Professional chaplains have an important role on the interdisciplinary team in delivering quality palliative care. The chaplain contributes to the interdisciplinary team by:

- Increasing likelihood of attending to the whole person when addressing patient quality of life.
- Provides team members with knowledge of the beliefs, values and practices important to the patient.
- Ensures integration of spiritual health resources, needs, and recommendations into the treatment plan.

"If you are not providing excellent spiritual care, you are not providing palliative care."

− Betty Ferrell, PhD, RN, FAAN, FPCN

The 11 palliative care competencies desired of a professional chaplain on the interdisciplinary team:

- Knowledge of Palliative Care
- Communication
- Counseling Skills
- Teamwork and Collaboration
- Spiritual Assessment and Documentation
- Ethics
- Delivery of Care and Continuity of Care
- Cultural Competence, Inclusion, and Marginalized Populations
- Care for Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Team
- Continuous Quality Improvement and Research Within Palliative Care
- Mentoring and Teaching

3 Levels of Competencies Progressively Enhance the Professional Chaplain’s Contributions to the Patient, Team and Organization.

**Foundational:**

Knowledge, Comprehension, Application – Understands concepts, engages in critical thinking, and applies them in daily individual work.

**Advanced:**

Analysis, Synthesis (in addition to Foundational level) – Develops new initiatives, applies leadership and interprofessional expertise in a variety of settings, situations, and teams; mentors and teaches as appropriate Foundational level practitioners.

**Expert:**

Evaluation (In addition to Advanced level) – Develops and assesses programs, predicts outcomes, provides thought level leadership; mentors and teaches Foundational and Advanced level practitioners.