



## BULLETIN 13 – June 2007

### Chair

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### Welcome

Welcome to Bulletin 13 from the Multi-Faith Group for Healthcare Chaplaincy. In this edition, is information from the Council meeting held in May 2007.

### Chaplaincy arrangements at the Worcester Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

The Council has been informed that there is no significant change in the arrangements for chaplaincy-spiritual care to that agreed in November 2006. The Council was pleased to hear that the chaplains who had been away on sick leave were beginning a gradual return to work.

### The *Caring for the Spirit* NHS Project

Mr Derek Thomson reported to the May Council meeting that the NHS Yorkshire and the Humber had decided that the lead role on NHS chaplaincy did not "sit well within their SHA footprint". As a result, Officers had indicated that their responsibilities for chaplaincy would cease.

In addition, the Office of SHAs secretariat had indicated that the SHA project review group had decided not to continue the *Caring for the Spirit* NHS Project beyond October 2007. Derek Thomson also indicated that he was leaving NHS employment at the end of June 2007

The Council noted this news with regret and recorded their thanks to Derek Thomson for his graciousness and courtesy throughout his membership of MFGHC

It was confirmed that Tim Battle would have responsibility for managing the remaining months of the Project.

### Central allocation for hospital chaplaincy 2006-07

Mr Derek Thomson reported to the May Council meeting that, as part of the SHA's relinquishing its involvement in chaplaincy, NHS Yorkshire and the Humber would no longer administer the central allocation for hospital chaplaincy on behalf of the Department of Health.

It was likely that the 2007-08 allocations would be handled by the Department of Health. It was not clear what would happen thereafter as the allocation needed to be independently administered.

Derek Thomson confirmed that he was in discussion with DH Officials and that, until new arrangements were clarified, NHS Yorkshire and the Humber would continue to hold the lead on central allocation.

### Informed consent for access to patient records by chaplains

The Council noted that one of the projects within the NHS chaplaincy portfolio of the SHA was support to the project examining confidentiality and consent issues.

Members were concerned that this project should not be lost in the SHA upheaval and wished that the Department of Health would include chaplains within the community of health professionals in order to facilitate this access. This view was also supported by those who considered that a formal consent process was a barrier to dialogue with patients over spiritual issues.

After further discussion, the Standards Committee agreed to convene a meeting with Rev Susan Hollins who was leading on the DPA project to discuss these issues further.

### Leadership issues for Chaplaincy Bodies

Rev Debbie Hodge reminded the Council that the Conference of Chaplaincy Bodies convened for May 2007 had been cancelled because the College of Health Care Chaplains had refused the invitation to attend. The CHCC President had indicated that, because the Conference had emerged as a proposal from the Mirfield Report with which the College did not agree, they considered that they could not attend.

Debbie Hodge indicated that the planning group, which she chaired, considered that the issue of a co-ordinated leadership for healthcare chaplaincy was still important. She regretted that efforts to convene a day conference on leadership topics in June had been postponed. It was hoped to reconvene this later in the year.



An important aspect of these discussions would be the determination of ways in which the chaplaincy bodies could ensure the continuation of chaplaincy support within secular institutions such as the NHS. The view that chaplaincy had a right to be included with mainstream health care was being constantly challenged and would need concerted effort to sustain. A co-ordinated leadership approach to this issue was essential to avoid the secular view having sway.

Members of Council agreed that this issue was important and also that other issues needed discussion and review as a progression from the MFGHC 2005 Conference. It was agreed that challenges and concerns should be sent to Debbie Hodge for collation and feedback in due course.

### **Celebrating healthcare chaplaincy through local annual events in October**

There was general support for this idea which had started within the Roman Catholic Community. The Vice Chair agreed to lead a small working party to take this forward and asked for volunteers to contact him. He would convene a meeting in due course.

### **Membership of MFGHC by bodies which represent those of no particular faith/ religion**

Following discussion at the January meeting, the Council agreed that these bodies should not have full membership of the Council.

### **Caring for the Spirit NHS Project – end of project report**

The Chair reported that he had asked that a copy of the final report should also be sent to the Faith Communities by Tim Battle.

### **Resources for smaller Faith Communities**

The Vice Chair suggested that the Council should reiterate the need for support to the smaller Faith Communities by the NHS as their chaplaincy services were developed. It was agreed to include this within the leadership challenges for consideration in due course.

### **Education Committee report – May 2007**

Debbie Hodge reported that the Education Committee had discussed and endorsed a statement about the content and KSF levels for induction training for new healthcare chaplains and visitors.

She also reported that the Co-Chairs were involved in a discussion between the *Caring for the Spirit* NHS Project and the University of Cardiff to finalise a curriculum for healthcare chaplaincy. A fuller report would be made to the next meeting.

### **Information provided by Faith Communities**

Chaplains were recently emailed a one-page summary on Jainism on behalf of Mr. Manhar Mehta, Chairman of the National Council of Vanik Associations (UK), and Vice-Chair of the Multi-Faith Group for Healthcare Chaplaincy (MFGHC). A number of chaplains have asked whether there are similar brief summaries for the other major faiths and the information we have is set out below:

The majority of resources provided by healthcare chaplains are included in the database available on the resources section of the MFGHC website at [www.mfghc.com](http://www.mfghc.com)

The Spiritual Care Development Committee, a multi-faith group which represents the main faith and belief groups in Scotland has produced a booklet entitled "A Multi-Faith Resource for Healthcare Staff". This document can be downloaded by using the link below. <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/documents/publications/classa/multifaith/Prime%20menu/Intro%20page.pdf>

The organisation Ethnicity on line has a website at [http://www.ethnicityonline.net/ethnic\\_groups.htm](http://www.ethnicityonline.net/ethnic_groups.htm) which in turn has links to information about the nine major faiths including summaries of their beliefs and customs, along with healthcare-related advice.

The University of Derby's Multi-faith intranet provides one page of information on each of the nine world faiths. <http://www.derby.ac.uk/multifaith/religions/christianity/index.asp>

Finally, the book "Religions & Cultures - A Guide to Beliefs, Customs and Diversity for Health & Social Care Services" is an A5 booklet which has three/four pages on each of the nine major world faiths and deals with diet; birth and death customs, worship, etc. The booklet costs £4.00 and can be ordered online at <http://www.religionsandcultures.co.uk/>

### **Communicating the work of the MFGHC**

The MFGHC has established a website ([www.mfghc.com](http://www.mfghc.com)) where its work will be highlighted. It intends to publish an e-bulletin about its progress every four months. For routine communication, Edward Lewis can be contacted at the address given above.

EJL May 2007