



BULLETIN 7 – February 2005

Chair

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Welcome

Welcome to the Bulletin of the Multi-Faith Group for Healthcare Chaplaincy (MFGHC). This Bulletin is distributed every four months to inform colleagues about the work being undertaken by the Council and its Committees.

New Members

The Council welcomed Mr Jayman Khan who was attending his first meeting as a spokesperson for the Jain community, Mr Alan Wittrick who was attending on behalf of South Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority and Revd Robert Lloyd-Richards who was attending on behalf of the College of Health Care Chaplains.

The Council was informed that Mrs Linda Coulter had been appointed on behalf of the Bahá'í community and that Revd Debbie Hodge had been appointed on behalf of the Free Churches Group.

Election of Honorary Officers 2005-6

The Chief Officer reported the results of the recent elections as follows:

Chair – Rabbi Martin van den Bergh
Vice-Chair – Mr Sital Singh Maan
Co-Chairs, Education Committee – HM Shafique Rahman, Mr Manhar Mehta
Co-Chairs, Standards Committee – Mr Ron Maddox, Revd Bob Evans

The Chair paid tribute to the work of his predecessor and former Co-Chairs and thanked them for their work on behalf of the Council. He also indicated his wish to continue and strengthen

the Group's work in support of multi-faith healthcare chaplaincy and to help reduce misunderstanding between all agencies in healthcare chaplaincy.

As one of his first acts, the Chair had written to HM The Queen in support of her New Year message on multi-cultural issues. He read out the reply which conveyed good wishes to him and all members of the Council.

A small reception to mark the change of Honorary Officers was held on 26th January and is reported on the MFGHC website.

Review of Department of Health central allocation of funding for NHS chaplaincy

Mr James attended the Council meeting to report progress with his report along the following lines:

- Three posts in support of chaplaincy administration had been agreed for the Free Churches, the Jewish community and the Muslim community.
- There was no agreement amongst the faith communities to the arrangements for a fourth post to be shared between them. Mr James was proposing that the funding reserved for this post be made accessible for bids from the other faith communities and the Council itself.
- A special training event was to be held to assist members in formulating applications for grant aid under Section 64
- The proposal to devolve funding had been focused on agreeing with South Yorkshire SHA that they should manage the funding stream for the central allocation.

Mr James indicated that the period of informal consultation was ending and a response to his

report from the Department of Health was expected in early February along with an updated report.

Conference on multi-faith chaplaincy – Monday 6th June 2005 – St Thomas’ Hospital, London

South Yorkshire WDC has agreed to fund a day conference with members of MFGHC in order to report progress since the end of the 1997 multi-faith work programme and in the two years of the Group’s existence. Five members from each member body would be invited.

Developments in the workforce strategy for spiritual healthcare

Ms Walsh updated the Council about progress with partnership working on these developments. She had consulted with chaplains and had identified a number of confusions which she was tackling immediately.

She had also proposed a series of lead responsibilities to the chaplaincy bodies which had not proved acceptable to all. The CHCC had indicated that it did not wish to give priority to this work at this time and Ms Walsh was therefore proposing to take the work forward with the involvement of chaplains direct. She considered it was of absolute necessity that partnership working should be achieved and that forward movement on the issues of importance be started.

Council members supported this approach but emphasised that the CHCC was always welcome to the MFGHC itself and to reports prepared for Council. Revd Robert Lloyd-Richards confirmed that CHCC was concerned that its voice was not always heard and that it was in close collaboration with other membership groups. He explained that the CHCC was seeking to develop a UK wide approach and therefore its involvement with purely national bodies was difficult.

Barbara Walsh thanked the Council for a helpful discussion. She considered that the strategy work needed to move on and that chaplains should be fully involved in it.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The Council noted the response made by the Chief Officer to the consultation on CPD currently being undertaken by the Health Professions Council. It was agreed to wait until a final view was available before taking this further within the Education Committee

Communications database

Revd Geoffrey Roper referred to the difficulty, which Barbara Walsh had identified of keeping track of all chaplains working in healthcare. He wished the Council to be able help with this problem and it was suggested that the various databases could be shared provided there was a common purpose and appropriate protocols to govern their use. This approach was agreed for further refinement.

Draft standards for spiritual healthcare approved for consultation

The Council received a revised copy of the draft standards proposed by the Standards Committee in the format which made handling simpler and the standards more accessible. A number of changes in wording were agreed and the draft standards approved for consultation.

Mr Ron Maddox, Co-Chair, Standards Committee, indicated that the consultation would take the form of a two stage listening exercise, first with chaplains and chaplaincy bodies and then with NHS bodies

Dates of next meetings

The Council agreed to meet again on Wednesday 18th May and Wednesday 14th September 2005 and on Wednesday 18th January 2006.

Communicating the work of the MFGHC

The MFGHC has established a website (www.mfghc.com) where its work will be highlighted. It intends to publish an e-bulletin about its progress every four months. For routine communication, Edward Lewis can be contacted at the address given above.

EJL 8th February 2005