

ADVENTIST WELLNESS



Adventist
Health Ministries

PRODUCED BY: Health Ministries Department of the
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Eunice Morais

PHOTO CREDITS: Available upon request

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LIFESTYLE AND
WELLNESS CENTERS



| PETER N LANDLESS | Director | GC Adventist Health Ministries

This document provides a summary of the philosophy and main principles for operation of Lifestyle and Wellness Centers. It is not exhaustive, and is an introduction to this important, and often neglected component of Comprehensive Health Ministry. It has been specially prepared for the 2019 General Conference Leadership Colloquium of Division Leaders which is themed **“Wholeness in Christ: Mission Vision in Action.”** We are grateful to the Taskforce that compiled this brochure - Viriato Ferreira and Zeno Charles-Marcel (co-chairs), Fred Hardinge, Chuck Cleveland and Frank Fournier. This team brings a uniquely rich expertise in Lifestyle and Wellness Center work gained through many years of dedicated and practical experience. They each live the dream! We express gratitude to Elder Ted Wilson for devoting this Leadership Council to your - the leader’s - personal health and wellness, as well as for casting the vision for **Lifestyle and Wellness Centers** to be multiplied and nurtured around the world. Our prayer is that this powerful witness will grow, benefit the health of many, and prepare a rich harvest of those who are led to accept health and wholeness in Christ through this special ministry.

May you be blessed as you experience Jesus’ desire for you

“...to have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10



When

David saw the steps leading to the front door of the Wellness Center he almost turned around. He did eventually reach the front door, but he had to stop to catch his breath on each step.

David was 75 years old, with a history of hard living – drinking, smoking, and eating the typical “meat and potatoes diet” – all the while building and losing several businesses. Now in retirement he had little hope, until told by his doctor that he might find help at the Adventist wellness center..

It was shocking to his system to be asked to walk even short distances several times per day. The diet was completely foreign to him, though he eventually learned to like it. No TV to watch meant he began sleeping more and the morning and evening devotions awakened a long dormant spiritual interest. No alcohol, no cigarettes, no coffee, combined with rest, fellowship and a simple, healthful lifestyle and God’s blessings, yielded big benefits.

Within a week, David was walking over 2 miles each day. His blood results rapidly normalized, and he was feeling much, much better. In the morning, at breakfast, he frequently remarked about how much better he felt and that he could think more clearly. When his three-week session was finished he felt he had a new lease on life.

Three years later he was walking his now daily 10 miles walk in the hills behind his home! What a joy it was to see and hear his testimony of a totally changed, invigorated and wholistic lifestyle!

Whenever he walks with visitors and friends he witnesses to the blessing the Adventist Wellness Center had been to him; how it had prepared him to support and care for his wife who died just a year later. He sums up the benefits this way:

“When I go to bed in the evening, I feel stronger and better at 79 years of age than I did when I arose in the morning at 40!”

Needs...

Everyone experiences sickness and suffering sometime in life. This has become a more pressing problem with the explosion of Non-Communicable Diseases such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, depression – mainly lifestyle related! Hopelessness and despair often set in. Where can we go for help? Where can we find healing and hope, not only for this life but also for life to come?

ADVENTISTS ARE CALLED BY GOD TO TOUCH THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING

Christ is no longer in this world in person, to go through our cities and towns and villages, healing the sick; but He has commissioned us to carry forward the medical missionary work that He began.

9T168





God's mandate

Envision a network of Seventh-day Adventist operated Wellness Centers strategically placed around the world, physically and spiritually helping and healing thousands of people. This is God's stated will for His Church.

GOD INSTRUCTED US TO ESTABLISH MANY WELLNESS CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

There should be sanitariums near all our large cities.*

Advantage should be taken of the opportunities to purchase buildings in favorable locations, that the standard of truth may be planted in many places.

I have been instructed that we are not to delay to do the work that needs to be done in health-reform lines.

MM 324

*Sanitarium: Word first used by John Harvey Kellogg and best described as a full-spectrum healthcare facility that included medical, surgical and dental care, physiologic treatments, nutrition and exercise, wellness services, based on the health principles advocated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As time passed the "hospital services" and the "wellness - natural therapies" services developed into two domains, the latter still being named sanitarium but limiting its services to wellness, lifestyle and "natural" treatments such as hydrotherapy, massage, and herbology. Today it has come to mean "Wellness Center" or "Lifestyle Center"

Places of hope and healing

The healing ministry of Jesus through dedicated Adventists is the Gospel in action. It brings hope, wellness and salvation to the suffering multitudes of this world.

Adventist health institutions are God's appointed agents for the healing of the body and mind. They are to be places where Heaven touches Earth.

WELLNESS CENTERS ARE TO BE PLACES WHERE WE MAY HAVE A FORETASTE OF HEAVEN

Our sanitariums are the right hand of the Gospel, opening ways whereby suffering humanity may be reached with the glad tidings of healing through Christ.

9T167

The establishment of churches and sanitariums is only a further manifestation of the love of God, and in this work all God's people should have a part.

CH 223





God's healing methods

God works through medical interventions, scientific advancements, modern health technologies, as well as miracles for which there is no explanation except for His direct intervention. However, a healthy lifestyle, meaningful interpersonal relationships and trust in God, promote health and healing and powerfully help ease many of the most common diseases of the 21st century.

WELLNESS CENTERS CAN BE ONE OF THE BEST PLACES TO HELP PEOPLE ADOPT HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES AND FIND HOPE IN CHRIST

If the sick and suffering will do only as well as they know in regard to health reform perseveringly, they will in nine cases out of ten, recover from their ailments.

MM 223

By whom

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes that only through the combined effort of all members will a global network of Wellness Centers be established. However varied the contexts might be, whether the work is carried out by Church employees or “tent-makers” (individuals or supporting ministries), this work is to be carried out always in connection with the Church, in principle and in practice. This implies unity of purpose and mission.

TOTAL MEMBER AND INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SUCCESS OF THIS ENDEAVOR

A network of Wellness Centers, composed of Church and also supporting-ministries owned institutions, working collaboratively with the Church and in accordance with strict medical criteria (best practices and current knowledge) and undergirded by spiritual principles, will bring glory to God and fulfill God’s call for this time.

WELLNESS CENTERS MAY BE:

1. Church owned and

- a) Operated by non-profit organizations which are Church-based but with specially constituted Boards. This minimizes ascending liability and involves more health related specialists in their governance structures.
- b) Operated by non-profit organizations which are Church-based but with unique Boards. This minimizes ascending liability and involves more health related specialists in their governance structures.

2. Not Church owned

- a) Non-profit corporations and charitable foundations (bona fide supporting ministries of the Church) which are recognized by all levels of Church administration – Fields, Conferences, Unions and Divisions of the General Conference and conduct themselves in accordance with the Church’s Working Policy.

Never should a sanitarium be established as an enterprise independent of the church. Our physicians are to unite with the work of the ministers of the gospel.
6T 240





To locate our sanitariums amidst the scenes of nature would be to follow God's plan; and the more closely this plan is followed, the more wonderfully will He work to restore suffering humanity.

7T 81

Where

Beautiful, natural surroundings have been appointed by God as the ideal setting for the establishment of Wellness Centers.

Healing of the mind and the body are amongst humankind's greatest yearnings. The large cities of the world are home to billions of people, and the majority of the global population. Wellness Centers should be established to serve them but ideally should not be located in the cities.

IN NATURE, BUT NOT FAR FROM CITIES

Wellness Centers are to work closely with urban centers of influence - vegetarian restaurants, medical and dental outpatient clinics, hospitals, health food stores, churches, bookstores, fitness centers, and other outreach projects. These urban centers of influence should be referral places to the Wellness Centers located in the countryside.

But more important than magnificent scenery and beautiful buildings and spacious grounds is the close proximity of these institutions to densely populated districts, and the opportunity thus afforded of communicating to many, many people a knowledge of the third angel's message.

CH 554

How large

Historically, the ideal number of clients, guests or patients from the standpoint of group dynamics range from 15 to 30.

Groups larger than 30 tend to promote thoughts of exclusion in some patients. This may hinder the promotion of positive group dynamics.

In addition, there should be suitable medical treatment rooms, as well as all other facilities needed to host patients and their families eg. dining room, conference room, fitness center and auxiliary services – kitchen, laundry, maintenance etc.

START “SMALL, SIMPLE,
SUITABLE AND SOON”

These institutions are to be His agencies for reaching a class whom nothing else will reach. They need not be large buildings, but should be so arranged that effective work may be done.

6T 113



In harmony with God's ways

Wellness Centers promote healthy lifestyles for the purpose of preventing disease and, where possible, reverse it. Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, and trust in divine power (MH 127) are among God's approved methods to prevent and treat disease. These, alongside the appropriate application of current medical knowledge i.e. surgical and non-surgical treatment modalities such as but not limited to, radiotherapy, pharmacological agents (including the careful use of indicated, proven and tested medicinal plants) and therapeutic modalities in mental health which are not contrary to God's principles, are among the means God has put at our disposal to promote and restore health. Nurturing a strong relationship with the Lord, and the social support and caring relationships fostered by caregivers in the centers, and provided by the members in the Church, additionally inspire hope, and powerfully augment the healing process.



WELLNESS CENTERS ARE TO BE OPERATED IN HARMONY WITH THE BIBLE, THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY AND EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE

THE FOUNDATION OF ALL PREVENTION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT MUST BE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- a) Biblically accurate concepts of healthful living and principles of healing.
- b) Many of these are expanded in the Spirit of Prophecy and form the primary basis of healthcare decisions.
- c) Each therapeutic practice will be characterized by a balanced, studied understanding of the Bible, Spirit of Prophecy and evidence-based science in harmony with the Biblical worldview.
- d) A sound understanding of health sciences will guide all health and wellness services.
- e) Evidence-based health information, methods of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and maintenance of health will be utilized.
- f) Medical care must be practiced in harmony with local regulations—as long as they do not conflict with the Bible, Spirit of Prophecy and evidenced-based principles.
- g) It is neither ethical nor moral for leadership or staff to use titles like physician, doctor, or nurse if they do not have the appropriate, legally earned and accepted certification, training and licensure.

2. Practices that are not acceptable under any circumstances include, but are not limited to: energy alignments and forces, acupuncture, hypnotherapy, iridology, reflexology, magnetism, yoga, tai chi, Reiki, homeopathy, cranial sacral therapy, exclusively eating raw foods for a prolonged period of time, prolonged periods of fasting, pendulum diagnostics, live blood analysis and other similar non-evidence based blood analysis, "colonics" (understood as the repetitive use of enemas using variable amounts of liquid and for which there is not a medically recognized indication), urine therapy, Bach's flowers, fad diets and practices and the promotion of health related information or practices which are not found in the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy and are not evidence based. (See Church Working Policy (2010) page 307)

*It [*the health institution] should stand forth with scientific ability, with moral and spiritual power, and as a faithful sentinel of reform in all its bearings; and all who act a part in it should be reformers, having respect to its rules, and heeding the light of health reform now shining upon us as a people. 4T 556*



Bill was a big man. He was considerably bigger a few years earlier but when we first met in 2006 he was sick, very sick. He could barely walk. He had no appetite, little energy, and a condition that only a miracle could cure. Bill had a very aggressive type of pancreatic cancer, fourth stage, with a prognosis of “six weeks to live”.

Years before, God led Bill to enroll in a healthy living program organized at his church. As a result, Bill’s cholesterol dropped from 300 to less than 150. “I thought myself so healthy,” said Bill, “that I would live to be 120 years old!”

But life doesn’t always unfold as we assume. On April 20, 2006 Bill felt a discomfort in his abdomen. In 15 minutes the pain became so severe he needed to be rushed to the local hospital. The diagnosis could not have been worse. Bill’s common bile duct was plugged by an inoperable, untreatable, aggressive cancer of the pancreas. What could anyone do with a diagnosis like that?

It so happened that some months earlier Bill and Amy, his wife, visited an Adventist lifestyle center. “If we ever get cancer,” Bill told Amy, “we will come to this place.” At that moment he didn’t imagine that his words were prophetic.

Bill was able to stay for two months at the center. This is where things began to turn around. A test conducted eight weeks after his stay revealed that the tumors in the liver had disappeared, and the one on his pancreas was arrested in growth.

Bill was 68 years old in 2006. He went back to work, eating normally and driving his car again. “I can see God’s providence in all of this,” says Bill. “Long before I knew I had cancer, God gave me an interest in healthful living, and walked me through the healing process, step by step.”

Today, Bill is 80 years old and as far as we know he is still cancer free. Why did he regain his health in 2006? The treatments at the lifestyle center helped him but did not cure his cancer. God did! We know that healing does not always come in the form of physical restoration. Emotional and spiritual healing are always offered even when physical healing is not granted. And a healthy lifestyle may assist the healing process...

Staffing

Staffing is the most important success factor for wellness centers. Consecrated, balanced and broad-minded, Seventh-day Adventist physicians, business managers, clinicians, therapists and ancillary personnel are essential for the positive outcome of these projects.

In general, a Wellness Center with a capacity of between 15–30 patients would likely need a staff of equal numbers, depending on a few factors. However, there are recommended *staff to patient* ratios which may be considered:

Examples:

14 staff members	10 to 15 patients at any time
16 staff members	15 to 18 patients “
20 staff members	18 to 22 patients “
24 staff members	22 to 26 patients “
28 staff members	26 to 30 patients “

Example: number of staff and their functions, for a 10 to 15 patients Wellness Center:

- 1 administrator
- 1 chaplain
- 1 program coordinator
- 1 accountant
- 1 medical doctor
- 1 nurse / massage / health presenter
- 4 kitchen staff members
- 1 grounds/maintenance
- 2 cleaning and laundry
- 1 physical therapist / massage / hydro / health presenter

Let those employed in our institutions be such as will let the light of truth shine forth in their daily words and actions. It is only such that Christ can accept as workers together with Him. MM 173





Wages

The question of wages is a matter of finding the balance between “too much” and “too little”.

EGW writes, “You suggest that if we paid higher wages, we could secure men of ability to fill important positions of trust. This might be so, but I should very much regret to see our workers held to our work by the wages they receive. There are needed in the cause of God workers who will make a covenant with Him by sacrifice, who will labor for the love of souls, not for the wages they receive.” CH 302

THE WORD MOST OFTEN USED IN THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY FOR THE WAGES OF GOD’S WORKERS IS “EQUITABLE”

“We do not establish them [sanitarium health institutions] as a speculative business, but to help men and women to follow right habits of living.” CH 249

The idea is not that men and women of great talent and training are not valuable, but God places special value on persons eager to engage in His work whatever the sacrifice required.

RECOMMENDATION: Wellness Center wages should be equitable, reasonable and comparable to the pay received by ministers in their respective countries.

“He (God) gives them (the self-sacrificing workers) success and victory. This has been presented to me over and over again. The Lord that sees in secret will reward openly for every sacrifice that His tried servants have been willing to make.” 2 SM 180: 0

Costs

Make small beginnings, and enlarge as circumstances may demand.

Count the cost of every undertaking, that you may be sure of being able to finish.

6T 113

BUDGETING is an essential element in establishing a wellness center. Costs may vary, depending on location, building prices, local wages and cost of living.

SETTING UP

Establishing a legal organization] USD\$ \$5,000

This is an essential step in order to create the appropriate legal framework for the wellness center to be established, independently from being an institution owned by the Church or a supporting ministry.

In most countries, \$5,000 is an adequate amount to cover expenses related to this. Some countries may need more. This amount should cover all legal costs – attorney and registration.

Land, buildings and equipment] USD\$ \$5,000

God’s provision is manifested in many different ways. There may be properties (land and buildings) already owned by the Church which may be used for this purpose. In these cases and depending on the condition of such properties, there may be a smaller outlay of means to start the work.

In the past, God has led His people to properties which He has designated for this purpose. Some properties may not have any buildings on them; others may already have some facilities. Others may be ready to be used.

With this in mind and in view of the number of examples already available, it is estimated that in most countries of the world, appropriate facilities may be established with amounts ranging from USD\$ 300,000 to 1,5 million.

LAUNCHING] USD\$ 20,000

“Pre-launch” marketing and training is an important step leading to the opening of the wellness center. This should preferably be done by marketing and other professionals.

OPERATING EXPENSES (FIRST YEAR)] USD\$ 360,000

- Operating expenses of a center with 15 staff members in a medium-income country may run at \$30,000/ month.
- Salaries account for approximately 2/3 of the monthly operating budget (approx. USD\$ 20,000/month)

IMPORTANT: to have an appropriation of an amount equivalent to 6 months of full salaries, at the launching phase (USD\$180,000)

TOTAL] ranges from \$240,000 to 1,600,000, depending on various factors such as the existence of a suitable building already owned by the Church.





Income

Financial sustainability is a key element for wellness centers. The aim for these institutions is to reach break-even point at 12 to 18 months of operation.

Income should be self-generated.

SOURCES OF INCOME:

- 1 > Residential wellness programs such as NEWSTART® or similar
- 2 > Depression Recovery Programs or similar
- 3 > Other residential programs including personalized interventions
- 4 > Individual outpatient medical consultations
- 5 > Vegetarian cooking and other courses

PRICES:

Residential programs could cost an equivalent amount to the average monthly salary in that country
eg: \$1500 *

Break-even point*

Financial “break-even” point would be achieved by:

Examples:

- > Two 10-day residential programs per month with 10 participants in each program.
- Or
- > One and a half 10-day residential programs per month (one program every 3 weeks)
- > Outpatient medical consultations e.g. 20 consultations per week at \$50 / consultation:
- > 3 patients in a personalized program during 10 days (between programs)

*These amounts will vary considerably from country to country.



Hotels - a way to start

A key element to start a Wellness Center is selection of the team that will operate it.

In order to build a good team, gain experience in running residential wellness programs and get the program known before the permanent Wellness Center starts operating, it is important to run a few pilot programs, preferably in a country hotel or in a well maintained campground with comfortable accommodation, kitchen, dining room, conference room and hydrotherapy facilities.

Two to three programs may be run in a hotel-setting during a 12-month period.

A hotel located in pleasant, natural surroundings in the country, not too far from a city, is the ideal place for such programs. Other important points to consider are:

- Hotel based programs should be financially more feasible as a starting point.
- Participants' fees should cover all the expenses, and prices should approximate to those to be charged when the permanent wellness center is operational.

RUNNING A FEW RESIDENTIAL WELLNESS PROGRAMS IN A HOTEL WILL GO A LONG WAY IN MAKING SURE A WELLNESS CENTER WILL OPERATE SUCCESSFULLY IN THE LONG TERM.

Inspire, coach, train and facilitate

The General Conference may play a leading role in:

- 】INSPIRING church leaders and church members worldwide to take up this special work
- 】Providing COACHING, TRAINING and leadership to the world field on how to start and manage Wellness Centers
- 】FACILITATING the establishment and management of the Wellness Centers network of institutions worldwide in collaboration with the local fields
- 】Establishing training programs for medical and non-medical professionals to work in Wellness Centers
- 】Including and involving well established Adventist wellness centers worldwide (both Church-owned and supporting ministries) to serve as a training ground, and to model such institutions for new leaders. These “model” institutions should be soundly-run, and based on the criteria described earlier in this brochure
- 】FACILITATING the expertise and availability of the products of Adventist Risk Management services(ARM), to ensure protection of the Seventh-day Adventist Church against litigation which may arise in the work of these centers. This is essential, and non-negotiable for wellness centers that belong specifically to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and have “Adventist” in the name.(ARM covers only church-owned institutions).

PLAN FOR SUCCESS, SET UP FOR GROWTH





Tony

had been diagnosed with Stage IV prostate cancer - it had metastasized to his bones. He called the wellness center to ask if a stay could help him. He was told there was little the lifestyle center could offer his situation. Yet, he insisted on coming, anyway.

The physician, on his first visit with Tony, asked him if he would like to be anointed (James 5). His reply was puzzling: "I would like to, but I can't!" The administrator also offered anointing and Tony's response was the same. This was offered several times during Tony's stay and the response was always the same.

Tony found the hydrotherapy and massage provided at least temporary relief from his pain. The fellowship with the other guests, the morning and evening devotions, and the caring staff encouraged him.

Several days before his session ended, the physician asked him again if he would like anointing, and his response was, "I would like to, but I can't!". The doctor pressed a little further and asked why he could not. He broke down and explained that he had given his 16-year-old grandson a car against his daughter's request, and now was estranged from the family. They had not spoken for more than a year.

The doctor asked him if he thought they would be willing to speak with him. He said they probably would and gave the contact phone number. It was a cordial conversation and the physician asked if they would speak with Tony. "Of course, we would be happy to talk with him!" was the reply. The doctor handed the phone to Tony and left the room.

When the conversation was over, the physician returned. Tony said, "I am ready now." That evening a special anointing and prayer service was held for Tony. He returned home two days later.

About 10 days later, Tony's wife called the lifestyle center to say Tony had passed away. Then she said, "I want to thank you for all you did for Tony. He found healing at the wellness center!"

Wellness and the Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church and its institutions have been healing agencies from their earliest history. Not only was there a call for sanitariums, clinics and hospitals to be organized, but also all church members were called to be involved in God’s ministry to the sick and suffering. That call is still active today.

Adventist “Sanitariums” moved beyond the medical practices of their day. It incorporated the then state-of-the-art therapies with a solid, time honored and now evidence-based approach to wellness, disease prevention, health promotion, and even disease reversal in specific situations. In the 21st Century, Adventists are leaders in acute care medicine, innovators in surgical procedures and in cancer treatments.

Seventh-day Adventist researchers have helped shape the current scientific understanding of lifestyle’s influence on health and longevity worldwide.

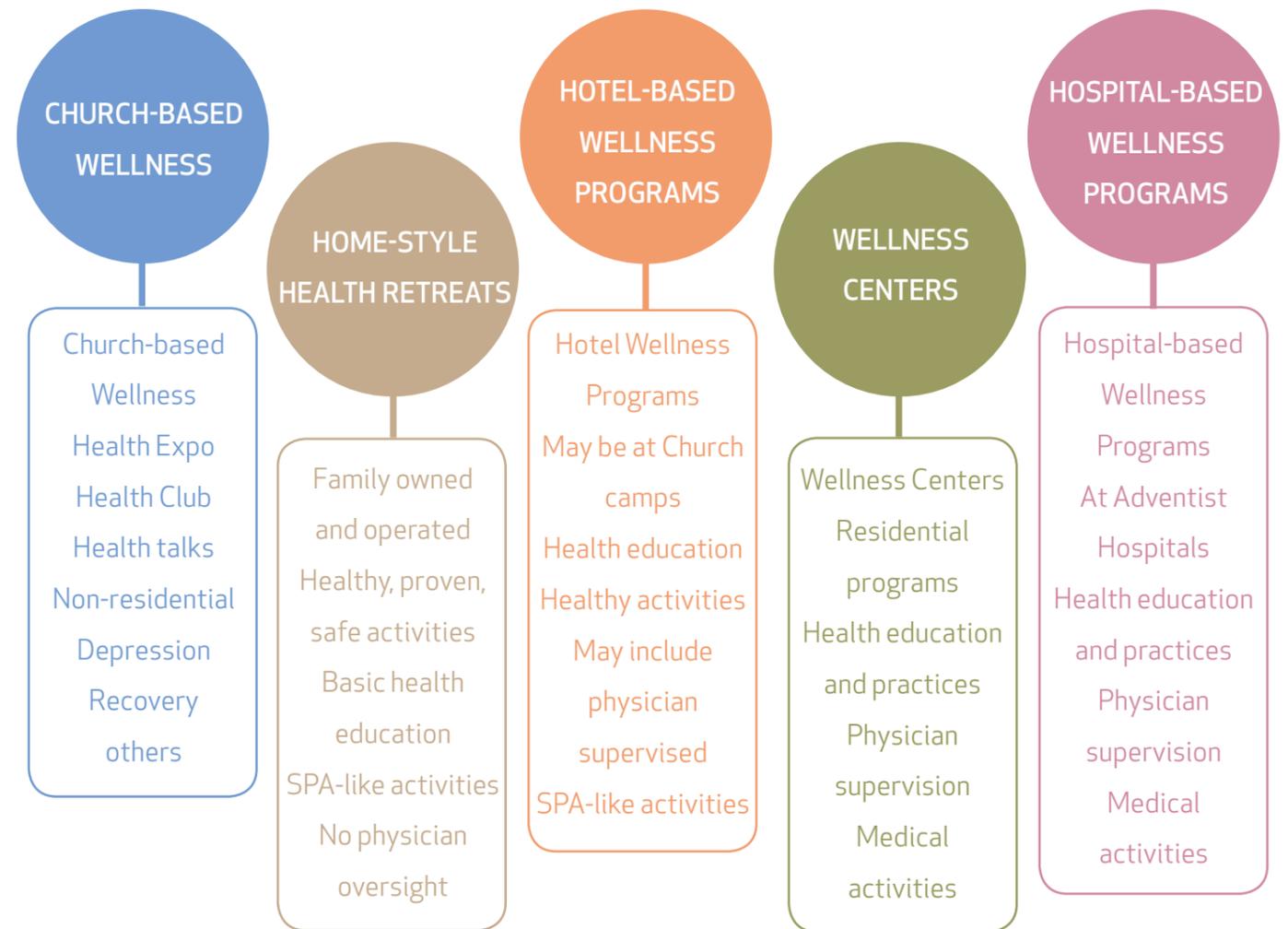
The global Adventist Healthcare Institutional Ministry of over 760 hospital, clinics and dispensaries serve the needs of 1.25 million inpatients and over 18.8 million outpatients (2015 data). Yet, this is only one aspect of institutionally-based comprehensive health ministry.

For many decades, consecrated lay Seventh-day Adventists have supported the denominational mission through the development of lifestyle or wellness centers, and health retreats around the world. Many of these have served as bridges between denominational and non-denominational health work in places where there may not be any denominational healthcare institutions whatsoever.

Church-based wellness programs such as Health Expos, vegetarian cooking schools, stop smoking programs such as Breathe-Free 2.0, CHIP®, NEWSTART®, CELEBRATIONS®, CREATION HEALTH® and many others, have helped reach thousands of people with God’s healing message.

Residential Wellness Centers are special in that they allow patients to come in close contact with Adventists for longer and more concentrated periods of time, and to experience firsthand the benefits of God’s healing message through the adoption of healthy lifestyles. This provides an excellent opportunity for the sick and suffering to come face to face with Jesus, the Great Physician, - their and our loving Savior.

The Spectrum of Adventist Wellness



Let those employed in our institutions be such as will let the light of truth shine forth in their daily words and actions. It is only such that Christ can accept as workers together with Him. MM 173