

# Health Ministries News



Presenters and Participants of the Mental Health Conference.

## Reaching Vietnam through the Ministry of Mental Health

South-Asia Union Mission | Southern Asia-Pacific Division

Vietnam is recovering from Covid 19, dealing with anxiety, stress, and depression caused by isolation, social media, and poor sleep patterns. Vietnam's Adventist community sees this as an opportunity to engage with the public and give solutions to this growing concern. Adventists in Ho Chi Minh recently sponsored a community fun run to promote social engagement and wellness. Dr. Torben Bergland, GC Associate Health Director, led mental health training, educating leaders and presenting various mental health solutions. In Hanoi, Adventists hosted a Mental Health conference where attendees valued the talk after understanding mental health development's complexity. The series concluded with the baptism of two individuals during the seminar's culmination. COVID-19 drastically affected mental health worldwide. People felt worried and depressed after being on lockdown. The Adventist Church will continue to find ways to help communities discover hope and healing in Jesus.



Participants of the youth alive training and conference in South France.

## Youth and Young Adults Make a Stand for Living Healthy and Serving Others

Franco-Belgium Union | Inter-European Division

Over 70 Young Adventists and several pastors met at the Moulin de l'Ayrolle, France, for a youth alive facilitator training and the launch of three mission-driven youth alive centers in the region. Six youth leaders were hired to lead Youth Alive projects in the cities of Bordeaux, Lyon, and Marseille, in an effort to reach post-modern youth and young adults with a message of healthy living, hope, and wholeness. "We experienced beautiful moments of worship, and we attended meditations and interventions of pastors and doctors and psychologists," reported Vanessa, one attendee. Breakouts discussed topics such as making choices, self-esteem, toxic relationships, sexuality, and depression. "These topics affect us all, especially as young people, and are very important to address so that we can live an abundant life with God's help," she added. Each day the youth gathered in their youth alive friendship groups to share their experiences in life. They listened, encouraged each other, and prayed together. "It was beautiful to see mutual trust, complicity, and harmony in a group of people who did not know each other very well at first. There was no judgment; sharing was done with love and respect. We welcomed everyone's opinions and testimonies with kindness," said Philippe Penner, Youth director for the conference. On Saturday, the group had a witnessing time, during which all those who wished could open their hearts to others and encourage them in the faith by sharing what God had done in their lives. This was followed by a time of games which helped to bring the participants closer together. They pledged I will Go, with a greater desire to reflect the love of Christ wherever they are, by their attitude, life choices, and concern for others, aiming at helping other youths adopt a healthy lifestyle through the Youth Alive discipleship program.



People who were baptized as a result of the Hope Journey health Project in Merida, Venezuela.

## Baptisms from Health Outreach in Venezuela

Western Venezuela Union | Inter-American Division

Despite the many challenges the people in Venezuela faced, the Adventist church in the Western Venezuela region found ways to minister to people's needs, following Jesus' method. They held two community projects focusing on comprehensive health ministry, with several conference ministries playing a pivotal role. The first, entitled Living the Hope, took place on May 20-22 in the city of Barquisimeto at the Adventist Hospital, where volunteer health professionals, church members, pastors, and supporting ministries came together to offer free medical care. They reported that 2336 patients received consultations, and hundreds were prayed for in these two days. The second, entitled Hope Journey, took place in the city of Merida. The goal is to bless the community through a center of influence, meeting people's whole-person needs. They started on the 25th of July, offering free health consultations with health professionals daily at the center. At the same time, patients were asked if they wished to be prayed for and/or study the Bible. In a period of six weeks, out of hundreds of patients receiving medical care, 245 accepted Bible studies, and 15 were baptized. The project continues, and a new church will be established soon. "We are thrilled to see God at work through comprehensive health ministry," said Fanny Soto de Gimenez, Union health ministries director. "It has been a joy to see people find health and hope," she added.



The physicians and organizers who participated in the free health clinic in Bacarena, PA.

## Physicians Unite to Serve the Underserved in Brazil

Belem, Brazil | South-American Division

The Adventist Medical Association (AMA) of the South American Division held its annual congress in the city of Belem, Para, at the premises of the Belem Adventist Hospital – which was first founded by pioneer missionaries Leo and Jessie Halliwell. The meeting brought together physicians from Brazil, Peru, Argentina, and Chile, along with medical students, to refocus on comprehensive health ministry and mission outreach. As part of the event, AMA collaborated with the Belem Adventist Hospital and the Northern Union in Brazil to organize a health outreach for the vulnerable population in the city of Bacarena. Forty physicians took time off their busy practices to volunteer, offering free medical, surgical, gynecological, pediatric, and psychiatric care during the three days. Over 1000 people received care and were touched by the love of God. "We had the opportunity to pray with them, offer words of hope, and share Christ's love with each one we saw," said Dr. Daniela Kano. "We certainly were instruments in the hands of the Great Physician. What a privilege!" she added.



# THE HEALTH CONNECTION

Every church a center of hope and health.

REACH UP

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Reach Up.....	1
Message from the GC Health Ministries Team	
Reach In.....	2
Health Ministry Resources	
Dates to Remember	
Reach In.....	3
Health Research Updates	
Reach Out.....	4
Health Ministries News	

## Focus on a Spirit Led Revival



## United in Prayer

Join in our Quarterly Days of Prayer. We invite you to pray with your local church family. Perhaps you will choose to fast on this day to gain more time for prayer and a clearer mind. You may fast from desserts or social media or eat sparingly plant-based food for a time. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/2QoKCNg>



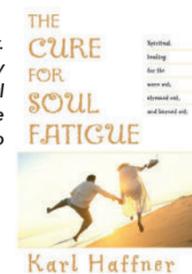
## Believe His Prophets

Believe His Prophets, the sequel to Revived by His Word, is a five-year program of 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 <https://bit.ly/3ve8VD7>

## Books

The Cure for Soul Fatigue, by Karl Hafner. With lots of laugh therapy along the way and mega-doses of wisdom, pastor Karl exposes the root causes of soul fatigue and prescribes the biblical cures to remedy them.

<https://bit.ly/3PKVL9W>



## Peace on Earth



We are celebrating another Christmas Season and will shortly welcome another New Year. I recall as a child how painfully long the wait felt for this special season to come around from one year to the next...Nowadays, it seems as if New Year ushers in an almost frenetic progression to Easter and then Christmas, with time racing by in a blur. There is so much to do and so much yet undone...

Last Christmas, we started emerging from the peak of the Pandemic. This Christmas, although the aggression of the virus has attenuated through increasing natural immunity and vaccinations, we still face the many issues that have followed in the wake of the pestilence – a significant loss of life, long Covid, economic woes, travel constraints, depression and loneliness, political divides, division, and distrust—even within the Church we love.

"Peace on Earth..." We sing these words, write them in greeting cards, see them in lights and paint them on beautiful tree ornaments. At the same time, we witness cruel conflict, the devastation of war, and the suffering of the innocent in real time to the extent that we develop compassion fatigue. Floods and fires, famine, and food shortages affect many people, many millions globally. In the midst of it all, we as health promoters have the privilege of touching lives, binding wounds, comforting the bereaved, sharing bread, and especially pointing people to the Source of life – Jesus - the Living Water, the Bread of Life! At the same time, despite overfilled schedules, we must nurture our personal connection to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Dr. Randy Roberts, the senior pastor of the

Loma Linda University Church, recently challenged his congregation to follow three steps to refreshing and renewal in these difficult times: To rest, reframe, and reach out as God brings people and opportunity our way. When we are refreshed, we have a clearer perspective on our calling [reframe] and how God wishes to use us to reach out. Then we follow as He leads.

Thank you for your faithful work and service in Comprehensive Health Ministry as you faithfully continue to make a difference! Allow yourself time during this holiday season to rest, reset and recalibrate. And as this broken, yet still beautiful, planet accelerates from crisis to crisis, we can remain thankful for God's faithfulness, constancy, and His Word. He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us. This Christmastide, with hope and confidence, we again give thanks for Jesus' First Advent as we keenly anticipate and prepare for His Second Coming. Even so, come Lord Jesus. Maranatha!



*Peter Landless*  
**Peter Landless, M.B., B.Ch., M. Med**  
LandlessP@GC.adventist.org  
Director  
GCHealthMinistries

## Health Ministries Resources



- **Nutrition Factsheets.** The General Conference Nutrition Council (GCNC) has produced several articles with an evidence-based scientific foundation that helps to clarify some essential questions about healthy eating and balanced nutrition. Check out some of these articles and share them with your health team, your community, and on social media. Download a vegetarian plate handout too. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3hLZwiV>.

- **Adventist church health-related statements.** Over the years, the Seventh-day Adventist church has produced several statements and guidelines related to healthy living and whole-person health. They cover issues related to physical health, such as AIDS, birth control, domestic violence, and care for the dying, to issues related to mental or behavioral health, such as addictions, or social issues, like poverty or homelessness. You can access these and other essential statements and guidelines at the GC health ministries portal at <https://bit.ly/3Gch4yd>.

- **Female Genital Mutilation (February 6).** Since 2012, the UN General Assembly has designated February 6th as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation to amplify and direct the efforts to eliminate this practice by 2030. Abuse comes in many forms, and female

genital mutilation is one of them. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has spoken against all forms of abuse through its ENDITNOW initiative for over two decades. Because female genital mutilation threatens physical, emotional, and relational health, Adventists are opposed to this practice. The church has created a statement about female genital mutilation and recommends that its departments share it widely. Access the statement at <https://bit.ly/3I5adHY>. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3WAmYtT>.

- **CELEBRATIONS brochures for health promotion.** CELEBRATIONS is a comprehensive wellness program that can empower people to experience optimal health and share it with others. It's based on the acronym CELEBRATIONS, which outlines 12 vital ways to energize one's daily living. One of the program's resources is a set of brochures highlighting these 12 principles, which can be downloaded freely and shared during health outreach programs or with neighbors, friends, or family. Download them at <https://bit.ly/3VkpAz>. [You must register as a health promoter under the leader's tab on the site so you can access the brochures and other resources to share].



## HM CALENDAR 2023

\* Online

- February 1–5**  
SSD Health Advisory  
Bali, Indonesia
- February 13–15**  
WAF Lifestyle Coaching Training  
Northern Cyprus
- February 17–26**  
Israel Field CHM Training  
Tel Aviv, Israel
- March 10–12**  
SAD ARMin Training  
Sao Paulo, Brazil
- March 17–19**  
TPU ARMin Training  
Suva, Fiji
- March 20–22**  
TPU Lifestyle Coaching Training  
Suva, Fiji
- April 2–8, 2023**  
NAD Health Summit  
Kentucky, USA
- April 7–11, 2023**  
GC Spring Meetings  
Maryland, USA
- April 14–14**  
SID Lifestyle Coaching Training  
Harare, Zimbabwe
- April 21–23**  
SID ARMin Training  
Victoria, Seychelles
- April 28–30, 2023**  
IAD Lifestyle Coaching Training  
Medellin, Colombia
- May 2–7, 2023**  
IAD Youth Alive Training/Conference  
Medellin, Colombia

## RESEARCH UPDATES

### Share Positive Choices Tips



- **Good sleep improves immunity to fight viruses.** Evidence accumulated over the last few decades demonstrates that adequate sleep improves the ability of the immune system to resist infection. Shorter sleep duration in otherwise healthy people is associated with an increased risk of developing the common cold. In one study, researchers found that 50% of those sleeping less than 5 hours per night in the preceding week got infected. Only 18% of those sleeping an average of 7+ hours were infected. Chronic sleep deprivation also contributes to an increased risk of obesity—a known comorbidity for COVID-19 and the Flu. Equip your body to resist infections by getting at least 7-8 hours of sleep every night <https://bit.ly/3HX0DHh>.

- **Struggle with depression and anxiety.** The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States noted in a 2020 survey that 40.9% of respondents reported at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition. The increase in depression, anxiety, stress and trauma-related disorders, substance abuse, and suicidal ideations is staggering compared to 2019 and 2018. Among 18-24 year-olds, three in four reported at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition, and one in four reported seriously having considered suicide in the past 30 days. <https://bit.ly/3WxBsPq> You can do something to help reverse this trend! Check out Youth Alive mental health initiative at <https://bit.ly/3Gd5RNP> and this conversation with youth about their mental health and share it today! <https://bit.ly/3VdnRfn>.

- **Foods that can help prevent memory loss.** While there are no effective treatments for dementia, some preventative measures may help. Flavonoids, powerful antioxidants found in plants, can potentially prevent deterioration of brain function. Researchers examined mild subjective cognitive decline (SCD) in 49,493 women and 27,842 men over 30+ years. A higher intake of total flavonoids

was associated with a lower risk of SCD. Foods were ranked according to their potency for this effect. Blueberries, strawberries, apples, and oranges were at the top, with potatoes at the bottom of the list. So, make sure you include these key fruits in your diet. The best way to get ALL the nutrients needed for good health is to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables—but not all at the same time! <https://bit.ly/3Cj519p>

- **Overwork can kill.** Researchers compared people who work more than 55 hours weekly to those adhering to the widely accepted 35-40 weekly hours. Those who worked longer hours had a 35% higher risk of stroke and a 17% higher risk of death from heart disease. The researchers estimated that 745,194 deaths occurred from ischemic heart disease and stroke in 2016. Unfortunately, the pandemic is likely to worsen these trends. The highest risks for overwork occur in middle-aged or older workers. The authors suggested that more flexible scheduling and job sharing could help ease this burden. No job is worth the risk of stroke or heart disease. Make sure to take breaks and balance working hours with rest and other meaningful, healthy activities. <https://bit.ly/3hQopdd>



## Global Health Calendar Emphasis



### January–March 2023

- February 4**  
World Cancer Day
- February 6**  
International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation
- March 10**  
World Kidney Day
- March 24**  
World TB Day