

# 19th Century Adventist Healthcare Principles in 21st Century Adventist Hospital

Pimentel-Melendez, C. Y. / Adventist University of East- Central Africa, Adventist School of Medicine East- Central Africa (ASOME) / [cyp@asome.health](mailto:cyp@asome.health)

## Abstract

This qualitative study identified Adventist healthcare founding principles in Ellen White's (EW) early health visions and how current Adventist healthcare (AH) leaders perceive their application. This poster focuses on three principles that have areas of opportunity for improvement in its implementation in Adventist Healthcare institutions.

## Background

Clarifying an organization's founding values and principles can help it stay focused on fulfilling its mission. Faith-based organizations often work to shore up their governing commitment to safeguard their core identity. Isolating and discussing AH founding values can be crucial for engaging leaders and followers in important identify, mission and strategic decisions. Surfacing conflict or disagreement about a value can help a community work through issues to deeper understanding and fulfillment. Or difference can be left to fester and dilute engagement and dissipate energies, commitments and mission.

## Objectives

The study's original research questions related to isolating early principles from E.G. White visions and then vetting those with historians and then discussing their new wording and application with current Adventist healthcare leaders.

## Methods/Main Findings

Document analysis distilled 12 principles from EG 1865 and 1871 recorded visions related to AH. Historians gave feedback on the analysis. Four focus groups with 26 AH leaders from different geographical areas discussed these 12 and their application to hospital work.

The 12 principles were:

- (1) health education and preventive medicine,
- (2) healthcare for Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) members,
- (3) indirect witnessing to non-believers patients,
- (4) sustain financial and administration model despite attention to all social classes,
- (5) unwavering biblical principles,
- (6) wholistic perspective,
- (7) physical activity as part of treatment,**
- (8) preparing people to be whole before God,**
- (9) prayer combined with treatment and obedience to the laws of health,
- (10) God-fearing personnel,
- (11) therapeutic nature interaction, and**
- (12) altruistic and trusting institutional model.

There was widespread support for most of these principles, some being viewed as now universally practiced in all hospital systems. There were some principles that raised debate and concern. Principle eight generated diverse responses and insights as leaders discussed what it meant to "prepare people to be whole" or "reconciled" with God. Principles seven & eleven (Exercise as part of treatment and therapeutic nature interaction), were perceived challenging to implement in the traditional hospital setting.

## Discussions

Three of the most discussed principles were analyzed. Preparing people to be whole before God was the most discussed and misunderstood of the principles. This was concerning since it was identified by EW as being the core of AH. The original intention of this principle refers to a continual process but the term "perfection" is linked to different interpretations.

Regarding physical activity as part of treatment and the therapeutic nature interaction is currently implemented in several hospitals and recorded in diverse clinical settings in the research literature. However, Ellen White provided a specific purpose, besides the physical benefit, to "keep the power of the will awake" (White, 2017, p.515). Patients in their particular conditions could work on numerous activities to redirect their minds and thoughts away from their problems. Interaction with nature assists in taking the patients' attention beyond their health problems and developing a sense of being useful.

## Conclusions

There were principles that Adventist healthcare leaders perceived as difficult to apply in modern settings, even if they were sympathetic to the value of the founding governing principle. While also was noted some differences and even resistance to a few of these principles applied to modern Adventist healthcare. Promotion of AH mission and principles with AH leaders can assist on exploring ways of implementing AH core philosophy in modern healthcare settings around the globe.

# 19th Century Adventist Healthcare Principles in 21st Century Adventist Hospital

## Main References & Video Links

### Main Bibliography

Covrig, D. (2003). Institutional integrity through periods of significant change: Loma Linda University's 100 year struggle with organizational identity. In A. S. Iltis (Ed.), *Institutional integrity in health care* (pp. 139-174). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-017-0153-2\\_9](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-017-0153-2_9) and [https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=k5K\\_QE\\_ukMQC&oi=fnd&pg=PA139&ots=J4wPDXWibK&sig=VA\\_AahWkgLtPppF21Wq8ZHeBCnM#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=k5K_QE_ukMQC&oi=fnd&pg=PA139&ots=J4wPDXWibK&sig=VA_AahWkgLtPppF21Wq8ZHeBCnM#v=onepage&q&f=false)

Covrig, D. M. (2005). Mountains, flatlands, and tenuous meaning: Organizational sociology in administrative sensemaking. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 43 (1), 102-120. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/leadership-dept-pubs/106/>

Pimentel Meléndez, C. Y. (2020). Adventist Healthcare: A Qualitative Study of 19th Century Founding Governing Principles in 21st Century Adventist Hospitals ([Publication Number 28028265](#)) [Ph.D., Andrews University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Ann Arbor.

White, E. G. (1992a). Testimonies for the Church (Vol. 1). Pacific Press. (1868)

### Power Point Presentation & Video Links

Power point presentation: Adventist Healthcare: Founding Governing Principles in 21st Century Adventist Hospitals

<https://ghi.llu.edu/sites/ghi.llu.edu/files/docs/GHC%202020/Speaker%20PPT/Adventist%20Founding%20Principles%20-%20Presentation.pdf>

Video link:

- . Video Presentation English: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXiQDjZEv6U> )
- . Video presentation Spanish (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3D4ayMkSQ0>)