

Celebrating 21 Years of AHPCC

October 1987

Rev. Colin Kassell, Chaplain at St. Catherine's Hospice, Crawley, writes to Rev. Stuart Coates at Strathcarron Hospice to suggest an Association of Hospice Chaplains being formed for mutual support and exchange of ideas.

A letter is sent to those in full time hospice chaplaincy to indicate interest in joining a group whose aims and objectives are:

- * Provide support and fellowship for chaplains caring for the terminally ill and their relatives**
- * Encourage theological discussion and training**
- * Provide liaison with the church at large and allied organisations at local and national level, especially on an ecumenical basis**
- * Seek to maintain and improve standards, pay and conditions for all in hospice chaplaincy**

January 1988

Rev. David Morrell, Rowcroft Hospice, Torquay, encourages the group to commit to meeting again as previous attempts had not got off the ground.

1988 - 1989

Inaugural Meeting of the Association of Hospice Chaplains where decision formally made to create an Association of Hospice Chaplains with 8 chaplains present.

Chairman: Canon Paul Brothwell
Secretary: Rev Colin Kassell
Treasurer: Rev David Morrell
Education Liaison Officer: Rev Derek Murray

A proposed constitution was discussed and created; the membership fee was set at £8.00; a day conference was to be organised for October 1988 at Church House, Westminster; a residential conference was proposed for April 1989.

Financial help was to sought from various sources including Help the Hospices and a number of organisations were to be informed the Association of Hospice Chaplains is now in existence.

A proposed constitution is presented to the executive committee meeting and accepted.

1990

The executive committee meets to plan the first annual conference; Peter Speck is to be the main speaker and Stephen Verney to act as conference chaplain.
Help the Hospices contributes £1000 to the expenses of AHC conference.

Hospice chaplains are to be entered into the Handbook of Hospital Chaplains and links to be made with the 'Umbrella' Association Meeting for professionals in palliative care. Discussion also took place concerning affiliation to the College of Chaplains.

2nd May 1990 AGM

44 members present and 108 members now part of the association.

A representative for the European Association of Palliative care had been requested.

Discussion was underway about relationships with other chaplaincy groups and how the distinctive work of a hospice chaplain can be best represented and supported.

1992

The Constitution now states that membership of the association is open to anyone working in a recognised chaplaincy capacity in a Hospice or Continuing Care Unit, Hospice home care team or Palliative care setting.

Associate membership may be offered to those who move on from hospice ministry or have an interest in hospice work.

The AGM report talks about the work of the executive committee extending beyond the main task of preparing for conference, to delegating and representation on other healthcare related groups arising from the Patient's Charter.

'The distinctive function of our association, especially in providing both professional and personal support, should be safeguarded.'

1993

Discussion underway to establish new objectives for AHC; these will include support and interest in inter-faith and inter-cultural issues, supervision, secularisation in hospice care, place of complementary therapies, New Age influences, sponsoring of local groups of chaplains.

A new objectives statement and proposal for discussion was to be produced and circulated with the view to these new objectives to be discussed over the next 3 years.

The group also discussed the characteristics of whole and part time chaplaincy and the tensions members experienced.

1995

Mission Statement for AHP suggested to the AGM

'The AHP comprises of members who are full or part time chaplains involved in the pastoral care of the dying and those significant to them. The Association exists to provide support and fellowship to identify and promote good practice: to encourage theological discussion and training; to promote ecumenical links with the churches and allied organisations. It also seeks to improve the effective use and financial support of hospice chaplaincy.'

1996

Whole time chaplaincy conference now taking place.

'The Hospice Chaplain' booklet, explaining the role and purpose to hospices making appointments, is now available and being promoted, as chaplains offer education to staff and the service of being an outside assessor to units.

A newsletter is now available to members and contributions are welcome.

76 members are registered.

1997

First draft of a standards document is discussed. Executive groups also working on issues such as audit and assessment.

At the AGM Lenn Lunn completes his term of being chairman of AHC and challenges members to think about identity in the work place where we work with other professionals who have clearly defined roles. The role of the chaplain is often not understood and by contrast to those around us 'we are expressing and representing eternal mysteries'.

1999

Work is done by the executive committee to group members in to regional groups for support meetings and local networking.

Members are submitting to the committee occasional papers on hospice and palliative care issues which will be for wider circulation; the executive committee felt this indicated a surge of interest in research and the need to validate the role and purpose of the chaplain and spiritual care.

The annual conference was the largest in numbers so far and the meeting minutes indicate a strong supportive network in the gathering.

2000

A wide ranging survey of hospice chaplains was to be undertaken with a working group established to take this forward. The aim of the survey is to gather together as much information as possible about the working practices of chaplains, areas for development and how the association can support our members more effectively.

The conference was to be organised by a co-opted member with support from 2 members; this recognises the growing responsibility of the organiser and the scale of the conference itself.

There is continued interest in the need for supervisors of chaplains who are trained and accredited.

2001

The executive group invited David Clarke and Michael Wright to the meeting to share their thoughts about the proposed research proposal on Spirituality, Chaplaincy and Palliative Care. This would be a considerable undertaking that would need commissioning, funding and coordinating.

'It was acknowledged that this project could be both exciting and scary as we are taking a risk in placing ourselves under scrutiny, but also seen as moving us forward to become a more professional body within the context of evidence based specialist palliative care'.

2002

Membership of AHPCC now stands at 105.

42 full-time chaplains and 50 part-time chaplains, plus volunteers.

Some of the issues under discussion are: data protection; development of a web page; standards for chaplaincy; development of an MSc course in Canterbury.

2003

John Stroud stands down from editing newsletter for several years.

Discussion taking place around code of conduct; competencies; work of South Yorkshire workforce confederation.

University of Kent module for chaplaincy takes place for the first time, organised by Geoff Walters.

Core Competencies document accepted and to be printed with AHPCC and Marie Curie logos.

Representation on CHCC, HCC and the Multi faith group continues.

AHPCC has 165 members with annual fee of £25.

2005

Proposal put forward to establish a UK forum of Healthcare Chaplaincy comes from chairs of chaplaincy organisations of CHCC, SACH and AHPCC.

The Assisted Dying Bill is a focus for discussion and chaplains are involved in presenting ideas and reflections.

2006

Registration Steering Group to discuss registration of chaplains now meeting regularly.

Standards and Guidelines booklets now revised and ready for circulation to every chaplain and hospice/palliative care unit in UK.

European Network of Healthcare Chaplains have requested permission to adopt the Standards for the organisation.

Proposal made to change the title of Chairman/woman to President.

2007

Dept of Health launch the initiative of End of Life care Strategy and chaplaincy representation is made at a series of planning meetings organised by the DOH.

Locally, chaplains are involved in training, teaching and advising on spiritual care within this initiative of palliative care.

2008

Presidents of CHCC, SACH and AHPCC meet to discuss a way forward for working together on issues such as a chaplaincy register, training, supervision.

Members of AHPCC are encouraged to make use of the website which is a developing means of corresponding with each other and information sharing.

2 members attend the European Network conference in Estonia.

Issues for members include on call arrangements; management training and protocol; supervision; knowledge and skills framework; Agenda for Change.

CAAB proposes the creation of a new chaplaincy body to build on meeting earlier in the year.

2009

AHPCC endorses the creation of the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy.

Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care well represented at the Help the Hospices conference with a full workshop session lead by Tom Gordon.

Our annual conference continues to be a successful means of supporting the membership, networking and training as chaplains experience a variety of working conditions.