

Health Ministries News



LifeStart Health members attending the first online LCS course

GC Health Ministries Launched a Lifestyle Coaching Workshop Online

General Conference Health Ministries

A Lifestyle Coaching Skills (LCS) virtual workshop was launched by the GC Health Ministries department in February 2021. Coaching skills have been recognized as a critically helpful tool in supporting people during lifestyle change. The LCS workshop was first launched in 2019 during the Global Conference of Health and Lifestyle with increased interest for it around the world. The pandemic made live training sessions impossible. Thanks to a collaboration with the Institute of World Mission and GC Health Ministries “the training is now built on an excellent virtual educational platform that focuses on mission outreach,” shared Dr. Katia Reinert, the course coordinator. “In less than one month since the course was launched, over 200 people globally have registered and completed the online course,” she reported. LifeStart Health was the first organization to bring it for their members on February 7-11, 2021. Then the Middle-East North Africa Union (MENA) introduced it for their territory with two training sessions (February 21-25 and March 21-25). One MENA participant reported, “In the present situation [no travel], this was one of the best online trainings I have attended.” Another participant from LifeStart Health shared, “I really appreciate this program. I am now equipped to take the final message of salvation and the health message to others in a more effective way.” See www.HealthMinistries.com/lifestylecoaching for more information on future courses.



Participants of the ARMin Global training for the Southern Union Mission in ESD

Addiction Recovery Training Goes Virtual in Kazakhstan

Southern Union Mission, Kazakhstan | Euro-Asia Division (ESD)

On March 14-18, 2021 the Southern Union Mission of the Euro-Asia Division hosted a virtual Adventist Recovery Ministries Global training in collaboration with GC Health Ministries. The facilitator training brought together pastors, health professionals, health leaders and volunteers passionate about ministering to people struggling with addictions and unhealthy compulsive behaviors. Dr. Svetlana Sultanova, Health Ministries director for the Southern Union Mission, voiced her commitment to bring this important program to Kazakhstan, recognizing that during the pandemic substance use and other addictions have increased drastically. “The participants shared their experience with others, and others became interested in becoming equipped as well,” shared Nadia Ivanova, ESD Health Ministries director, who has worked tirelessly to expand the reach of the ministry across the territory. “The 12-Step, Christ-centered approach was the instrument that God used to transform my life” said Cergei, a participant who currently leads a 12-Step group near Almaty. “God is amazing! I am eager to use the new materials shared in this training.”



SoZo Health Retreat Participants in NSW, Australia.

SOZO Health Retreats Foster Life Transformation

New South Wales, Australia | South Pacific Division (SPD)

The North New South Wales (NNSW) Conference Health Ministries department launched the SoZo Health retreat as a model to assist people in lifestyle change. The retreat normally takes place in a hotel or spa with about 12-15 participants and 15-20 program volunteers. The SoZo Health Retreat goal is to bring restoration of body, mind, and spirit. It is a complete health approach shown to have long term results in just eight days. “We are fortunate to have other experienced professionals in our team working on our pilots as well as reviewing protocols, such as Bruce Thompson, a renowned physiotherapist in Australia and author of the website traditionalhydrotherapy.com now used worldwide as a reference guide for hydrotherapy treatments,” reported Camila Ito Staf, NNSW Conference Health Ministries director and SOZO Health coordinator. Local teams receive training and become ready to serve together running programs in their area every year. This is “an inclusive mission project that unites health professionals and lay people while enabling us to offer an opportunity for practical training for health professionals seeking to be involved in mission,” shared Camila. The last SoZo retreat was held in February 2021, and now the retreats have become a fully sustainable ministry. This model will soon be launched by the GC Health Ministries department for use around the world under the name Enliven Wellness. Stay tuned!



First Class of Medical Students on their Sabbath on Campus

Adventist School of Medicine in East Africa Welcomes Students

Kigali, Rwanda | East-Central Africa Division (ECD)

The Adventist School of Medicine of East Africa (ASOME) officially opened its doors to welcome their first students on March 10, 2021. Placed in the Adventist University of Central Africa, Kigali, Rwanda, the school has enrolled 34 students in the first class, with 12 females and 22 males. “The program offers a post-secondary degree in a curriculum spread over seven years of study and practice,” shared Dr. Tsegaye Fesaha, East-Central Africa Division Health Ministries director. He added, “by God’s grace, this group will become medical missionary doctors who will be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ wherever they may serve.” The ECD leadership and the new medical school leaders are grateful for God’s leading, not only in making the dream of a medical school a reality, but also in providing a collaboration with the Rwanda Government in an effort to build a new hospital that will serve the community while allowing medical students to do their clinical rotations gaining medical expertise while serving.



THE HEALTH CONNECTION

Every church a center of hope and health.

REACH UP

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Focus on a Spirit Led Revival



United in Prayer

“I will go...to the end,” praying. The church is *United in Prayer*: A global prayer movement including 100 Days of Prayer and 10 Days of Prayer, in which hundreds of thousands of people have participated. With the COVID-19 pandemic sweeping our world, and with many unsettling events now taking place, what better time to be pressing together as a Church in prayer as we seek strength in time of crisis as well as Holy Spirit power for the mission before us? www.revivalandreformation.org/100days/blog/100

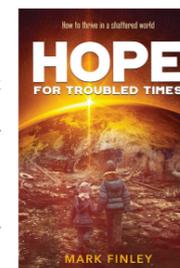


Believe His Prophets

Believe His Prophets, the sequel to *Revived by His Word*, is a five-year program reading through the Bible and selected Ellen White writings, including *Steps to Christ*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Prophets and Kings*, *The Desire of Ages*, *The Acts of the Apostles*, and *The Great Controversy*. You can receive daily Bible readings, participate in interactive blogs and read select inspirational writings. Sign up at www.revivalandreformation.org/signup

Books

Hope for Troubled Times, by Mark Finley. God is larger than our fears, bigger than our worries, and greater than our anxieties, by our side; and He has practical, down-to-earth, real solutions to our problems. <https://www.sharinghope.com/book/hope-for-troubled-times/>



Up in Smoke



Many of our plans for 2020 went up in smoke because of an invisible aggressor: SARS-COV-2. This novel coronavirus has challenged just about every healthcare and public health system around the world. Depending on where you live, the impact on personal health and loss of life has probably been either great or enormous with very few exceptions.

Among the risk factors for infection and poor outcomes of infection are chronological age, and underlying metabolic conditions – particularly diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and chronic kidney disease. Since these diseases are usually associated with lifestyle behavior, our usual approach to prevent, control, manage, and even reverse (when possible) these diseases is very relevant in this pandemic era. The tools that we have developed over the years, such as CELEBRATIONS, have become even more useful among those who see that COVID-19, a communicable disease, exploits the vulnerability of those people who have underlying risk factors for, or actually suffer from so-called non-communicable diseases or conditions!

Smoking and vaping (e-cigarettes) have recently joined the list of potential risk factors. Researchers found that smokers were more susceptible to infection and more likely to suffer from a more serious infection during the MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome) outbreak. Now with the COVID-19 pandemic, the concern is that smoking or vaping could create a one-two punch, since smoking irritates the sensitive lung tissues and stimulates mucus production and inflammation, so people who smoke are more likely to have serious respiratory infections and illnesses, such as influenza and pneumonia. The second punch

is related to the social aspect of smoking and vaping. Additionally, vaping has created concern of increased COVID-19 among younger people. The pandemic has given yet another opportunity for tobacco users to recognize the serious health and addiction risks and to consider quitting.

A Massachusetts General Hospital survey of 1,024 adults (age 18 and up) evaluated the 6-month use of cigarettes or e-cigarettes. Thirty-three percent of the smokers studied increased smoking because of increased stress. Participants expressed interest in getting help to quit. Cessation assistance during this time was recommended by the researchers to reduce stress-related increases in product use and improve the success rates among those willing to quit using tobacco products. Breathe-Free 2 helps smokers do just that! Our wholistic lifestyle approach to health includes smoking cessation, so that no one has to have their whole life go up in smoke. You can find more information about Breathe Free 2 under the Resources session of this newsletter.

Let's use what we have in lifestyle approaches to include smoking cessation so that no one has to have their whole life go up in smoke.



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Health Ministries Resources

• **COVID-19 Health Ministries Resource Page.** The COVID-19 outbreak and response has been accompanied by an “infodemic, an over-abundance of information, some accurate and some not, that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it. The General Conference Health Ministries (HM) department continues to update its COVID-19 resource page, as it is critical to evaluate every piece of information we share in church and in the community. The website offers articles and resources for churches, health professionals, health ministry leaders and church members. You will find information about vaccination and videos that can be used as health minutes to assist in educating your church and community. <https://www.healthministries.com/coronavirus>

• **COVID-19 Mental Health Initiative (MHI).** This is an initiative supporting mental health among youth and young adults during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this COVID-19 Mental Health initiative we can counter isolation, loneliness and hopelessness by stimulating positive coping strategies and establishing appropriate support structures and initiatives where we are. Explore free resources and make a difference by becoming a #Covid19MHI ambassador. Learn more and register at <https://youthaliveportal.org/mentalhealth>

• **World Health Day (April 7).** This year the World Health Organization (WHO) is inviting all to join a new campaign to build a fairer, healthier world. As the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted, some people are able to live healthier lives and have better access to health services than others. COVID-19 has hit all

countries hard, but its impact has been harshest on those communities which were already vulnerable, whose residents are more exposed to the disease, less likely to have access to quality health care services and more likely to experience adverse consequences as a result of measures implemented to contain the pandemic. Let’s us join hands and reach out to make a difference. <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2021>

• **World No Tobacco Day (May 31).** The COVID-19 pandemic has led to millions of tobacco users saying they want to quit when they realize that smoking increases the risk of severe COVID-19 disease. This year’s campaign theme “Commit to Quit” focuses on helping provide resources for people of all ages to leave smoking behind. This is a perfect opportunity to host a Breathe-Free2 stop smoking program in your church, hope center, or school, motivating and helping people say no to Tobacco. See the WHO resources page for more information: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-no-tobacco-day/world-no-tobacco-day-2021>



WHO and UN Health Calendar Emphasis



April-June 2021

- 7 April**
World Health Day
- Last week of April**
World Immunization Week
- 25 April**
World Malaria Day
- 31 May**
World No Tobacco Day
- 14 June**
World Blood Donor Day

Dates to Remember

2021

March 21-25
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training II
Egypt-Sudan Field (MENA)

April 16-18
SSD Family Health Camp
Virtual

April 24-25
ARMin Global Training
NSW Conference (SPD), Australia

May 2-6
ARMin Global Training
New Seed (SAD), Brazil

May 19-21
AHSRA Annual Conference
Virtual

May 19-25
Global Campmeeting
Virtual

June 13-17
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training
Baltic Union (TED)

June 20-24
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training III
Middle-East North Africa Union
(Arabic)

August 1-8*
Youth Alive Training and Conference
Middle-East North-Africa Union, Egypt

September 10-12*
ARMin Global Training
Portuguese Union, Portugal

2022

June 6-11, 2022
GC Session
St Louis, Missouri

*Tentative date

RESEARCH UPDATES

Share Facts with Hope and Positive Choices



• **Smoking among males and COVID-19.** Using tobacco products can increase your chance of getting COVID-19. Bringing your hands to your mouth can transfer the virus into your body. Sharing tobacco products can transmit the virus between people. Tobacco weakens your respiratory system making you more vulnerable to the coronavirus. On top of that, according to the Center for Disease Control, men die on average 5 years earlier than women. While women are expected to live an average of 81 years at birth, men are expected to live an average of 76 years, with non-Hispanic Blacks having the lowest life expectancy at nearly 71 years compared to White and Hispanic males. But there’s hope! One of the factors contributing to worse health in men is the higher prevalence of cigarette smoking among males than among females at any age. By quitting the habit, males can reduce their chances of dying from any cause and experience a longer and happier life. <https://bit.ly/3rC6WEj> and [https://factswithhope.org/\(video 28\)](https://factswithhope.org/(video 28)).

• **Smoking linked to severe coronavirus infection.** Smoking or vaping could make you more vulnerable to a severe infection of the novel coronavirus. Though few studies have investigated the connection specifically, cigarette smoke and vaping aerosol are linked to lung inflammation and lowered immune function. A small study in China found that men were more likely than women to be hospitalized for coronavirus infections, and scientists say this observation could be related to the fact that in the country, vastly more men than women smoke. Another study published in the Chinese Medical Journal, involved 78 patients with COVID-19 and found that those with a history of smoking had a 14 percent higher risk of developing pneumonia. Want to reduce your chances of lung complications or severe COVID-19? Choose to stay free from tobacco or vaping. [https://factswithhope.org/\(video 8\)](https://factswithhope.org/(video 8)).



• **Reducing Risk for COVID-19.** You may catch COVID-19 and be at risk of becoming severely ill, if you have a noncommunicable disease/a pre-existing condition such as cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, or cancer. But there is hope. Here are tips for people affected by these conditions on how to stay safe: Engage in lifestyle changes (such as exercise, eat healthfully, rest adequately), take your medicine if prescribed, follow medical advice, keep distant from sick people, wash hands often, quit drinking alcohol or smoking, protect your mental health. <https://www.who.int/teams/noncommunicable-diseases/covid-19>

• **Mental health disorders during the COVID-19 pandemic.** According to the CDC, nearly 3 in 4 youth and young adults age 19-24 years old (nearly 75%) reported at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition, and one in four (25%) reported seriously having considered suicide in the past 30 days. That’s a fact. But there’s hope! Knowing common depression symptoms among adolescents can help parents and friends offer help in a loving and non-judgmental way. Connecting depressive adolescents with adequate health care and treatment is a critical first step in reducing the high prevalence of depression and suicide in this age group. [https://factswithhope.org/\(video 36\)](https://factswithhope.org/(video 36)).