

## Christmas 2016

Christmas greetings to everyone!

This year has brought to us all a variety of joys, challenges and experiences as we work within hospice and palliative teams across the UK. I am aware that for some people, there have been many organisational pressures on chaplaincy services and changes have taken place that remind us of our vulnerability. Others have shared positive experiences of new teams, support and ways of working that have refreshed chaplaincy contributions to the team. Whatever your experience has been, I hope that you have felt the support of AHPCC with you and that regional groups, alongside the executive committee can be available for support and conversation.

We held a very successful conference in May and we are grateful for the positive feedback that will inform us as plans are made for 2017. It always feels as if the networking and encouragement we give each other sustains us throughout the year and friendships are made that endure. It is good to hear that regional groups are largely working well and offer good support to local chaplains. Our mutual support is so important and valuable, as it is often hard to find those in our organisations who fully understand our role and purpose.

There are challenges for chaplaincy services at present, no doubt. The UKBHC is awaiting confirmation from the Professional Standards Authority that the application for chaplaincy to be a registered profession has been accepted. The implications of this will be outlined in a further email once we know the outcome. In the new year, discussions are taking place between the Network, which represents chaplaincy across different faiths, and the Chaplaincy Leadership Forum. Again, the outcome of these conversations will be shared in due course.

In June, Margery Collin and I represented AHPCC at the European Network for Healthcare Chaplaincy conference, held in Hungary. It was fascinating to hear so many different flavours of chaplaincy discussed and shared. The same discussions around funding, understanding and value are repeated pretty much across the board. Please look at the ENHCC website for full details of the conference and proposed developments for a research institute for chaplaincy.

Christmas is with us again and we will all be caught up in the mixed emotions patients, families and staff share with us. Please take some time for yourselves if you can for your own refreshment, and I don't only mean mince pieces and mulled wine! It is a continuing privilege to be in the role of president, listening and sharing with members through all sorts of experiences. Let's pray for each other over Christmas, continuing to support those in our care, as well as those we love at home.

Every blessing and peace

Karen