

Holistic Nurse-Endorsed Programs Combine Whole Health Education, Coaching

Two longstanding American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA)-endorsed programs, Bark Coaching Institute, formerly AsOne Coaching, and the National Institute of Whole Health (NIWH), are working together to provide a comprehensive program that includes both whole health patient education and health coaching competencies for nurses.

Nurse health coaches are becoming an important component in addressing the urgent need for reducing chronic conditions, heart disease, obesity, metabolic syndrome and stroke. An innate part of nursing skills and knowledge is providing patient education and behavioral change facilitation. As the definitive voice for holistic nursing, AHNA recognizes the importance of nurse health coaches and the role they play in providing whole health, person-centered care.

"We are happy to see our endorsed programs working together," says Jeanne Crawford, AHNA Executive Director, "This type of collaboration has potential to open new doors for multidisciplinary education within the nursing profession."

Certificate programs are only endorsed by AHNA after a rigorous peer-review process and approval of the AHNA Leadership Council. These programs offer content based on a well-developed body of knowledge consistent with the AHNA Scope and Standards of Holistic Nursing Practice.

Combining the Whole Health Education and Health Coaching Competencies program is a two-fold addition to the nurse's tool, according to AHNA. The Whole Health Education component provides an evidence-based, demystified body of health knowledge and information that goes beyond the linear, symptoms-oriented, treatment-oriented education nurses receive during training.

By having a clear, integrated and scientific understanding of how and why disease manifests in the body due to chronic lifestyle choices, nurses can provide their patients with the information they need to take greater control of their health. In addition, nurse professionals can use this new whole person health information to take better care of their own health.

The Health Coaching Competencies, taught under the guidance of Linda Bark, PhD, RN MCC, gives nurses new tools and modalities with which to facilitate their patient's organic choices of how they would like to get well, stay well and take control of their health and the quality of their life.

The combination of these two evidence-based, hospital-tested disciplines are not only important skills for today's nurse, according to AHNA, but this patient education model of disease prevention with health coaching, is a billable and reimbursable health insurance service when provided in a medical practice or by a nurse practitioner.

The combined program meets the published guidelines that Medicare, Medicaid, the Institutes of Medicine and the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Health Organizations (JCAHO) published in 2005 for the practice of health care in all settings. These guidelines include: "patients at the center of their healthcare decision making; care for the whole person; and evidenced-based patient health education" as key guidelines.

To learn more about program endorsement through AHNA, or to view a list of certificate programs currently endorsed by AHNA, visit <http://www.ahna.org/tabid/1207/Default.aspx>.