

President's Report May 2018

Welcome to the 2018 Conference, especially to those new to chaplaincy or AHPCC. It is also good to reconnect with colleagues who have been in post for a while. The conference offers time to connect with each other and feel supported in our work by those connections. Our theme of resilience has been addressed in response to last year's feedback for themes and current issues for our members. The programme looks great and thanks go to those who have put so much effort in the organisation of these 3 days. We are especially delighted to be welcoming Bob Whorton to lead our Soul Nourishment sessions and hearing about his move to France.

1. Executive news

The committee has met 3 times this year as usual, including an overnight meeting in Edinburgh. This longer meeting allows us time to get to grips with some of the bigger issues that are current for our membership. You will have noticed from the current website letter that there are a number of vacancies for the executive committee. Please get in touch with David Buck or anyone on the executive if you would like to know more. Don't be shy! We will need to fill quite a few posts this year as current members finish their term of office or are retiring from chaplaincy. I am grateful for the hard work and commitment of the executive over the past year, and especially recently as I have been unwell. Nigel Mason, our current secretary, is retiring from chaplaincy in June. Nigel has brought so many of his gifts to the role and we are tremendously grateful. We will need a new secretary, however, from this year's conference, so please consider asking a bit more about what is involved.

2. Chaplaincy Developments

- a. Network for Pastoral, Spiritual and Religious Care in Health (NPSRCH) (Formerly CLFE and Healthcare Chaplaincy Faith and Belief Group)

You will have read on the website about developments with this group representing the wider body of healthcare chaplaincy. The 2 groups have now merged to become the NPSRCH which is a long acronym to remember. It feels as if this merger will enable the different faith and belief communities to communicate more openly together and be a strong voice for healthcare chaplaincy in our respective organisations.

- b. UKBHC

This time last year, I reported that the board were awaiting the results of the PSA decision regarding accreditation for chaplaincy. This decision eventually came through as positive which is tremendous news for chaplaincy as a healthcare discipline. Mark Stobart has replaced Derek Fraser as Chair of the UKBHC. It is important to recognise the contribution Derek has made to this decision being made as his commitment to making this happen has been consistent for many years. Mark may be able to come to the conference this year and update us on recent developments. In the meantime I direct you to the UKBHC website for all the information you need.

3. External Chaplaincy links

- a. European Network of Healthcare Chaplaincy

The European Network holds its bi-annual conference this year in Belgium and we will be represented. This is a gathering of chaplains across Europe who make connections together during the conference and then are able to feedback new ideas to our chaplaincy organisations. And yes! In spite of Brexit, they still let us attend!

b. ERICH

The research institute was formerly launched in June. Margery Collin and I attended complete with AHPCC banner which promoted some good discussion and interest.

The institute is embarking on a major project of research using the PROM which was first introduced in Scotland. This is a unique tool for evaluating chaplaincy and the service chaplains provide. As you will have read in my last letter on the website, AHPCC have committed ourselves to being part of the research and asking chaplains to be part of the research project through your organisation. I know that Austyn Snowden will be talking about the project in his conference sessions and encouraging hospices to respond. Several hospices have already committed to the research, but if you want to know more in advance please contact the executive committee.

Conclusion

Finally, it has been a privilege to take on the president's role for the past 3 years. As I have represented AHPCC at various national and international meetings, my understanding of the wide variety of chaplaincy experiences has grown tremendously. There is such a varied picture of chaplaincy services nationally, let alone in other parts of the world. A particular highlight for me has been the launch of the book which Bob Whorton and I co-edited and was launched last year at Weston Hospicecare. The feedback has been so positive from a wide range of reader, the effort involved was definitely worthwhile. The joys and strains of the chaplain's work are well documented and discussed. The conference is another opportunity for us to share our experiences and offer warm support and caring to each other. Regional groups are a further source of this networking and care and I encourage you to be part of a group near you.

Thank you again for all the support given to the executive through the year and in return, be assured of our availability to you for a listening ear.

With all good wishes

Karen Murphy

President AHPCC