



HEALTH POLICY FOR MINISTERS IN THE EKALESIAS

1. STUDYING AT TAKAMOA

Students enrolling at the Takamoa Theological College are required to undergo a comprehensive medical health check from a recognised medical institution and must submit a detailed medical health report to the Principal when submitting his application. Students failing to do this will not be considered for entry into Takamoa.

Students who have major health issues according to their medical reports may not be allowed to study full-time at Takamoa. This will depend on the advice of a medical doctor which the Principal will seek before considering the applicant's application as a candidate for Takamoa.

2. MINISTERS' ROTATION POLICY

This health policy does not replace the Ministers' Rotation Policy already passed by the CICC General Assembly. Rather, where health comes in as a major issue, then this health policy will work around the rotation policy insofar as accommodating the needs of the ministers are concerned.

3. MINISTERS' HEALTH POLICY

3.1 Bereavement

When a minister or his wife have major health issues and as a result passes away while caretaking an Ekalesia, the Ministers' Bereavement Policy takes effect immediately.

3.2 Prolonged hospitalisation

When a minister is diagnosed with a serious ailment which requires hospitalisation of over 3 months, the relevant CICC Council will arrange for a stand-in minister. The minister's family (wife and children) will continue staying in the Ekalesia's mission house and will be looked after by the Ekalesia.

If the hospitalisation exceeds 6 months and the medical profession confirms that the minister "needs to remain hospitalised for much longer," the CICC Executive Council must discuss and decide whether to take the minister and his family out of the Ekalesia completely and post a new minister in his place. It is not right and fair for the Ekalesia to go without a full-time resident minister for prolonged periods, such as over 6 months.

3.3 Medical referrals

When a minister or his wife encounters a major medical referral while in the Ekalesia, the following conditions will apply:

- On the dialysis machine – if there is no such machine in the Cook Islands, the minister may not be returned to serve in the Cook Islands. His postings will continue in New Zealand and Australia if he is in a position to continue serving while he or his wife is undergoing treatment. This option will need to be worked in with the current Ministers' Rotation Policy.

- Cancer and undergoing chemo treatment – if treatment is not possible in the Cook Islands, the minister may not be returned to serve in the Cook Islands. His postings will continue in New Zealand and Australia if he is in a position to continue serving while he or his wife is undergoing treatment. Again, this option will need to be worked in with the current Ministers' Rotation Policy.
- Stroke – if the nature of the stroke is such that it incapacitates him from carrying out his duties effectively, the minister will have to take early retirement. He and his family will have 3 months to vacate the Ekalesia, and the CICC Executive Council will make arrangements for a minister to be posted to the Ekalesia.
- Other major medical issues such as a serious motor vehicle accident – the case with stroke also applies here.

While undergoing treatment for cases which are not life-threatening, the minister must regularly update the CICC Executive Council on the status of his treatment and that of his wife's. If in the view of the Council the medical referral of the minister and/or his wife is such that it is significantly affecting his/their responsibilities towards their Ekalesia, the Council must discuss and decide whether the minister should continue serving or be replaced completely.

3.4 Good health and fitness

Ministers serving in the Ekalesias must have a good health record and should be fit at all times in order to be able to carry out their functions effectively. Really, they cannot function properly if they are not in the best of health. Spending time in the hospital or on a medical machine (such as a dialysis machine) is just not appropriate for a caretaker of an Ekalesia or any organisation for that matter. Under these circumstances, the minister should seriously consider taking early retirement. The CICC Executive Council should also consider the merits of replacing very sick ministers if there are ministers waiting for an Ekalesia.

At the end of the day, the responsibility for good health and fitness lies squarely with the minister himself. He must be accountable and take charge to ensure that he, his wife and members of his family are living healthy lives. There are scheduled health and fitness programmes operating on Rarotonga and certainly in New Zealand and Australia which he could enrol if he is not leading a physically active lifestyle. If he is not able to look after his health and that of his own family, how can he take his responsibility seriously as a caretaker of an Ekalesia?

(Approved by the CICC Executive Council, 29 July 2010)