

Call for papers

## **Religious, Spiritual, Pastoral ... Secular? Where Next for Chaplaincy?**

A Special Issue of *Health and Social Care Chaplaincy*

*Proposals for papers (theoretical or empirical research) are invited from health and social care chaplains, also from scholars and researchers working in related fields, e.g.: theology, philosophy, anthropology, semantics, sociology, psychology. Case studies of 'non-religious spiritual care' are also welcome.*

**Deadline** for 800 word proposal: **31 July 2019**

**Contact email:** [chaplain@pah.org.uk](mailto:chaplain@pah.org.uk) and [duncan.maclaren@nhs.net](mailto:duncan.maclaren@nhs.net)

The genius of chaplaincy has long been its ability to adapt to new demands and changing environments. From origins in the service of military campaigns to contemporary expressions in shopping malls and sports facilities, for over 1000 years chaplaincy has been evolving new understandings of spiritual care and how it can be delivered.

Arguably, the biggest changes in chaplaincy's self-understanding have come in the last 100 years. Perhaps the most recent has been professionalization. As spiritual, religious and pastoral care has moved into locations that are beyond the direct control of the religious institutions – obvious examples being higher education and health and social care – the requirements to be accountable to commissioners and demonstrate value for money, while in themselves nothing new, have caused chaplaincy to adopt modern management discourse and practice in ways that are transformative.

Yet the next wave of change may prove to be most significant for chaplaincy's self-understanding. Within western societies, the decline of traditional forms of religious affiliation is but one aspect of a whole process of cultural change that, over years, has been reshaping western beliefs, values and identities. The emerging spiritual landscape is complex, fragmented and in many respects uncharted. The arrival of the 'Nones' or the SBNRs (those who identify as 'spiritual, but not religious') has been well-documented.

But, while many Westerners are abandoning their former (however tenuous) affiliation to religious institutions, the spiritual and pastoral – and arguably religious – needs previously addressed within the religious institutions remain and demand to be addressed. The intriguing irony is that Westerners who are abandoning the historical religions are nonetheless looking to chaplains, so long associated with one particular historical religion (Christianity), for help and support. This desire for chaplaincy support is generating new forms of chaplaincy: chaplaincy in the non-Christian historical religions, but also chaplaincy in the new religions (Pagan chaplains; Inter-faith ministers) and the non-religions (Humanist chaplains; civil celebrants).

For health and social care chaplains, the 'turn to chaplaincy' poses an interconnecting set of questions that might be grouped around language, authorisation, training and qualification, and practice, but which are essentially all interrelated:

- Language: What do 'spirituality' and 'spiritual care' mean if they no longer simply refer to religious experience and religious care? Does the concept of 'spirituality' have any currency in a pluralistic context or should it be abandoned, and if so what alternatives are appropriate? Is the term 'chaplain' anachronous and, if so, what other name (if any) effectively communicates the role? Is it possible to speak meaningfully (and theologically) about spiritual care using non-religious language? Is there a meaningful replacement for the term 'non-religious'?
- Authorisation: Given the variety of beliefs chaplains now serve (historical religions, new religions, non-religions), should chaplains continue to be authorised by a 'community of belief' or can a professional body provide sufficient authorisation? What kind of relationship is appropriate between a chaplain's 'community of belief' and their professional body? Does chaplaincy embody an emerging mode of spirituality, based not upon exclusive forms of religious identity but rooted in common human experience – an 'inclusive' spirituality?
- Training and qualification: What level of training should chaplains have? What knowledge and skills should a chaplain be able to demonstrate? Should chaplain training follow a competency model or a personal development model? What recruitment criteria should be used for chaplains from new and non-religions?
- Practice: If spiritual care can be offered independently of religious care, what difference is there between chaplains and social workers or counsellors or other sorts of 'talking-therapists'? What distinctive contribution do non-religious chaplains make to patient care?

The list of questions is indicative and inter-disciplinary, but it focuses some of the issues to be explored in a special edition of *Health and Social Care Chaplaincy – Religious, Spiritual, Pastoral ... and Secular? Where Next for Chaplaincy?* This special issue will be guest edited by Steve Nolan and Duncan MacLaren. Proposals are sought for papers from health and social care chaplains, and from scholars and researchers working in related fields, e.g.: theology, philosophy, anthropology, semantics, sociology, psychology. Informal queries should be sent to *both* editors [chaplain@pah.org.uk](mailto:chaplain@pah.org.uk) and [duncan.maclaren@nhs.net](mailto:duncan.maclaren@nhs.net)

#### **Submission process:**

Potential contributors should email a brief outline of their paper (around 800 words), together with a brief Curriculum Vitae or Resume to the editors. The submission deadline is on or before **31 July 2019**. On review of the outlines, the editors will notify all contributors whether the full paper is to be invited. Guidelines for author preparation and submissions are available at: <https://journals.equinoxpub.com/index.php/HSCC/about/submissions>. Submissions will be made through the Equinox online portal, and undergo a blind peer review.

**Note for case study contributors:** Additional guidelines are available from Steve Nolan. Please contact him *before* drafting your case outline.