

# Multi-Faith Group for Healthcare Chaplaincy



## BULLETIN 9 –October 2005

### **Chair**

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### **Chief Officer.**

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### **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed to the recent Council meeting the Revd Jim Linthicum observing on behalf of the College of Health Care Chaplains and the Revd Fr Paul Mason joining the Council on behalf of the Roman Catholic faith community. HM Shafique Rahman was welcomed on his return after a lengthy absence.

### **New appointments to lead healthcare chaplaincy development**

Mr Chowdhury Mueen-Uddin has been appointed as Director for Muslim healthcare chaplaincy and Mr Bimal Krsna das has been appointed as Co-ordinator for Hindu healthcare chaplaincy. Both these appointments have been welcomed by Council.

### **MFGHC grant application 2006-07**

None of the grant applications to the Department of Health for support of spiritual healthcare development had been successful other than that submitted by the Free Churches faith community in support of further work on the "fourth community" of Christian Churches, which had gone to the next round for sifting.

### **SYSHA arrangements for administering the central allocation for chaplaincy 2005**

SYSHA has allocated the balance of funds (£40K) from the central allocation for 2005-06 on an equitable basis in accordance with the arrangements proposed for the balance of funds in the James Report.

In commenting on these arrangements, Mr Derek Thomson, Head of National Workforce Projects, explained that the small sum involved had been allocated as swiftly as possible to enable faith

communities to progress their plans. He would now seek to establish the service level agreements with colleagues as soon as practicable.

### **MFGHC Communications strategy**

The Council has endorsed the broad approach to communications strategy proposed by the Executive Committee. This envisages a three-pronged approach to the Department of Health in order to raise the profile of chaplaincy amongst the new Ministers and Officers.

A useful first meeting has been held with the Chief Nursing Officer and a further one is planned in November. Additional contacts are being made with both MPs and Ministers.

### **Listening exercise on quality standards for spiritual healthcare**

The listening exercise started on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005 and will end in September. A report of that exercise based on the 20 or so comments would be submitted to the Standards Committee in November. Any changes proposed would then be tested with the NHS and associated bodies in a further listening exercise in 2006.

### **Launch of the resources for multi-faith chaplaincy**

These resources have been available on the website with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September. The Council has congratulated all those concerned with marshalling, sifting and highlighting them. Particular praise was reserved for the MFGHC webmaster for the clear and accessible presentation of material.

The Chair reported that arrangements were being made for a small launch event to publicise the material and to thank those who had contributed. This would probably be held in October/ November.

## **MFGHC Review Conference 2005**

The report of the Conference held at St Thomas Hospital in June 2005 has been approved and is included on the website.

## **MFGHC Priorities 2006**

The Council has discussed a statement of managerial commitments compiled from those which had arisen from its routine work and those identified at the Review Conference. It is clear that the commitments exceed the capacity available to achieve them all and there is agreement that Council should support commitments already made whilst not ignoring new issues.

The Council supported the priority work being undertaken in the following areas of work:

- Developing authorisation processes for world faiths
- Advising NHS Trusts on quality standards
- Getting more resources for healthcare chaplaincy
- Developing Foundation training for world faith chaplains
- Sharing and developing communication methods and databases

## **Authorisation processes**

The Council has agreed a timetable for meetings and the proposed questions for discussion with a view to completing the next stage in this development by end December.

## **Events in London on 7<sup>th</sup> July**

At the recent Council meeting, the Chair referred to the events in London on 7<sup>th</sup> July and paid tribute to those who had responded to the need to care for victims at the time and in the days which followed. He made mention particularly of the staff of the Free Churches Group whose offices had been adjacent to one of the bombs and who had been very involved in the care of victims and others. He referred to the media statements in support of chaplains made by himself with Revd Chris Swift President of the CHCC.

Despite the effective response, it was felt that the call-out arrangements for spiritual care-givers had not operated effectively and some inappropriate groups had been able to access victims and carers without checks. The Chair indicated that he would feed these comments into the system of review of the emergency response.

## **Chief Officer's report – September 2005**

The Chief Officer reported positive feedback from NHS Trusts, many of which wanted to engage with the agenda for developing spiritual care, coupled with the difficulties of those who were having to reduce staffing as a result of the NHS financial position. Thus, one part of the NHS was proposing to host a conference on spiritual care in 2006 whilst another was proposing to cease the arrangements for out of hours call out. The mix of positive and negative issues was very challenging and would continue to be so.

## **Jain Festival**

Mr Manhar Mehta reported that during the Jain religious festival held in the first week of September and attended by more than 800 people, he had announced the setting up of a spiritual care system for Jain patients in hospital which was received by the audience with great enthusiasm.

## **Buddhist chaplaincy introductory course**

Gen Tubchen Kelsang reported on the successful four-day introductory course in Manchester which had been attended by 18 people. This followed publicity at the Summer Festival held in Cumbria in July.

## **Dates of next meetings**

The Council has agreed to meet again on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January, Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May, Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2006 and Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

## **Communicating the work of the MFGHC**

The MFGHC has established a website ([www.mfghc.com](http://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 4<sup>th</sup> October 2005*