

**HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINCY NETWORK INTRODUCES NATIONAL SERVICES
ADDRESSING SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF VETERANS, CURRENT SERVICE MEMBERS,
MILITARY FAMILIES**

Resource Unveiled at Event Honoring ‘Four Chaplains Day’

NEW YORK, N.Y. (February 3, 2015)--HealthCare Chaplaincy Network (HCCN) today introduced a national service that provides spiritual and emotional support to veterans, active service members, and their families, including the opportunity for one-on-one conversations with professional chaplains via phone, email and video call.

The national nonprofit organization unveiled the new resource at an event commemorating “Four Chaplains Day” to honor four U.S. Army chaplains of differing faiths who gave up their lives during World War II, as well as all men and women who have served or are currently serving our country.

Designed specifically for military and their families, HCCN’s *ChaplainCareforVeterans.org* features online information, resources, and supportive counseling to address painful feelings such as hopelessness, guilt, loneliness, anger and grief that can lead to spiritual distress. Central to this free and confidential service is Chat with a Chaplain, which allows individuals, regardless of religion or beliefs, to connect with a professionally-trained multi-faith chaplain 24/7 via the Internet, phone (844-CARE4VETS), or video call.

“We want these heroic Americans to know we are here for them,” said Rev. Eric J. Hall, HCCN’s president and CEO. “There is increasing recognition that both public and private sectors must pitch in to meet the needs of veterans, current service members, and their families. At the same time, changes in our overall health care system underscore the need to adjust how we deliver care for the body, mind and soul—for both military and civilians alike.”

Research indicates that strong spiritual connections can significantly and positively impact the mental health of military personnel and their families to cope with the impact of war. A 2011 Pew survey reports that 44 percent of post-9/11 veterans are having difficulty adjusting to civilian life. Invisible wounds of service and war include traumatic brain injury (TBI), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety and isolation.

“Addressing the spiritual needs of the veteran and the family are essential to helping these individuals resume their lives with the peace and comfort that existed prior to their wartime experience,” said Richard E. Powers, M.D., a board-certified psychiatrist who served in the U.S. Army and has practiced in Veterans Administration hospitals for 30 years. “It takes a chaplain or other spiritual advisor to walk with that veteran as they resolve the spiritual conflicts that can be caused by the complex stressors of war.”

HCCN's new resource is part of the organization's efforts to augment the practice of hospital-based chaplaincy, by offering innovative and technology-driven products and services that provide professional spiritual and emotional support to people in various health care and residential settings.

Congress unanimously declared February 3 as "Four Chaplains Day" in 1988 to honor the four U.S. Army chaplains of differing faiths who gave their lives to save others when the torpedoed U.S.A.T. Dorchester, with 920 soldiers aboard, sank on February 3, 1943.

HCCN held the event at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York. Speakers included Powers; Larry Herrmann, a board member of the Four Chaplains Foundation and a former major in the U.S. Marine Corps; Jamal Othman, deputy director, New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs; and Deputy Bronx Borough President Aurelia Greene. Rev. Roxanne Birchfield, a 1st Lieutenant and Chaplain Candidate in the U.S. Army Reserve stationed at Fort Totten, NY, delivered the invocation.

About HealthCare Chaplaincy Network™

HealthCare Chaplaincy Network™ is a national nonprofit organization that offers spiritual-related information and resources, and professional chaplaincy services in hospitals, other health care settings, and online. Its mission is to advance the integration of spiritual care in health care through clinical practice, research and education in order to help people faced with illness and grief find comfort and meaning—whenever they are, wherever they believe, wherever they are.

Visit www.healthcarechaplaincy.org, call 212-644-1111, and connect on [twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Media Contact:

Carol Steinberg

csteinberg@healthcarechaplaincy.org

212-644-1111, ext. 121