

Multi-Faith Group for Healthcare Chaplaincy



BULLETIN 8 – July 2005

Chair

Rabbi Martin van den Bergh
Visitation Committee
Wembley Synagogue
8 Forty Avenue
Wembley
Middlesex HA9 8JW
Tel: 020 8385 1855
mvdbergh@btinternet.com

Chief Officer.

The Rev'd Edward J Lewis
Room 366 Church House
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3NZ
Tel 020 7898 1892
chief.officer@mfghc.com

The events in London on 7th July

On behalf of the MFGHC, the Chair issued the following statement on 8th July:

“We extend our heartfelt prayers to those injured in the London terrorist blast, and our deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones. We also extend our support to members of the emergency teams, and to our chaplaincy colleagues who are involved in bringing support and succour to both the injured and the healthcare staff.”

Welcome

The Chair welcomed Ms Linda Coulter (Bahá'í faith community), Revd Debbie Hodge (Free Churches faith community), Revd Chris Swift (College of Health Care Chaplains) and Mr Derek Thomson (South Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority (SYSHA)) to the recent Council meeting.

Reception to mark the election of Honorary Officers 2005-06

A small reception was held on in January to mark the election of honorary officers 2005-06. This had been a pleasant occasion attended also by MPs with a reflection given by the Chief Rabbi, which had been appreciated by all.

Section 64 Funding

Edward Lewis reported to the Council on the seminar funded by the DH, which had been held in March. Short presentations had been given about how best to apply for S64 funding and on current DPA issues

Subsequently, three applications for S64 funding on the Group's behalf had been submitted covering the database and communication project; core funding for the Groups work; and training for healthcare chaplains in world faiths.

None of these applications were successful in passing to the second stage of consideration although two applications from faith communities were still continuing.

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

The Council noted that the Department of Health (DH) had published its response to the James Report and included this on its website.

There was discussion about the system proposed for the longer term in support of healthcare chaplaincy. The DH had indicated that their allocations to the three faith community posts were not tied in perpetuity and that there was no guarantee that any central allocation would be available in future years. A case would need to be made.

Discussion also focused on the funding to be allocated by South Yorkshire and to whether the SHA might also be able to support further discussion about funding. Alan Wittrick suggested that they might not be a first line of attack but that he would seek to determine whether there was scope to increase the overall size of the allocation before there was a necessity to apply more stringent equalising actions. He agreed to pursue these issues in due course and to report progress. This approach was welcomed.

South Yorkshire SHA's administration of the remaining unallocated central allocation funds

Derek Thomson reminded the Council that, in the short term, the DH had not allocated the full amount of the central allocation for 2005-06. SYSHA had been asked to implement a process to distribute the remainder (about £40000) in accordance with the recommendations of the James report and the DH response.

Listening exercise on quality standards for spiritual healthcare

As a result of pressure of other work, the listening exercise with chaplains and chaplaincy bodies had been postponed to July-September 2005. The listening exercise with NHS Bodies would take place once the Standards Committee had had the opportunity to digest the comments during the autumn.

MFGHC Review Conference 2005

The Council's Review Conference held in June at St Thomas' Hospital, London was regarded as a success with helpful presentations in the morning and lively and informed discussions during the afternoon. The full report of the Conference will be circulated in due course.

The Council is very grateful to SYSHA for sponsoring the costs of the Conference and to the Guy's/ St Thomas' Foundation NHS Trust for hosting the event.

MFGHC Biennial Review 2003-4

On behalf of MFGHC, the Council has published its Biennial Review 2003-4 which is available on the website at www.mfghc.com

Launch of the resources for multi-faith chaplaincy

It was not possible to launch these resources at the Review Conference but it has been agreed that this work should be drawn to a close and the resources made accessible as soon as possible. A suitable launch event would be arranged in due course.

Authorisation process – May 2005

The initial discussions with representatives has proceeded satisfactorily and faith communities are making steady progress in identifying their

arrangements. The Council has now agreed to undertake more formal discussion with the Bodies which the Council might wish to designate as undertaking authorisation processes.

These discussions which will be held in the autumn will cover subjects such as preparation and formation for faith community representatives; training and education requirements; codes of practice; and the giving and removing of authorisation.

Maintaining standards in spiritual healthcare

Arising from the work of the Standards Committee, the Council has endorsed a four stage process for dealing with complaints that standards were not being maintained.

The proposed four stages are as follows

Stage 1 - The individual raises the issue with the Trust and should be seen to exhaust local procedures possibly including comments from PCTs/ SHA

Stage 2 - The individual raises the issue with MFGHC which deals with the local SHA about policy issues/ compliance

Stage 3 - In the event that the local SHA cannot achieve any progress, MFGHC should draw the problem to the attention of the South Yorkshire SHA as the lead NHS body for spiritual healthcare.

Stage 4 - Such interactions should be publicised in the MFGHC Biennial Review

Generic Chaplaincy

In reporting on his own activities with the last three months, the Chair has special mention of his concern about the use of the term 'generic chaplaincy'. This appears to suggest a watering down of the faith-based term of chaplaincy-spiritual care and may need further discussion if that proves to be the case.

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 18th July 2005