NACC 2012 Annual Meeting Pre-Conference Intensive Workshop

Introduction to Research for Chaplains
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Description
This workshop is for chaplains who are curious but hesitant about the value of research for their ministry. Participants will learn basic concepts by reviewing studies whose findings are relevant for chaplaincy. The workshop will help chaplains integrate findings from research into their ministry without sacrificing essential values such as empathic presence. The aim of the workshop is to help chaplains become informed research consumers not researchers. Enrollment is limited to 30 to facilitate small group work and interaction.

Workshop Goals
As a result of this workshop, participants will:
1. Be able to read and understand a simple research paper.
2. Be able to describe the implications of a research study for their spiritual care.
3. Become familiar with research that shows the beneficial effects of a chaplain’s spiritual care.

Context for the Workshop
Standard 12 of the new Standards of Practice for Professional Chaplains in Acute Care, (Association of Professional Chaplains), signals the acceptance of the concept of evidence-based spiritual care among professional chaplains. It says, “The chaplain practices evidence-based care including ongoing evaluation of new practices and, when appropriate, contributes to or conducts research.” The Interpretation accompanying this Standard suggests that all chaplains “should be sufficiently familiar with existing evidence to present it to their health care colleagues from other disciplines, read and reflect on new research’s potential to change their practice and be willing and able to integrate that which is better for patients, families, or staff.” The aim of this workshop is to help chaplains begin to develop the skills to be able to comply with this new Standard.

Workshop Schedule
7:30 - 7:55 am  Introduction - How Do You Feel About Research?
7:55 - 9:25 am  Reading Qualitative and Quantitative Research: Small Groups*
9:25 – 9:40 am  Break
9:40 – 11:00 am  Reporting on Research - Small Group Reports and Discussion
11:00 – 11:30 am  Resources, Next Steps, and Feelings about Research
In the workshop we will be working with the three research studies listed below. All workshop participants should print out a copy of all three studies and bring them to the workshop. 

Workshop participants do not need to read any of the studies prior to the workshop. In their small group, workshop participants will read and develop a summary of one of the three research studies. Participants should also print out a copy of the Research Summary Outline which they will use in their small group to summarize the main points of the study they read. They will use this Summary to present the study they read to the other workshop participants. They will also hear presentations about the other two studies. The three studies were chosen to illustrate different types of research as well as issues of interest to chaplains. (It is not a problem if interested participants read any of the studies prior to the workshop.)


## Comments from Participants in Past Workshops

In the past six years we have led a version of this workshop at five regional and national chaplaincy meetings. Workshop participants at the 2008 APC Conference wrote these comments:

“It was very comprehensive as an introduction to pastoral research.”

“Both Pat and George were well organized and made the conference interesting with research studies in small groups and large group presentations.”

“Very effective. Articulate, engaging, great explanations. Also they put people at ease in a workshop on a topic which is daunting and potentially intimidating.”

“Informal and informative. Appreciated the small group “research paper” experience. The handouts will be useful too.”

## Workshop Leaders

**George Fitchett, DMin, PhD, BCC** Professor and Director of Research, Department of Religion, Health, and Human Values, Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, Illinois. George has been a certified chaplain (APC) and pastoral supervisor (ACPE) for over 25 years. His book, *Assessing Spiritual Needs* (Academic Renewal Press, 2002), is widely used in clinical and academic training programs. He has a PhD in epidemiology which he earned as part of a 5 year Career Development Award from the National Institute on Aging.

**Patricia E. Murphy, RSCJ, PhD, BCC** Associate Professor and Staff Chaplain, Department of Religion, Health, and Human Values, Rush University Medical Center. Pat’s special interest is in religion and mental health. Her 2009 article “Belief in a Concerned God Predicts Response to Treatment for Depression for Adults with Clinical Depression” was published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*. In addition to her work in chaplaincy, she has taught courses in statistics and counseling in the College of Health Sciences at Rush.

**Deacon Roger Vandervest, MA, BCC** Instructor and Staff Chaplain, Department of Religion, Health, and Human Values, Rush University Medical Center.