionary work or who just want to live a healthier lifestyle as God intended. Call 1-800-844-1099 x1022 for details or register online at www.wildwoodhealth.org.

• **Abuse Prevention Emphasis Day** is August 27, 2011. Work with your church and conference Women’s Ministries leader to increase awareness and help prevent abuse, as well as bring healing to the church and community. Sermons, PowerPoint presentations, and other information is available on the NAD Health Ministries website at www.NADhealthministries.org.
NAD HEALTH MINISTRIES
The NAD Health Ministries Committee met on April 1 in Silver Spring, Maryland. This committee serves to give counsel and vote on the direction and strategic plans for Health Ministries in the NAD. Formed by new members representing hospital systems, universities, ministers, HM Conference Directors, physicians, nurses, church administrators and lay leaders, the Committee was inspired by a spiritual message from Elder Mark Finley. The highlight of the meeting was the launch of the Adventists InStep for Life initiative (see www.adventistsinstepforlife.org for details).

CAROLINA CONFERENCE
Twelve churches in western North Carolina organized an Adventist Health Network (AHN) for the purpose of coordinating health events, community services, and family life ministries. The Network also aims to build community partnerships. On April 8, Katia Reinert, NAD Health Ministries Director, joined pastors of the local churches as they met at the Mt. Pisgah Academy with community leaders from the Buncombe Department of Health, Western North Carolina Region of the American Cancer Society, YMCA, Asheville Buncombe County Christian Ministries, Parkridge Health, and North Carolina Center of Health & Wellness. The meeting provided an opportunity for getting acquainted, sharing AHN goals, and exploring possible partnership activities. The AHN is also collaborating with the Health & Wellness Department of the University of North Carolina to plan a Let’s Move Day event as the kick-off for the University’s annual Health & Wellness week in September.

ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM
Thirteen participants completed the Faith Community Nursing (FCN) Preparation Course offered by Florida Hospital March 4-11. FCN brings a powerful ministry to any congregation’s ministry. As a colleague to the pastor, the registered nurse called to this ministry is able to use his/her knowledge, experience, and the nursing process to address the following roles for groups and individuals within the congregation: Health Advocate and Referral Source, Health Educator and Counselor, Developer of Support Groups, Liaison to Community Resources, and Spiritual Caregiver. Florida Hospital has educated over 450 faith community nurses since 1994. For more information on future training programs at Florida Hospital, visit www.parishnursing.net.
Fostering Healthy Behaviors Early Translates Into Better Health Later

**FACT** Juggling the heavy academic demands of college or graduate school with work and family life often leads young adults to burn the candle at both ends. But the downside is that sleep deprivation makes you more susceptible to overeating. Columbia University researchers found that normal-weight men and women consumed 296 calories more on average when they slept for four hours versus when they got a full night’s sleep. Overall, most of the extra calories came from high-fat foods such as ice cream and fast foods, which can lead to rapid weight gain.

**HOPE** Be sure to have healthy, low-calorie snacks on hand for those unexpected late nights. And if you are trying to lose weight, consider how you can rearrange your schedule so that you can retire earlier or take a nap during the day.

**FACT** Researchers from the University of North Carolina followed 14000 American youth from early adolescence to young adulthood. For nearly all groups surveyed, health behaviors worsened as the youth reached adulthood. By the time they had reached adulthood, the participants were more likely to be obese, to frequently eat fast food, and to be sedentary.

**HOPE** Addressing healthy behaviors during adolescence paves the way for a healthier adulthood. One positive change will often cause a cascade of other positive changes. For example, if teens stop drinking coffee, they may sleep better, and, in turn, may not turn to sugary, carbohydrate-laden foods to help them stay away the next day.

**FACT** Young adults who go to a religious event at least once a week are 50% more likely to become obese by middle age as young adults with no religious involvement, according to new Northwestern Medicine research based on tracking 3,433 men and women for 18 years. One explanation may be that getting together once a week and associating good works and happiness with eating unhealthy foods could lead to the development of habits that are associated with greater body weight and obesity.

**HOPE** Your church can be a trend-breaker! Add healthy selections, including fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains, at church gatherings. Better yet, plan meetings around fun, outdoor activities such as intramural sports clubs, hiking, bicycling, work bees, or community service projects.

**FACT** A recent survey found that 9 out of 10 U.S. college-age adults think they’re living a healthy lifestyle—even though national statistics show that less than 1 percent is meeting the definition for ideal cardiovascular health. Most recognized the importance of a healthy lifestyle and wanted to live until age 98, but 43% of them didn’t worry about heart disease and stroke and one-third didn’t think that doing healthy things now, would make any difference in their risk of disease in the future.

**HOPE** Lack of time and cost were the most common reasons for not engaging in healthy behaviors. Tailoring health messages and programs to the needs of young adults can increase awareness and help them make the connection between how their behaviors affect their risks for chronic disease. Also consider how your church can support young adults by creating a culture of eating well, being active, and paying attention to our health.

“... I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.” Deuteronomy 30:19, NIV

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