

Integrative Health Care at Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC

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The Integrative Program at Mission Hospital originally began in the summer of 2008 with a staff of three. Currently, the department has 18 staff members including an Integrative Medicine physician, Holistic Nurse Specialists, Movement Instructors who specialize in Tai Chi, Qigong and Yoga, Administrative staff, Pet Therapy Coordinators, Education Coordinator, and a Music Therapist. The program will soon be adding an Acupuncturist and Art Therapist to the department because of extended Integrative Health services that will be offered at the new Cancer Center.

Integrative Healthcare is a combination of traditional medicine and complementary modalities that address the whole person, not just the disease. At Mission Hospital the Integrative Healthcare Department is helping patients achieve balance through science and compassion and by maximizing the body's potential for healing. This optimal healing is achieved by creating a partnership in which patient and practitioner work together, incorporating treatment options from conventional and complementary approaches, taking into account not only physical symptoms, but also psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of health and illness.

Integrative Healthcare at Mission Hospital is dedicated to the safe and compassionate integration of complementary and conventional medicine through the activities of research, education, clinical services, and community partnerships.

Integrative Healthcare seeks to:

- Reaffirm the importance of relationships in enhancing wellness and healing in a family-centered and culturally-sensitive manner.
- Promote safe, evidence-based practice that integrates effective therapies.
- Collaborate with community resources and practitioners to create an integrated healing network.

The foundation of the Integrative Health Program began by giving the tools of Holistic care back to nurses. At Mission Hospital this means implementing Integrative Holistic nursing practices and creating an innovative program which builds on the success of Mission's healing journey. Nurses are given the opportunity to become Holistic Resource nurses through a 24-hour continuing education course. This course focuses on evidence based nursing practices and the core values of Holistic Nursing from the *American Holistic Nurses Association* and the *American Nurses Association*.

The class guides nurses in the art and science of holistic nursing and offers ways of thinking, practicing, and responding both personally and professionally to bring healing to the forefront of healthcare. Emphasis is placed not only on preparing for the Holistic Nursing Certification (HNC) exam, but also in preparing Mission nurses to serve as Holistic Resource nurses in their roles as clinicians, educators, and researchers. Components of this course include an organized base of knowledge, competencies, definitions, theories, and research. There have been 348 nurses trained at Mission who function as Holistic Resource Nurses.

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