

CHCC Annual Report

2024

This is a simple summary of College activity in the year since our 2023 AGM. We hope you find it useful. We are continuing with the less 'glossy' format as employed previously. Do please let us know if you find this report helpful.

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The Organising Professional Committee (OPC)

The College of Health Care Chaplains (CHCC) is a semi-autonomous professional college within UNITE the Union that sits as a national branch within UNITE Health. Although CHCC retains some independence, it is in other ways wholly integrated into UNITE such that its membership is fully integrated. The good news is that all the benefits of being a UNITE member are combined with all the benefits of being a CHCC member for no extra cost.

The decision-making body of CHCC is the *Organising Professional Committee (OPC)* which is made up of the officers of the branch and elected representatives of the CHCC regions. Additionally, a general invitation is given to observers who report on various aspects of health care chaplaincy practice in the UK that they are involved with. Other observers are leaders in other health care chaplaincy bodies in the UK giving the OPC a comprehensive overview of health care chaplaincy in the UK.

The following people make up the OPC:

Officers

President: Simon Harrison

Vice-Presidents: Kartar Singh Bring and Giselle Rusted

Registrar & Branch Secretary: Allison Dean

Treasurer: Phillip Staves

Equalities Officer: Stewart Selby

Faiths/Beliefs Officer: Kartar Singh Bring

Digital Communications Officer: Mark Burleigh

Lead Professional Officer: Jane Beach

Industrial Officer: Melanie Todner

Regional Representatives

London: Tasha Critchlow

East Anglia: Adrian Woodbridge

South-East: Ruth Bierbaum

South-Central: Ruth Fitter

South-West: Mark Richards

West Midlands: Ricarda Witcombe

East Midlands: Kay Cattell

North-West: Giselle Rusted and Andrew Bradley

North-East (*Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire*): Fran Kissack

North-East (*Durham, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear*): Graham Peacock

Wales: Euryl Howells

Scotland: Paul Graham

Northern Ireland: Michael MacMillan

Observers

Mental Health Chaplaincy Forum Chair: Andrew Williams

GP Chaplaincy: Angela Painter

End-of-Life Forum (Ambitions, NACEL): Giselle Rusted

Advisors' Group (Recruitment): Derek Fraser

Paediatric Chaplaincy Group: Claire Carson

AHPCC Chair: Jill Thornton

UKBHC Chair: Tony Brookes

Journal Liaison: Fran Kissack

For contact details please visit the website on: www.healthcarechaplains.org

President's Report

Simon Harrison

Dear members,

I am hopeful that all have been receiving updates from myself and OPC throughout the year, so little I need to say here should be news! I am well aware that throughout the year we talk about 'OPC' and 'officers' and such like and sometimes forget to explain who is who and who does what. I, therefore, want to spend half of my up-date clarifying these things. OPC means "Organising Professional Committee". It is not quite the same as a 'union branch' but is very close - it is effectively the group of people elected, appointed or co-opted- to run the College. The College sits as a national branch - hosted by London region at present. Within OPC are a number of branch officers - you will see who they are by the up-dates they share at this AGM. Unlike many other branches we specifically have a 'Faith and Belief Officer' - (Kartar Bring) because this remains a significant factor in the work we do and our workforce. The majority of the OPC are elected reps from each region, and I am delighted that we currently have every region covered. Each in their own way seek to represent the region, offer a local point of contact for members and play their part nationally in the work we do. I will take this opportunity to say a word of thanks for the commitment every one of these individuals make, above and beyond their working life and any other priorities.

Apart from myself, the officer that most people may come in contact with is

Allison Dean. We refer to her as the College Registrar - albeit in union language we would call her the 'branch secretary'. Again, this is a great opportunity for me to say huge thanks for the incredible dedication she has brought to this role again in 2023/24.

Behind the scenes are some other roles you may have much less contact with. Our Web-master, Mark Burleigh, and our Treasurer, Phillip Staves, are two key individuals who might only be noticed if they were not there (!) but who play a really significant part in making the College run smoothly; they really are the best to work with. Our Equality Lead Officer, Stewart Selby, has continued this year to provide sage guidance even when his capacity has been limited, and we are grateful for him and his commitment to the College.

One key development over the last two years has been a broadening of responsibility across OPC and beyond. We are always looking at opportunities for members beyond OPC to engage with our work, and making sure that the work *within* the OPC is not all led by the president. Having Giselle step-up to be Vice-President alongside Kartar has been a part of this journey and I am delighted to have both of them sharing wisdom and common sense. Having Graham coordinate the final stages of the paper now known as "Greater Diversity in the Workforce" and Adrian doing the same now with work on 'on-call' is also very welcome - but they can do so only

because there is a culture in OPC of mutual support.

Our Mental Health network deserves a mention as the largest sub-group within College and they have a thriving life and leadership of their own. I know many have found the regular sessions on Teams a great source of fellowship and learning. As well as this internal group, we also work very closely with other bodies and groups that share our common goal. Notably the NIHCA - Northern Irish Association of Chaplaincy in Healthcare is a key partner, as is the AHPCC - Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains. We work in close harmony on many issues of mutual concern. Both have Observer status on OPC. We also play our part in supporting the UKBHC - recognising it as the 'regulatory body' which sits at a slight arm's length from ourselves as a professional body. Our primary focus is supporting members - the UKBHC primary focus is professional standards and public safety. There are yet more groups that make up the last few places on OPC:

- a. We have a representative from the Paediatric Network (though many members are college members, the group goes beyond Chaplains).
- b. A representative from The Association of Chaplaincy in General Practice - a group looking to expand such provision, and
- c. We co-opt the chair of the Chaplaincy Forum, an organisation that exists to ensure

effective collaboration between different bodies in England.

There may be any number of different perspectives on healthcare chaplaincy from different groups - but the way in which we work collaboratively at OPC and in other forums is vital in such a small profession - if we can't play nicely together then we are sunk! I know for many of you this will all be familiar territory, but it is good to take the opportunity this AGM to paint the bigger picture. If we are to continue to diversify and strengthen our leadership - we need to be an organisation that new members can understand and see themselves contributing to. If you want to get more involved, do not hesitate to contact myself or Allison - there always things to do.

I just want to say a few words of reflection to finish my report.

In our working lives we are often brought face to face with tragedy, despair, anger, and hopelessness. If many of the patients we see are not struggling, we are not reaching the right people. If we do not hear colleagues from other disciplines regularly expressing need or hopelessness - we are not listening to the right colleagues. It is an obvious thing to say, but our roles will, and should, take us to the darkest of places, and each of us somehow need to find the means of putting this into context, perhaps taking comfort in the privilege of sharing the hardest of times.

We do not do our best work by working harder; we simply know that our work is good enough when we are in the

hardest places. There are a few fundamental consequences of this professional reality.

1. We need to hold all this suffering in tension with all the joy and delight and fulfilment that is going on all around us. For every mother we sit with who has lost a child, there are hundreds delighting in the mystery of birth and the hopes and dreams to come. Self-care of this most fundamental sort is an absolute essential. A key part of such self-care (and a principle set out in the “Greater Diversity” paper) is having deep roots and keeping these nourished. Walking through the shadows leaves none of us unchanged; we journey through our life as healthcare chaplains both as professionals and as people - and we make a mockery of spiritual care if we do not have a deep and meaningful spiritual journey ourselves, with all the joyous heights and dark valleys that seem to come with a life well lived.
2. We need to understand the importance of self-knowledge, as well as reflecting on *what we do* (this is the focus of our September 2024 CHCC Conference in Durham).

3. We need to be aware of the impact that this work may have not just on ourselves but our sense of perspective and our relationships with those around us, both professionally and those near and dear.

This is not a problem to be fixed- but an observation on the work we do. So how does the work that we do impact on the way we behave towards one another, the shape of our faith and belief, perhaps even what we want out of our professional body?

In the coming months, Neil Cockling will be doing a piece of work on behalf of the OPC asking just this final question - what is it that you need at the professional body that will support and strengthen all that you do. Do we need to focus on those times when everything goes pear-shaped? Do we need to focus on a really robust set of guidance documents to ensure consistency and best practice? Do we need to advocate much more clearly for Chaplaincy as a registered healthcare profession? The answer to the question is not mine to give but yours to share.

With great thanks for so much support from across the profession in the last year.

president@healthcarechaplains.org

Registrar & Branch Secretary's Report

Allison Dean

Greetings to everyone. It has been a privilege to serve again this year as Branch Secretary/Registrar for the College of Healthcare Chaplains. The role entails far more than taking minutes at OPC meetings, creating agendas and up-dating the OPC Action Tracker. For me it is a ministry of hospitality done off the side of the desk in providing assistance to members and answering queries about potential bursaries, available training for chaplains, and sign-posting to other appropriate persons who can provide more detailed answers than I am able to. It means I work closely with our web-master, Mark Burleigh, in attempting to keep the CHCC web-site up-to-date as well with Emma at UNITE in keeping our membership list up-date to date.

Simon Harrison, our president, and I chat regularly as we look at what needs to be done throughout the year.

I sit on the Conference Planning committee and have the pleasure of working with Mark Richards who does a phenomenal job of chairing this group, as well as Liz Allison (Conference Registrar) who also does a fantastic job in doing the administrative work for the conference bookings and invoices. It is always exciting to hear the ideas the several conference committee members have about workshop shops, keynote speakers and panels, and how the days will run.

Another person with whom I work closely is our Treasurer, Phillip Staves, who works quietly in the background to keep our accounts in order and shares his wisdom with respect to conference as well.

Stewart Selby is another person with whom I work as he knows so much with respect to UNITE rules and regs in his role as Equalities Officer and I often pick his brain when I am not sure.

While I have named the persons with whom I work with most, I do wish to extend my thanks to every officer, person, and observer on OPC for their gracious and sometimes humorous responses when I pester them for reports, send yet another request for details, or ask them to add another person to their list of persons to contact. Without each person quietly working in the background, my role as Registrar would be that much more difficult. From me to all of you, THANK-YOU for all that you do in serving the members of CHCC.

I know there are people who like numbers. Unfortunately, our regular UNITE contact, Emma, has been off sick so one of her colleagues, Heather, has done her best to fill in with two figures. We have 690 active members of which 57 are retired members. Below are a few more figures of the assistance given to members in 2023 from the Registrar's perspective.

1 Induction Session for new Regional Reps
 1 query about claiming CHCC fees with HMRC
 1 CHCC AGM
 2 sympathy cards to members who had experienced deaths of close family members
 3 queries about training and educational opportunities to become a chaplain
 4 queries about accessing the Journal
 4 mass mailings of the Research Digest
 4 quarterly OPC meetings
 5 notifications of retirement and arranging cancellation of CHCC memberships
 7 persons requesting changes to their contact details
 9 queries about the benefits of joining CHCC and how to join

23 web-site access queries (sent onto web-master Mark Burleigh)
 25 queries re CHCC Conference and/or purchase order enquiries
 88 Transfer of Memberships to CHCC from UNITE at Large processed

1. Includes requesting Emma at UNITE to make the transfer
2. Asking Mark Burleigh, our web-master, to grant access to the web-site
3. Notifying the regional rep of a new person to add to their list).

In closing, thank-you again for the privilege of serving you – truly it has been both an honour and incredibly humbling to serve CHCC.

If you have a query, please do not hesitate to contact me at allison.dean@unitetheunion.org.

Treasurer's Report

J. Phillip Staves, CHCC Hon Treasurer

The College of Health Care Chaplains has two Bank Accounts; the Unite account and the Training account.

The Unite account is funded from members subscriptions to the Union and pays for the running of the College. Members' contributions via UNITE were down in 2023 from the previous year's figure, and it is important that all of us strive to increase our membership numbers and thus increase our income.

The Training account allows us to award grants and bursaries to members, plan a large national conference and facilitate local training events. The largest source of income for the account is our annual conference and October's successful event should make a profit of £3,576 when all the places have been paid for. A smaller, but none the less useful, source of income comes from having most of our funds on deposit and the rise in bank interest rates during 2023 has been a benefit to CHCC. After a

period of quiet, mainly due to lockdowns, it has been good to fund some training events around the country this year and award a few bursaries.

My thanks go to Fran Kissack in Sheffield plus Declan McConville and James Taylor in Poole for their help in auditing the accounts each quarter. I'd also like to record my thanks to Liz Allison (Conference Registrar) for her help and efficiency.

CHCC Unite Branch Account 2023

<u>INCOME</u>			<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
	2023	2022		2023	2022
Balance Brought Forward	£ 8,136.02	£ 6,830.32	Registrar Services	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00
Members' Contributions via UNITE	£ 6,703.72	£ 7,063.16	Journal - Equinox Publishing	£ 810.00	£ 790.00
			Website - Maintenance	£ 840.00	£ 840.00
			Website - Hosting	£ 779.40	£ 779.40
			Website Domain Renewal		£ 101.94
			Website Email redirection	£ 35.86	
			President's expenses	£ 143.88	£ 232.50
			Treasurer's expenses - Postage & Stationery	£ 51.90	£ 25.50
			2 places at CHCC Conference for Officers	£ 590.00	£ 590.00
			European Network of Health Care Chaplains ¹	£ 219.90	£ 193.12
			Free Church Federal Council	£ 250.00	£ 375.00
			CHCC 30th Anniversary publicity	£ 2,256.00	
			Social Fund - Gift	£ 28.00	
			Bank Charges	£ 28.75	£ 30.00
TOTAL INCOME	£ 14,839.74	£ 13,893.48	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 7,833.69	£ 5,757.46
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 7,833.69	£ 5,757.46			
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	£ 7,006.05	£ 8,136.02			

Notes

¹ Subscription + foreign transfer fee

CHCC Training Account 2023

<u>INCOME</u>			<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
	2023	2022		2023	2022
Balance Brought Forward	£ 39,790.77	£ 34,978.52	Bursaries	£ 1,966.00	
Conference Fees - Previous Year	£ 1,755.00		Training	£ 1,392.42	
Conference Fees - Present Year ¹	£ 20,400.00	£ 20,965.00	Conference - Present Year	£ 16,458.85	£ 13,385.50
Interest from Deposit Account ²	£ 787.89	£ 82.75	Conference - Following Year		£ 2,850.00
TOTAL	£ 62,733.66	£ 56,026.27	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 19,817.27	£ 16,235.50
TOTAL INCOME	£ 62,733.66	£ 56,026.27			
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 19,817.27	£ 16,235.50			
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	£ 42,916.39	£ 39,790.77			
Money in Current Account	£ 5,068.54	£ 9,708.02			
Money in Deposit Account	£ 37,847.85	£ 30,082.75			

Notes

¹ As of 31-12-23 we are still awaiting payment for 8 delegates = £2,485

² Deposit Account opened 16-08-22

Lead Professional Officer's Report

Jane Beach, Lead Professional Officer for Regulation, Unite in Health

It continues to be a privilege to support the CHCC with their professional agenda. The annual professional conference was once again a great success and as ever, oversubscribed. We were at last able to celebrate 30 years of CHCC, with celebratory resources available for members. If you would like a 30th anniversary pen or badge, do please contact your regional CHCC rep.

We got this year off to a good start as the Organising Professional Committee (OPC) once again held an overnight meeting in Bristol. It was good to see existing members face to face and to welcome new members to the OPC. A number of important areas of work were progressed and the strategy going forward was discussed. As my

lead area is regulation, I am supporting a review of the UKBHC Code and look forward to being part of taking this important work forward.

We have welcomed a new Regional Officer Melanie Todner. I am sure I can speak for the whole OPC when I say she is very welcome and we look forward to working with her.

Once again, thank you to the OPC, who continue to ensure CHCC is able to represent the interests of Healthcare Chaplaincy and to you for all that you do in supporting Unite members.

Jane Beach
Lead Professional Officer for
Regulation

Industrial Officer's Report:

Melanie Todner - (No written report received)

Equality and Diversity Officer's Report

*Stewart approved this report written on his behalf at his request
by Simon Harrison and Allison Dean*

In this past year, Stewart has been supporting the CHCC officers with constitutional and union rules wisdom and advice with respect to elections and procedural concerns. He has also been offering advice on all equality-related issues. In addition to this, Stewart has also been serving on the CHCC Fellows committee as they have drafted a rough document which was sent out to OPC for their consideration. Stewart has cast his eye over role descriptions and shared in

co-option decisions as well and will be assisting with the election for President this summer. It has been a privilege to have Stewart as that quiet person in the background that we have been able to turn to when we have been in need of clarification or needed someone to read over a brief document. Thank-you Stewart for your work in this past year even as you have dealt with major health issues. It has been much appreciated.
equality@healthcarechaplains.org

Faith/Belief Officer's Report

Kartar Singh Bring

The challenges faced by Trusts and Healthcare providers in the UK over the past year have been significant; in the face of these difficulties the consistent and dedicated work of Chaplains has been invaluable. The value of Chaplaincy services in providing holistic care to patients amongst other healthcare professions cannot be overstated, alongside the person-centred care the significant work delivered providing care to staff.

Over the last year support and guidance have been provided to Chaplaincy teams and Hospital Trusts on several issues related to faith and belief. This has included addressing practical religious concerns of staff, providing guidance to Trusts on supporting staff on catering, festivals, and reasonable adjustments.

Efforts have also been made to support greater diversity within chaplaincy services to better meet the evolving demands of service users; this

has included navigating barriers, promoting positive, cohesive working environments, and supporting effective engagement with wider faith and belief communities. These efforts not only bridge the gap between healthcare and faith communities but also contribute to creating a more cohesive and supportive environment for all involved.

The commitment of Chaplaincy teams in navigating these issues demonstrate

their importance as integral members of holistic healthcare teams. As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, the role of chaplains in providing pastoral, spiritual and religious care remains essential in promoting patient and staff well-being as well as wider healthcare institutions.

Digital Communications Officer's Report

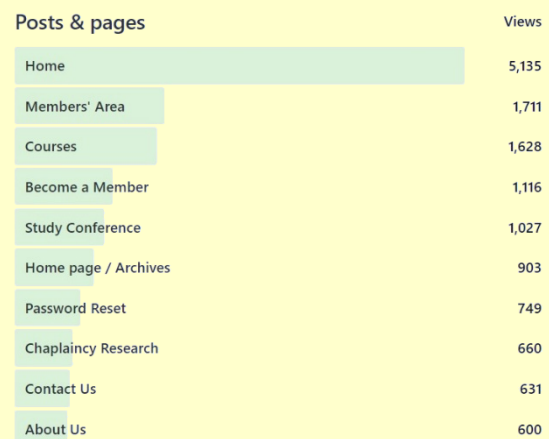
Mark Burleigh

Our website has been increasingly used. There were 21,716 visits to the website in 2023 which is up 38% on



2022. The number of different people visiting the site was up 11% to 5,515.

The graph following shows which pages are most accessed by visitors:



And this shows the peak number of visitors was in August and November 2023:



Again, we have been able to keep our site secure (and have done since the hack in 2019). The site blocked 4,900 attempted logins and 1,500 spam comments!

The site has been regularly updated over the past year. However, if you see something that is out of date, please let the Registrar know.

I also continue to maintain the access to the members area of the website. New members have been granted access (as well as updating email addresses for those who have changed their email address). This relies on me being informed of additional or changed details, which the Registrar regularly does.

CHCC members can access the members' area using their email address. You will need to use the email address that the CHCC has as a part of your membership details. If you need to change your registered email address, please email the Registrar. The first time you log in

please use the "forgot password" option. A new password will be emailed to you. When you have used that password to log in to the members' area you can change your password to something more memorable. You can access the code for free access to the Journal in the members' area.

From a GDPR point of view, no information is stored within the site except members' email addresses and passwords for the members' area (unless members have specifically added additional details themselves).

I am glad that the website is being well used and continues to serve the Chaplaincy profession and the interests of the members of the College. If you spot a problem with the website, please do send me an email!

website@healthcarechaplains.org

Mental Health Chaplains' Forum: Chair's Report

Andrew Williams

**** PRESIDENTS NOTE:** Andrew (as chair of the Mental Health Chaplaincy Forum) is not available to submit a report in time for this AGM, but we are

delighted that he leading this very active group within the College.

Simon

Chaplaincy in General Practice Observer's Report

Angela Painter

GP Chaplaincy continues to expand and develop across the UK. The Association of Chaplaincy (ACGP) is the professional body for chaplains in primary care who offer a listening and guidance service to patients, usually on an appointment basis in GP medical centres. This year we focused on securing Charitable status as the Association of Chaplains in General Practice (ACGP) becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) by the end of the year.

This will enable us to better access NHS and Charitable funding for this valuable service, to benefit both patients and staff within this setting. There has been some positive access to primary care funding via social prescribing monies this year. Various models of GP Chaplaincy, both paid and voluntary, have developed in response to patient and staff needs for pastoral and spiritual care. ACGP continues to work towards the standardization and professionalism of the service in this context to ensure patient safety and efficacy of the service.

ACGP provides training and a handbook to assist those interested in establishing and delivering a chaplaincy service in general practice. There are regular training courses for those interested in becoming chaplains as well as CPD and networking opportunities. Accreditation, with annual reaccreditation, for GP chaplains is also offered. Please see the renewed ACGP website for more information on GP Chaplaincy and associated research reports.

<https://acgp.org.uk>

We look forward to seeing the development of Primary Care Chaplaincy over the next year and to holding a conference 'in person' 😊 in 2024.

On a personal note, I have greatly appreciated my welcome into OPC meetings as an observer and found the meetings both interesting and inspiring.

www.gpchaplaincy.com

End of Life Group Observer's Report

Giselle Rusted - (No written report received)

Paediatric Chaplaincy Network Observer's Report

Claire Carson

The PCN gathered for their annual study day in June 2023 at Great Ormond Street Hospital, where they explored the psycho-social impact and issues around healthy models and practices of spiritual care and destructive spiritual care, led by colleagues from social work, psychology, and family liaison teams. Healthy spiritual care practices were explored which can help with the patient and family journey in hospital and be a positive resource to build resilience. Discussions were mainly based on presented case studies.

This year our annual study day will be held in Leeds on 25th June 2024 where we will have a presentation on the findings and implications of the National Paediatric Chaplaincy-Spiritual Care research project SPARK. The SPARK Project is exploring pastoral, spiritual and religious needs of children and young people living with life-threatening or life-shortening conditions.

The PCN steering group meets twice yearly to discuss current news and issues within paediatric settings, as well as planning for up-coming study days.

Chaplaincy Advisors' Observer's Report

Derek Fraser

I have just taken over following Cameron Langlands' unexpected death.

It was good to see the recommendation in the NHS England Chaplaincy guidelines issued in August 2023 to utilise professional appointment advisors when recruiting and appointing chaplains.

In accordance with the NHS England guidelines, the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy (UKBHC) is able to provide professional appointment advisors to assist with the recruitment process from the outset, including sitting on an appointment panel. Our UKBHC advisors are experienced working chaplains who can offer practical support and information about job descriptions, person specifications, advertising, and the selection process.

They provide an impartial external assessment of the knowledge, training, experience, and competencies of candidates in relation to a post, as well as provide an external professional opinion to an interview or selection panel. We strongly recommend having a professional appointments advisor on an appointment panel especially when recruiting a lead chaplain or Head of Chaplaincy service. We have welcomed several new advisors this past year and have completed two virtual training sessions

with them. There are more new advisors are coming on the team and UKBHC has plans to recruit and train more.

If you are interested in becoming a Professional Advisor or wish the support of a Professional Advisor for recruitment purposes, please contact the Lead Officer for the Professional Advisors by e-mail:

advisor@ukbhc.org.uk

Research First Journal Club

Mark Newitt

The CHCC continues to support the online Research First Journal Club. The journal club meets on the first Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday of a month on rotating basis to discuss a recent article with relevance to chaplaincy care. The journal club is open to any health and social care chaplain who wishes to participate. No special knowledge or research experience is required. At the beginning of the Journal Club a presenter provides a summary of an article, and we then break into smaller groups to discuss it further.

A *proforma* with a framework of questions to think about when reading an article has been created to help chaplains gain confidence in their own ability to understand and critique research and apply it to their practice. Through 2023 it has been good to see the number of people offering to present an article widen. More details of dates and forthcoming articles can be found on the CHCC website. If you would like to receive a link to join or know more about the journal club please contact Mark Newitt (mark.newitt@freechurches.org.uk)

English Regions, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland Reports

London

Tasha Critchlow

London Region is attempting to find ways to connect teams in this vast and busy area. Among major events we had monthly meetings of Southwark Leads of Chaplaincy, London Anglican Chaplain's group meetings and the Pregnancy Loss Art Exhibition for Baby

Loss Awareness Week (Oct 9th-15th) at the Royal Free. Chaplains from various Trust came together to learn together and support each other. We have a continual struggle with prayer spaces and staffing.

South-East England

Ruth Bierbaum

Since taking on the role of South-East Regional Representative last year, I have had 9 members notify me that they are happy to be contacted directly and invited to meetings. Due to GDPR law, members need to explicitly give their permission to be contacted.

Whilst we have not yet had a meeting, (the day-job has of course been somewhat busy), I am hoping that a date in *May* will soon be fixed for a Teams meeting. Neil Cockling has requested to attend as part of his

listening exercise, to hear the concerns of the membership. As soon as we have a mutually agreeable date, Teams invites will go to those I know about, and the meeting information also distributed more generally.

As Rep I have been grateful for a helpful training session led by Simon Harrison and attended the January residential. I have also been working on the (now early) drafts of the on-call guidance.

ruth.bierbaum@nhs.net

South-Central England

Ruth Fitter

I have now been the CHCC rep across the South-Central Area for almost a year and it has been a steep learning curve. Part of the steep learning curve has been learning about healthcare chaplaincy in all our different settings particularly having only been in chaplaincy for two years myself. Highlights from this past year have been attending the CHCC conference at High Leighs last October where I got to put faces to many names or at least legs, having seen most people on screen in zoom or Teams format only, and to discuss creativity within all forms of healthcare chaplaincy. The other highlights have been working with colleagues Adrian Woodbridge and Ruth Bierbaum to reflect upon the on-call guidance and also attending the policy reflection days in January at Unite's headquarters in Bristol. I have also attended all of the OPC meetings and some of the mental health forum

meetings. Unfortunately, I have not been able to get any regular group meetings together for our area yet but this is my priority as we move forward and beyond the AGM.

It has certainly been an interesting year leaving me and others with much to ponder, particularly with the new NHS Guidelines around chaplaincy in England having been published in the autumn. There are always new things to think through and to consider and the year ahead will certainly continue to be thought provoking and exciting in equal measure.

Please be in touch with me if you have any thoughts or comments (ruth.fitter@ouh.nhs.uk) and as I say, I hope to be in touch with you all about regular drop-in meetings where we can hopefully get to know each other and our particular contexts in more depth.

South-West England

Mark Richards

Once again, it has been a privilege to serve the college and to represent my Chaplaincy Colleagues throughout the South West on the OPC. I was also pleased to be part of the Conference 2023 planning group and enjoy planning for Durham 2024.

Throughout the past year, it has also been my privilege to facilitate the South-West Healthcare Chaplaincy Collaborative, which draws together Chaplains from across the region to support each other and learn from one another. We meet monthly and share

in an annual study day at Buckfast Abbey. If you are working as a Chaplain in the South-West and wish to contact me, I would be delighted to talk to and support you in any way I can. My details are <mailto:mark.richards9@nhs.net> or tel 01872 252883.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Simon and Allison for the outstanding contribution they have both made to the life of the College and Healthcare Chaplaincy once again this year.

West Midlands

Ricarda Witcombe

It's been another full year for chaplaincy in the West Midlands. We have started meeting together monthly on-line to have a virtual lunch together, sharing ideas and challenges with each other. If you are a West Midlands chaplain and haven't received any invitations for this, please let me know as we would love you to join us. We are hoping to hold an in-person event together a little later this year.

Some pieces of news from around our region – and again, if you read this and think your news is not here, please be in touch with ricarda.witcombe@swft.nhs.uk so we can rectify this for next time

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust

CWPT chaplaincy has continued with its collaboration with DR YingFei Heliot & the University of Surrey around the

area of faith competency in the NHS. This research is continuing, and a faith competency toolkit is currently being piloted. We look forward to sharing the findings with CHCC.

Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital

The chaplaincy team

1. Launched their first Islamic miscarriage, still birth and child bereavement journals with Ta Ha publishing.
2. Produced and distributed first Blue Christmas and Blue Eid films both for bereaved Muslim families.
3. Joint Festival of Lights pilot for Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas Celebrations and Thankfulness Challenge, especially during Lent and Ramadan.
4. Start partnership with Moodle designer for 360 degree multi-

faith and belief virtual care rooms for Hospital staff training.

5. New cohort for 2023-5 for Perinatal and Paediatric Chaplaincy PGC with Newman University, Birmingham.
6. Relaunch Sibling support project.

The Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Hospital Trust (SaTH)

The chaplaincy team recruited to full strength and expanded in 2023, now having eight chaplains working across two busy hospital sites. A multi-faith team, chaplains with Muslim, Buddhist, and Christian faiths provide a service across the full week including on-call. They have also welcomed back and supported volunteers to develop in the chaplaincy service and are expanding multi-faith representation. The SaTH team are widely recognised across their Trust as engaged, approachable, and caring. They are visible across the full range of activities and areas, making specialist contributions to multi-disciplinary team meetings and patient experience groups, as well as developing contact with local community groups making areas such as maternity services more accessible. SaTH's team welcomes contact and visits from chaplains in other trusts and looks forward to developing work with the CHCC in 2024.

South Warwickshire University NHS Foundation Trust

We have started a new monthly event in the hospital chapel for anyone who has experienced the loss of a baby – this is especially aimed at very early losses, to give an opportunity for an accessible, simple act of remembrance in the waiting time before a shared or individual cremation.

Most of our team have acted as a SUDIC (Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood) Keyworker for families and have played a significant part in developing SUDIC processes in the Trust and in the local region.

We have developed our 'Bereavement Listening Service, supporting staff, patients and relatives who have been bereaved recently or long ago, usually with one-to-one meetings or phone calls.

Our 'Faiths Group' has gone from strength to strength, developing a small community of many faiths and supporting colleagues across the Trust.

One of our team, Nell Cockell, was judged "Outstanding Professional" by the prestigious *WellChild Awards* for her work with children, young people and their families who have been given a life-limiting diagnosis, and families who are bereaved.

We ran a very energetic, hands-on training course for new volunteers, increasing our volunteer numbers and our use of them in chaplaincy. We've also been developing our in-service training for volunteers through the year.

George Eliot Hospital (North Warwickshire)

There is lots to be thankful for this year!

Our team has grown this year with the addition of a third full-time member of the team, Imam Osman Sheikh, who brings a wealth of chaplaincy experience and wisdom to our patch. In addition to our core team growth, our volunteer team has grown to 16 this year, and we have also been blessed to have the additional pastoral support and expertise of two local Alimahs (female Muslim scholars) to our team as Honorary Chaplains to support the team and to respond to our local population's needs.

Imam Osman Sheikh been involved with a lovely project that has created a version of the Quran with an English translation parallel to it. It is a

beautiful volume. The collaborative group who has produced this volume is offering copies to us as NHS Trusts free of charge. If you would like free copies of this resource for your setting, please contact Osman.Sheikh@geh.nhs.uk

The team has seen a growth in the staff population celebrating each other this year through the GEH Faith, Belief, and Spirituality staff network as well. It's been great to celebrate Easter, Ramadan, Eid, Vaisakhi, Diwali, Bandi Chhor Divas, Baha'i Holy Days, Christmas in 2023. We look forward to celebrate these and more in 2024.

Finally, this year marks the 30th anniversary of the multi-faith chapel here at George Eliot Hospital. We'll be celebrating this on 6th March with a small service to celebrate all that has been and all there is to look forward to in the years to come.

East Midlands

Kay Cattell

The East Midlands area has been without a rep for a little while, which has meant a decline in regular contact between CHCC members. As the recently appointed rep, I have made contact with the registered members in the area, with the aim of establishing a regular network, and occasional online gatherings. I also

look forward to providing information and support for individual members, as well as creating opportunities for us to share and learn from one another. Ultimately the direction that our shared chaplaincy community will take, will depend on what the individual members would value most to enhance their experience and engagement with the CHCC and their fellow members. It's exciting to

anticipate what the next 12 months may bring.

East Anglia

Adrian Woodbridge - (No written report received)

North-West England

Andrew Bradley and Giselle Rusted - (No written report received)

North-East England (Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire)

Fran Kissack

It is a privilege to have joined the OPC to represent Yorkshire and the Humber.

I work in an acute setting, arriving at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals in 2016 after many years as a chaplain at what is now Hull Teaching Hospitals. I am passionate about chaplaincy and the difference it can make, and love being part of an evolving profession. There is always a new challenge!

I am the OPC link with the journal, Health and Social Care Chaplaincy and am the journal book reviews editor. I am always looking for new reviewers. This is your chance to be published, and to get a free copy of a book. What's not to like?! If you think you might like to review a book there are

some simple guidelines for what is needed. You might want to suggest a book to review, or I could find something for you. Please ask me.

I have got to know some of you over the last months since taking up this role, and I am glad to have been able to offer personal support to a few of you in particular. I would love to hear from any of you in this region about your work locally and your aspirations for chaplaincy regionally and nationally. I hope that in the coming year we might find ways to get together, virtually at least, to learn from and support each other. If you want to get in touch my email is fran.kissack@nhs.net.

North-East (Durham, Tyne & Wear, Northumberland)

Graham Peacock

We've continued to meet three to four times a year, for an hour by Teams. During this time, we share news from the wider CHCC, and someone leads us in an area of learning that they are involved in and might contribute to our own development. Since the last AGM, sessions have included non-religious chaplaincy, the 2023 Chaplaincy Guidelines, the present and future developments in the CHCC, and an open session on what learning attendees to the 2023 CHCC conference brought back with them.

During 2023, I continued to convene the group on 'Towards and Inclusive Workforce' for the OPC, before handing this over in December. I'd like to thank the colleagues outside this region who contributed to this paper: it should be with you all very soon and I think it will provide a useful framework for the development and growth of the profession for the next few years.

Scotland

Paul Graham

**** President's Note:** Paul was unable to send a report at this time. However, he continues to provide the key point of contact for members in Scotland and to work with NHS Scotland and

NES on matters relating to employment. We are most appreciative of his on-going work with OPC. *Simon*

Wales

Euryl Howells

I write this report from the province of Wales as we prepare to celebrate St David who died on 1 March in 589. On St David's Day we celebrate the patron saint of Wales, which includes festivals and Eisteddfods which are often held

across the world. Men wear a traditional Welsh dress, and also wear daffodils and leeks, the iconic symbols of Wales and St David. His last words to his followers came from a sermon he gave on the previous Sunday: 'Be

joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things that you have heard and seen me do.’ The phrase ‘*Gwnewch y pethau bychain mewn bywyd*’ - ‘Do the little things in life’ - is still a well-known maxim in Wales and often the role of chaplains is about ‘the holistic- simply time and listening, basics on a ‘pilgrimage’ of waiting and fearing the unknown.

No one thought in 2023 that life would continue to be so challenging for yet another year in the healthcare setting and that we continue to address the service demands post-covid and each of the Health Boards continue to evolve to provide spiritual care to patients, visitors, and staff members. It is a case of having to adapt to the latest guidance around infection issues and all this takes its toll on the community. Visiting restrictions and staff shortages and contact isolation means that the hospitals remain under huge pressures. The effect is that the Chaplaincy Team have been called upon more than ever to provide pastoral, spiritual and religious support often in crisis.

In the depth of the pandemic, requests from employees for spiritual care rose dramatically and chaplaincy proactively and it began what remains essential in a fast-moving world that spiritual care of staff members and its almost instant access remains high, not

only organisationally but due to personal needs. The ability to reach the employee with a constant visible present on-site, offering an open ear through empathetic listening presence, even for a few short moments can relieve the burden and anxiety of colleagues. Staff self-referral in times of personal need has increased as well as the work-force teams who engage with Spiritual Care staff. Support is offered not only to individuals but through to clinical and other designated areas to include end of life care and in conjunction with staff Health and Wellbeing Teams.

As a result of this access and our multi-disciplinary cooperation it has seen requests for a rising number of teaching sessions. Due to the service demands in the province and huge admission levels with complex needs there is in addition an increase in bereavement support.

Together with the large numbers of nurses recruited from Overseas Chaplains and the Chaplaincy Teams have been involved with additional induction and guiding recruits with their own faith needs.

In 2023 the Health Board’s in South Wales the Chaplaincy Teams were asked to support and provide a liturgy for the Organ Donation Thanksgiving

Service. North Wales provide something similar.

Vacancies that have existed in the province haven't always seen successful recruitment and on-going Departmental personal staff issues has affected Wales.

Health Boards use the contemporary model approach and staff demonstrate broad spiritual care delivery but at the same time ensure they provide within the service and what is available geographically high-quality religious care to people for whom it is appropriate. The more rural and western areas of the province do not always have access to multi-faith leaders and access to a Rabbi is either in Cardiff or Manchester in the main. Most often the primary skill is to listen intentionally, and the essential requirement is time, to understand life changing events or perhaps the search for meaning/worth on that journey.

The Spirituality, Health and Wellbeing in NHS & Social Care Wales (SHaW)

group has asked Chris Swift to consider recommendations to the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales with a view of updating the WG Spiritual Care Guidelines of 2010. This was funded by the Welsh Government and documents were reviewed as well as verbal input from Lead chaplains. There is a discussion due in March 2024 on the recommendations and it will be decided on options and if there is a wider consultation within NHS Wales, Faith Leaders, CHCC, etc.

It is hoped that a CHCC event will be hosted in the Principality and perhaps it would be possible to do something that would be relevant and to support/implement the above review.

We continue to meet as Leads in Wales three or four times a year and regularly correspond by email or short Teams if there is some urgent matter we need to discuss.

Northern Ireland

Michael McMillan

Dia duit! Or Hello - God be with you (Irish Gaelic).

My name is Michael McMillan and I am the CHCC Rep for Northern Ireland. I am glad to report that we now have a functioning devolved administration (we didn't at the last CHCC AGM!).

Preparations are being made to reduce HSCNI waiting times and fix the many potholes on the roads. We (Northern Ireland Healthcare Chaplains' Association) are very thankful to receive generous funding from the Department of Health but continue to have a sense of "*is this the last year?*"

This year more than ever we have been making tracks to further cement our position, to show that we add value.

We started our year with a training residential led by the very capable Rev Dr Ewan Kelly. Ewan teased out the core values of Northern Irish healthcare chaplaincy and exposed them to the light of the future. This exercise has given us much to reflect on and will inform our priorities.

As part of this, we continue to professionalise through UKBHC/CHCC membership, encouraging members to enrol in CPE units, and postgraduate qualifications, and by endeavouring to firm up our evidence base. As an organisation (NIHCA) we are keen to raise our profile and have invested in promotional material to aid in this.

I am delighted that we are making progress with a significant piece of research which we hope to commission this incoming financial year. The focus of this research will likely be patient/client experience of healthcare chaplaincy and associated health outcomes. We feel it is imperative to put some stats behind what we do.

Increasingly, our chaplains are looking to academic studies to explore who they are and what they do as healthcare chaplains. We are glad to have a link with Cambridge Theological Federation although some of our chaplains have chosen to go

elsewhere. Our members can avail of funding grants which cover these costs in their entirety.

We have been fortunate to have some other great speakers to facilitate training for us. These include Rev Prof Chris Cooke, Rev Dr Steve Nolan, and Prof Baroness Finlay of Llandaff. We are excited to also welcome Dr Kathryn Mannix in April. **AND** We are grateful to Canon Dr Simon Harrison as he has agreed to facilitate an CHCC engagement event at our (NIHCA) AGM on Tuesday 28th May.

Perhaps the biggest challenge to face healthcare chaplaincy in Northern Ireland is the introduction of a province wide electronic patient record system called Epic. Chaplains in all Trusts will be expected to record each patient encounter. This will increase visibility and accountability. It will certainly raise the profile of chaplains however it has caused quite a stir. IT literacy is a stumbling block. There are also some who don't see the need for it and others who are refusing to be part of it. In order to combat this, we have provided a training session in addition to those available at Trust level and will be seeking to adopt a regional approach in terms of record keeping. I personally feel this is an opportunity, an exciting one, but recognise the challenges.

Please do touch base if you're ever in Northern Ireland.

Appendix 1

Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting of the College of Health Care Chaplains (CHCC)

23 March 2023 – Held via Zoom

11:00 - 13:15

Simon Harrison, CHCC President, welcomed all present.

The first part of the Annual General Meeting started at 11:00 a.m. with a Creative Event led by Jez Brown.

After a 15 minute break the business portion of the AGM commenced at 12:00 hr.

Present:

Simon Harrison	David Flower
Allison Dean	Iain Telfer
Phillip Staves	Martin Manley
Kartar Singh Bring	John Mills
Mark Burleigh	James Taylor
Jane Beach	David Savage
Ruth Bierbaum	Timothy Dixon
Ruth Fitter	Elizabeth Allison
Giselle Rusted	Christian Damanka
Andrew Bradley	Jane Pope
Graham Peacock	Stewart Watts
Fran Kissack	Hilary Lomax
Ricarda Witcombe	Jeanette Peel
Paul Graham	Sarah Sewell
Mark Newitt	David Saka
Mark Richards	Stewart Selby
Adrian Woodbridge	Graham Peacock
Tasha Critchlow	Ricarda Witcmbe
Angela Painter	Stephen Baker
Jez Brown	

Apologies:

Tony Brookes
Andrew Williams
Charles Thody
Steve Baker
Mack Kholowa

David Hughes
Reg Field
Euryl Howells
Michael McMillan
Sean Kettle

Agenda

The agenda was presented and adopted as presented.

Minutes of the 2022 AGM

Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting were presented by the Registrar, Allison Dean, who noted that the minutes are to be amended to correct Adrian's name to Woodbridge from Wallbridge.

Moved by Allison Dean, seconded by Ruth Bierbaum:

"That the Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting be adopted as amended."

Motion carried

Allison Dean will send a hard copy of the amended minutes to Simon Harrison for signature and they will subsequently be stored for future reference.

Simon Harrison provided a brief history of CHCC, its relationship to UNITE and how OPC functions within CHCC and UNITE. He also spoke about how CHCC supports chaplains across the UK and how it engages with NHS England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

Elections:

Simon Harrison outlined the election process and Allison Dean advised that the following persons have been co-opted until the 2024 AGM:

Fran Kissack - North-East (Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire)
Ricarda Witcombe - West Midlands
Giselle Rusted and Andrew Bradley - North-West
Michael McMillan – Northern Ireland and Ireland
Mark Newitt – Journal Liaison

The following persons have been acclaimed and will serve a three-year term:

East Anglia: Adrian Woodbridge

London: Tasha Critchlow

North-East: Graham Peacock

South-Central: Ruth Fitter

South-East: Ruth Anne Bierbaum

South-West: Mark Richards

Wales (South): Euryl Howells

Scotland: Paul Graham

Reports:

President's Report: As written.

Registrar's Report: As written. Simon Harrison extended thanks to Allison Dean for work carried out.

Treasurer's Report: As written and presented. Simon Harrison extended thanks to Phillip Staves for work carried out.

Digital Communications Officer's Report: As written. Simon Harrison extended thanks to Mark Burleigh for his work as web-master in keeping the CHCC web-site so up-to-date. Mark Burleigh extended thanks to Allison Dean for being so efficient in keeping him informed of changes and persons who wished to access the web-site.

Equalities Report: Report as written. Simon Harrison welcomed Stewart Selby back.

Faith/Beliefs Coordinator's Report: As written.

Professional Officer's Report: Jane Beach added that the Political Fund is about the Union's ability to campaign on behalf of CHCC members. She asked that when ballot received, that UNITE be given a mandate for the political fund.

Industrial Officer's Report: As written. Sean Kettle sent his regrets. Simon Harrison welcomed Sean to OPC and looks forward to having him on OPC.

Business Arising

1. Update from motion agreed at 2022 AGM re Report

Simon Harrison gave background to the original motion of 2021 and the amended motion from last year's AGM regarding the report that has been produced. Draft 23 of the Workforce Plan was handed over to Graham Peacock who is chairing a Task and Finish Group for completing the report. Graham advised that the group has met several times and there are two more meetings scheduled. He acknowledged and thanked

Lindsay de Wal for bring the Humanist perspective to the work before she stepped down due to work pressures. Another Humanist chaplain has been recommended by Lindsay to sit on the group for finishing the report. He gave an up-date on the work the Task and Finish group has done to date. Simon Harrison extended thanks to Graham and his group for all the work that has been done and looks forward to seeing the final report. It was noted that the report needs to be acceptable to Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Graham noted that once the document is finished it could be presented to line managers and boards so that it will assist the profession in the future.

2. Up-date from motion agreed at 2022 AGM re Research Focussed Group

Mark Newitt advised that there was no up-date at this time. There have been no formal movements with UKBHC at this time. It was noted that there are people attending the Research First Journal Club and developing research literacy and how it links in with best practice. Stewart Selby stated that there is work quietly going on in the background. Mark Newitt hopes that next year we will see more progress. Trisha Critchlow asked if there was a reference manager which could be used to enable the sharing of research articles being read. Mark Newitt and Trisha will discuss this outside the AGM.

Any Other Business

Issues raised on the day (Chair's discretion)

- a. Zoom calls – during Covid connections with chaplains in the UK occurred using Zoom. Question: Do we have a themed session that could be used to draw people together on a quarterly basis

Moved by Giselle Rusted, seconded by Tasha Critchlow:

“That OPC be asked to draw together their program of opportunities and events communicate clearly each quarter to all members.”

After discussion the

Motion carried

Scotland: Paul Graham provided an up-date on the programme of change in Scotland and work with UKBHC regarding mandatory registration for all Scottish chaplains. Simon Harrison extended thanks to Paul for all he does representing CHCC in Scotland and the work he is doing.

Michael McMillan and Euryl Howells were unable to attend. Simon Harrison has had a conversation with Euryl about a similar programme in Wales encouraging greater participation with CHCC. Simon Harrison also went to Northern Ireland and had great joy in connecting with Michael and exploring how CHCC can be more involved there. In closing Simon Harrison thanked everyone for attending and participating.

Meeting adjourned at 13:12 hr.