

Spiritual and Pastoral Support for Cancer Survivorship

Patients have the right to spiritual (pastoral) care that respects the patient's own cultural, spiritual and religious background and preferences. A basic concept of pastoral care is to treat a person holistically taking into account the interrelatedness of body, mind and spirit which may result in either sickness or health.

The objective of the chaplain's ministry is to assist the patient in drawing upon personal resources and religious faith to progress toward health. Spiritual/Chaplaincy Services are provided without violating the individual's religious and faith traditions. This ministry is essentially person-centered, preserving and enhancing the integrity and self-worth of the patient in the midst of the depersonalizing and anxiety-producing circumstances of hospitalization.

Mindful of the spiritual component in total patient care, healthcare providers will assess the spiritual needs of the patient being mindful of the patient's own spiritual leader, such as their priest, rabbi, imam or minister. This contact respects the unique relationship and spiritual support patients receive from their spiritual leaders and religious communities. Many of our patients, however, do not have a relationship with a faith community or their own spiritual leader is not available. In these cases, our trained and board-certified staff chaplains or resource chaplains can be of assistance by directly providing appropriate interventions to address identified spiritual needs. The chaplain may be of help for the patient as he/she indicates a need for those spiritual resources that nourish the human spirit and contribute to well-being.

Community Health Network's Spiritual Care/Chaplaincy Services is committed to providing spiritual and religious support services to patients, their families and our hospital staff with respect to their own spiritual, cultural and religious needs.

The chaplain, who is part of the patient healthcare team, is available for patients to:

- share thoughts and feelings
- notify (at the patient's request) his/her faith community
- assist with Advance Directives (<https://www.ecommunity.com/patient-rights/advance-directives>)
- offer sacraments and devotional materials
- give support and prayers for healing
- and provide spiritual support to the patient and his/her family

Chaplains are able to offer counsel for:

- faith questions and spiritual concerns
- loss and grief
- treatment decisions
- coming to terms with medical diagnosis and interventions
- patient rights
- personal and family issues
- coping with lifestyle changes
- ethical considerations

For further information, please call our cancer survivorship line at 317-621-4961 or chaplaincy director at 317-621-6788.