National Association of Catholic Chaplains
Spiritual Leadership Competencies for Pastoral Care
September 2009

Introduction

The 2007 CHA/NACC Pastoral Care Summit Care Services Task Force produced in fall 2008 the document, **Essential Functions/Responsibilities of a Board Certified Chaplain**. These essential functions matched up well with the **scope of services** that introduced the Standards of Practice for Chaplains in Acute Care Settings identified by the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) Commission on Quality Services and affirmed by the Spiritual Care Collaborative (http://www.spiritualcarecollaborative.org/standards_of_practice.asp).

The Task Force then targeted the need to identify the Spiritual Leadership Competencies, the skills and training required, for a **spiritual leader in pastoral care.** While a traditional human resource approach would attempt to identify and categorize the skills, knowledge, and abilities required for leaders in pastoral care, the Task Force rather has identified here "fields" of competencies for what is required to be a successful spiritual care leader. This list is not intended to be a comprehensive nor prioritized list.

We realize that not all chaplains and those who minister to the spiritual and emotional needs of patients, families, and associates are called to become spiritual leaders of pastoral care. The diversity of gifts is critical to meeting these needs. However, we also believe that many of these gifts for leadership are present in those currently serving in the pastoral care ministry, and we hope this work will help call them forward, encourage the discernment of these gifts, and lead to the further development of the structures and resources to prepare them for spiritual leadership positions. Therefore, the Task Force aims were to assist:

- Mission leaders and human resource specialists responsible to hire those for spiritual leadership
- Those responsible to develop and provide education and training
- Current directors of pastoral care for their own professional development
- Spiritual care ministers who are discerning their own professional growth and direction

It also encourages the further collaboration within and among healthcare systems to develop and/or support spiritual leadership opportunities.

I.   **Leadership**: skills and ability to set the goals of a department and inspire/direct the staff to achieve the goals and live out the mission, vision and values of the organization.
   1. Model and demonstrate being visionary and inclusive
      1.1. Communicate a compelling and inspired vision or sense of core purpose for Spiritual Care services
      1.2. Demonstrate how Spiritual Care is an integral function of mission
      1.3. Articulate the need for making Spiritual Care more operational, and explore with system leaders ways to do so

1.4. Position the Spiritual Care department as a resource for Spirituality and Ethics formation
1.5. Excel in meeting department goals successfully, and constantly and consistently be one of the top performers
1.6. Exemplify personally and professionally the mission, vision and core values of the organization

2. Exhibit a collaborative and interdisciplinary management style with other managers of the organization, as well as with the spiritual care team
   2.1. Work with other disciplines across the organization demonstrating an agility in understanding organizational complexities
   2.2. Promote the value of Spiritual Care across the organization as integral to the organization's mission of healing
   2.3. Exhibit management skills that provide excellence in the provision of spiritual care services for the organization developing a spiritual care team to meet the needs of a changing healthcare environment
   2.4. Demonstrate a servant leadership style that promotes the development of leadership skills in the members of the Spiritual Care team

3. Exhibit a strategic agility in adapting Spiritual Care services to the changing needs of the organization in providing a continuum of care
   3.1. Collaborate with Mission Director and/or Supervisor in demonstrating and promoting creative strategies for the delivery of Spiritual Care services
   3.2. Can rethink strategies and adapt to change for the delivery of Spiritual Care services

II. **Finance/Accounting:** knowledge of current principles, practices, and policies to fiscally manage the department.
   1. Comprehend, analyze, and monitor balance sheet and income statement of organization particularly as related to Spiritual Care
   2. Build, monitor, and make value-based decisions regarding budget
   3. Situate spiritual care services within the business plan of the institution/organization and the standards of the profession
   4. Demonstrate to the institution and system "value added" and "cost avoidance" benefit of adequate spiritual care/chaplain staffing

III. **Management:** ability to administer a department in collaboration with other departments and administration throughout the organization
   1. Assess department personnel needs
   2. Design a structure for Spiritual Care department
   3. Work with human resources to develop appropriate position descriptions
   4. Hire, develop, and evaluate staff, with appropriate knowledge of labor laws
   5. Determine needs for and purchase equipment and materials
   6. Manage resources and time
   7. Prioritize tasks and balance a multiplicity of demands
   8. Possess working knowledge of and capability with
      8.1. Behavioral-based interviewing
      8.2. Career assessment tools
      8.3. Team development

8.4. Employee coaching and counseling
8.5. Group facilitation
8.6. Conflict resolution
8.7. Succession planning

IV.   **Marketing:** ability to direct/process the development/management of services and products from conceptualization through delivery.
1. Collaborate with key partners to identify Spiritual Care service needs
2. Identify, assess, select, and develop Spiritual Care services that meet those needs
3. Determine cost and price, method for delivery, and promotion
4. Promote the value and need of Spiritual Care across the continuum of care of the organization
5. Develop, tailor, and provide education and information to promote Spiritual Care services to potential users of the services and to decision makers

V.   **Organizational Dynamics**: knowledge of and ability to navigate and maneuver within the structural, cultural, and power relationships within an organization to achieve desired outcomes.
1. Understand how the system operates, i.e., how individuals, groups, and the overall organization interact
   1.1. Understand the business of mission and stewardship of resources
   1.2. Know and be able to articulate the organization's strategic and mission goals, and know how to relate the Spiritual Care department's goals and activity to those goals
   1.3. Know where the Spiritual Care department is situated and how it functions within its organizational environment (branches, divisions, departments), and how to communicate/problem solve within the communication/reporting channels of this environment in order to be achieve desired outcomes.
2. Develop and implement departmental goals that align with organization's strategic plan
3. Demonstrate a personal and departmental accountability
4. Understand the integral role of Spirituality to mission, and communicate with system, administration, and mission leaders the particular and strategic roles of Spiritual Care
5. Promote the process of ethical decision-making and theological reflection within the department and within the organization

VI.   **Professionalism**: knowledge, conduct, qualities, and capacity that characterize the profession of chaplain, based on professional and organizational standards and ethics and the best practices of the profession
1. View self as professional leader within organization, committed to build professional relationships
2. Possess the characteristic of being a skilled practitioner; an expert in
   2.1.1. Setting up an office
   2.1.2. Dressing the part
   2.1.3. Communication
   2.1.4. Transitioning
   2.1.5. Change management
   2.1.6. Expanding modalities
   2.1.7. Interaction (within all levels of the organization)
3. Demonstrate confidence in responding to challenges

4. Promote the professionalism of the chaplain and Spiritual Care department
5. Build relationships with key partners in organization and within the professional field

VII. **Quality**: desired outcome of a mission driven culture that exhibits excellence in going beyond the expectations of those being served.
1. Provide a quality of Spiritual Care services that is evidence-based, outcome-orientated, and consistent with national best practices
2. Promote quality as integral to the organization's mission and purpose
3. Be able to work with colleagues across interdisciplinary lines to create a healing culture of excellence
4. Demonstrate a quality of work that is mostly error free the first time with little waste of or redone work in areas of
   4.1. Metrics
   4.2. Cost Avoidance
   4.3. Continuous Quality Improvement
   4.4. Planning and Assessing

VIII. **Strategic Planning:** Capable of creating the new and different - to be actively involved in setting short term goals while at the same time being future orientated to establish long term goals.
1. Know current and possible future policies, practices, trends, technology and information affecting business and organization
2. Use available information and data in developing techniques to seek better performance
3. Anticipate future consequences and trends accurately
4. Possess broad knowledge and perspective
5. Create breakthrough strategies and plans
6. Utilize available information and data to forecast techniques to seek better performance

IX. **Technology acumen:** ability to use current and emerging technologies that underlie effective spiritual care management in today's world.
1. Possess competence in Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint or their equivalents
2. Know of system/organization softwares that, e.g.
   2.1. Monitor customer and personnel development
   2.2. Track productivity
   2.3. Create budgets and financial reports
3. Think and communicate as an expert in technology does, e.g.
   3.1. Identify problem and key considerations
   3.2. Group data into categories
4. Be aware of and open to new technologies that can contribute to, and/or impact, spiritual care
5. Advocate for information and communication technologies that can improve spiritual care, e.g.
   5.1. Templates for tracking Spiritual Care services
   5.2. Hand-held devices.