MISSION
We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

CORE VALUES

REVERENCE
We honor the sacredness and dignity of every person.

COMMITMENT TO THOSE WHO ARE POOR
We stand with and serve those who are poor, especially those most vulnerable.

JUSTICE
We foster right relationships to promote the common good, including sustainability of Earth.

STEWARDSHIP
We honor our heritage and hold ourselves accountable for the human, financial and natural resources entrusted to our care.

INTEGRITY
We are faithful to who we say we are.

VISION
As a mission-driven, innovative health organization, we will become the national leader in improving the health of our communities and each person we serve. We will be the most trusted health partner for life.
Spiritual Care: An Integral Part of the Healing Process

Spiritual care is the ministry that attends to a person’s spiritual and religious beliefs and inner sources of personal strength. This inner strength affects one’s perspective on life and the capacity to respond to and heal life’s changes. Spiritual care is an integral part of the healing process. Health care chaplains talk with and listen to patients and residents. Conducting a spiritual assessment allows the chaplain to identify the person’s needs, concerns, hopes and resources and to determine appropriate actions necessary to address those issues. They enhance people’s use of their own spiritual resources and are prepared to minister to people of all faith traditions and non-traditional spiritual practices. Chaplains have long been known to provide spiritual care in hospital and continuing care settings. With the accelerating shift of care to outpatient and home settings, and the declining number of priests and sisters available to staff spiritual care departments, the face of health care chaplaincy is changing. While spiritual care for patients and residents admitted to our facilities will always be important, today’s professional chaplains have dedicated themselves to meeting the spiritual needs of persons, families and colleagues across the continuum of care. A board-certified chaplain (B.C.C.) has a Master’s degree in theology and has completed a rigorous course of study and supervised clinical pastoral education (C.P.E.) leading to certification.
How Chaplains Support Our Health Ministry

• Ministry to colleagues: assist in finding meaning in midst of pain, suffering and sadness; provide counseling to prevent compassion fatigue

• Sacraments

• Advance Care Planning: provide information to complete Advance Directives

• Ethics consults: facilitate conversations about treatment options when patient/resident is unable and loved ones and clinicians lack agreement

• Education for clinicians, residents and students: identify situations that may trigger a referral to a chaplain; provide information about what clinicians can do to ease spiritual distress

• Attending clinical and medical rounds: learn and contribute appropriate information

• Quality improvement activities: partner with clinical team to provide the right care in the right place every time

• Multidisciplinary patient/family care: facilitate conversations; mediate conflicts.

• Worship, ritual, meditation: celebrate, console and nurture patients, residents, family and staff

Chaplains are available for consults for a variety of needs, including:

• a significant worsening of a patient’s (or resident’s) condition

• a patient, resident or family who has difficulty coping with illness

• a patient, resident or family receiving bad news

• a discussion of end-of-life care

• spiritual support prior to surgery

• a long, extended stay

• a patient, resident or family who is experiencing grief and loss issues

Spiritual care interventions incorporated into clinical order sets: collaborate and improve outcomes.

Participation in projects at unit, department and administration level.

Liaison with leadership of local faith communities: building a bridge to make continuum of care a reality.

Chaplain Q & A

Q: What do chaplains actually do with patients, residents and their family members?

A: Only what the patient, resident and family needs or wants spiritually.

Professional chaplains are trained to provide compassionate spiritual comfort to anyone in emotional or spiritual distress. Everyone who enters one of our facilities is in some level of spiritual distress. As a fellow companion on life’s journey, our chaplains can help discover meaning in the lives and illnesses of our patients, residents and colleagues. They can help verbalize life stories, conduct a life review, address the relevance of faith, and validate feelings of anger, resentment, despair, anxiety, guilt, sin, forgiveness and reconciliation leading to health and a positive sense of well-being. Chaplains can help with the healing process, identify means of coping and sources of support, find ways to handle fears and inspire hope for the future.
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Q: What kind of education and training do chaplains have?
A: Professional chaplains are very well-educated and highly trained.

Professional chaplains usually have earned a college degree from an accredited school and board-certified chaplains have earned a graduate-level degree from an accredited school in theology, divinity, religious studies, pastoral ministry, pastoral studies or spirituality. They also are required to complete four units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in over 1,600 hours of supervision by a qualified supervisor at an approved health care facility. Certified chaplains also must be approved by a certification review board and complete 50 Continuing Education Units annually to maintain their certification status.

Q: What is the role of a professional chaplain?
A: Chaplains fill many roles, including:

- Representative of God’s love and compassion
- Loving, non-judgmental, listening presence

- “No agenda,” providing patients and residents with complete control over the relationship
- Advocate for patients, residents, families and staff
- Spiritual and emotional counselor
- Ethics consultant
- Bereavement counselor
- Prayer and ritual provider
- Professional confidant
- Advisor on difficult health care decisions – e.g., end-of-life, advance directives, organ donation
- Calming presence in the midst of chaos

Q: What do chaplains actually deliver?
A: Chaplains provide a broad array of services.

- Spiritual and emotional support in times of stress
- Sense of calm in the midst of chaos
- Prayer and rituals
- Hopefulness replacing helplessness
- Meaningfulness to illness and life
- Receptive listener to life stories
- Compassionate, listening presence
- Trusted counsel in making difficult decisions
- Reminder of God’s care
Ten Reasons to call a Chaplain

Hospital Chaplains are available to help in many ways. The following lists some of the reasons to call pastoral care (this list is not complete – you may think of many more).

1. When a patient is anxious or fearful of surgery, therapy or medical procedures
2. When patients and/or families need comfort and consolation
3. When for no reason, a patient doesn’t respond to medical treatment
4. When patients and/or families have major healthcare/treatment decisions to make
5. When a patient’s way of life must change following an illness
6. When a patient has a long term or terminal illness
7. When a patient is dying
8. When a patient is admitted in a traumatic or emergency situation.
9. When a patient has died
10. When Team Members are having difficulty with circumstances of a particular case

Q: What is the real value of a chaplain to patients, residents, family and staff?
A: They provide a reason to hope and be at peace.

The ultimate value of chaplains is to provide “hope” – a distinguishing characteristic in healthcare today as always. A major component of “hope” is spirituality. Supported by faith in God, hope has the capacity to transcend suffering, within the changing context of suffering and illness.

The late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin once said:

“We are to do for one another what Jesus did: comfort others by inspiring in them hope and confidence in life. Our distinctive vocation in Christian health care is not so much to heal better or more efficiently than anyone else; it is to strengthen their confidence in life. The ultimate goal of our care is to give those who are ill, through our care, a reason to hope.”

There is no other health care professional that is trained, motivated and willing to take sufficient time to provide the depth of spiritual comfort, sense of hope and peace to patients, residents, family members and colleagues as a professional chaplain does on a daily basis.

• Bereavement counsel and support
• Knowledgeable ethics resource