

Dear Friends,

As the details for this year's conference 'go live' it seemed a good opportunity to update our membership with a bit more information and various issues to think about in relation to our chaplaincy work.

Our conference organisers have been working hard to pull the theme and content together. It promises to be an excellent event with speakers and workshops exploring the theme of resilience which is especially pertinent for those of our membership facing cutbacks in working hours and support. Our inner resilience to face the challenges of our work needs to be regularly replenished and restored, so coming to our conference is felt to be a most helpful resource for that purpose. We hope to see as many of our membership as possible in Swanwick. If you are new to post, or indeed, new to chaplaincy, there will be a very warm welcome and the opportunity to meet with others in the same situation. It seems as if we regularly have around a third of those attending being new chaplains. I am aware that for some of our 'old timers', this will your last conference in post as we seem to have a number of long-standing chaplains coming up to retirement.

We also have a number of vacancies on the executive committee including to role of secretary due to Nigel's retirement. We will need to fill all these vacancies, especially the secretary role, so please do get in touch with any of the current executive if you are interested in fulfilling this role or standing for the executive. We meet 4 times a year and keep in touch through email regularly. It's a great group to belong to and gives us all a wider perspective of what is happening in the chaplaincy world. We are delighted to welcome Bob Whorton who will be our conference chaplain, so we know we are in very safe hands. So please send in your booking form as soon as possible, May will come around soon enough!

We are delighted to have, among our other speakers, Austyn Snowden, who is will be speaking about the research being undertaken by the European Research Institute for Chaplaincy in Healthcare. He will hopefully enthuse many of us to take part in this research and explain what it will mean for chaplains and our organisations. Many of us are already engaged with outcome measure surveys to give a picture of our services. The PROM being used in this case is the only validated tool for measuring the work of chaplains, and a study has never been done in palliative care. I strongly encourage you to look at the information and think about taking part in the research, and again executive members can be contacted for a conversation.

Finally, I shall be out of the loop for a while but hopefully back for the conference. I have recently been diagnosed with breast cancer, thankfully at a low grade and contained in one place. I shall, however, be having surgery soon which means taking time off for recovery. If you have any issues or concerns in the meantime, please contact David Buck, our vice-president, or any member of the executive committee. I'll be grateful for your prayers over the next few months.

Best wishes to everyone

Karen

Karen Murphy
AHPCC President