Why Health Care Providers Should Hire Professional, Board Certified Chaplains

A professional board certified health care chaplain is one of the most cost-effective resources to facilitate communication, enhance patient experience, and increase family and staff satisfaction.

Professional chaplains are the spiritual care specialists on the health care team who, while doctors and nurses focus on the needs of the body, help patients, family, and staff identify and draw upon their source of spiritual strength to find meaning and comfort and to work towards healing.

When a person and their family are coping with illness, trauma, or grief, they may find themselves wrestling with issues of spiritual distress – a painful disruption in one's belief or values system. Spiritual distress presents itself both emotionally and physically, from rejection of care to chronic insomnia, and may or may not be grounded in religious belief or practice.

A professional board certified health care chaplain:

- Serves people of any religion or no religion.
- Does not proselytize or promote any particular faith tradition
- Is an objective mediator who helps defuse conflicts and crises by facilitating communication and cultural sensitivity

Professional chaplains working as members of the interdisciplinary health care team:

- Can lift HCAHPS scores by raising patient and family satisfaction because they help them address relevant emotional, spiritual, religious, and cultural needs.
- Facilitate goals of care discussions for patients that can influence end-of-life care, treatment compliance, hospice enrollment, and patient quality of life especially near death
- Liaison with community religious leaders

Credentials:

One becomes a professional health care chaplain when he or she is board certified by one of the professional chaplaincy associations. Requirements include graduate level study, 1600 hours of supervised clinical pastoral education, 2000 hours of clinical experience, demonstration of competencies through a rigorous peer review process, adherence to a professional code of ethics, and continuing professional education.

Source: HealthCare Chaplaincy Network™ is a 54-year old global nonprofit organization that offers spiritual-related information and resources, and professional chaplaincy services in hospitals, other healthcare settings, and online. Our mission is to advance the integration of spiritual care in health care through clinical practice, research and education in order to improve the patient experience and satisfaction and to help people faced with illness and grief find comfort and meaning, whoever they are, whatever they believe, wherever they are. For more information, visit www.healthcarechaplaincy.org, call 212-644-1111, follow us on Twitter or connect with us on Facebook.