



# Competencies for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification

Part of the NACC Standards  
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Subcommittee on Certification for Ecclesial Ministry and Service  
Committee on Catholic Education

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## **National Association of Catholic Chaplains Competencies for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification**

The Applicant for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC) shall demonstrate mastery of 14 professional competencies, both experientially in the Applicant's practice and in the knowledgeable application of the palliative care and hospice literature. The demonstration of competency should reflect the advanced and specialized work required for palliative care and hospice beyond the skills and knowledge of the Board Certified Chaplain (BCC). The team will be looking for advanced practice and the special sensitivities, behaviors and unique concerns of the palliative care and hospice chaplain. While it is understood that an Applicant may be more experienced in a particular setting, such as home hospice or hospital-based palliative care, it is expected that the Applicant for BCC-PCHAC will demonstrate mastery across the continuum of palliative care and hospice.

Overarching Characteristics are foundational for advanced chaplaincy care which will be demonstrated through the Competencies:

- Understanding of and practice in all eight (8) domains of the National Consensus Project on Palliative Care.
- Exemplifies advanced transdisciplinary integrated practice.
- Reflects educated compassion-integrating the total pain, including medical, psycho-social, spiritual and emotional compassionate response.
- Demonstrates the ability to be an emotional broker while holding various emotions and facilitating communication.
- Offers ethical mediation, including but not limited to understanding of futile care.
- Provide moral distress diffusion for staff, care recipients and families.

### 601 Qualifications of Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification

QUA1: Full or Retired membership in the NACC.

QUA2: Board Certification as a NACC Chaplain or Educator for a minimum of one year.

QUA3: Direct clinical palliative care and/or hospice work experience spanning over three (3) years at a minimum of 520 hours per year.

QUA4: Completion of an intensive palliative care and/or hospice course equivalent to three (3) credit hours (45 hours).

QUA5: Suggested reading: Improving the Quality of Spiritual Care as a Dimension of Palliative Care: The Report of the Consensus Conference; Gone From My Sight: The Dying Experience; Hard Choices for Loving People: CPR, Artificial Feeding, Comfort Care, and the Patient with a Life-Threatening Illness.

### 602 Competencies of Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification

The applicant will demonstrate the ability to:

- 602.1 Integrate the history of the hospice movement and the subsequent expansion of palliative care while differentiating between the current philosophy and goals of palliative care and hospice in practice.

- 602.2 Familiarity with state and federal laws regarding Advance Directives and other end of life practices.
  - 602.3 Demonstrate an integrated knowledge of implications of medical treatment for life-threatening or life limiting illness as it impacts a patient's physical, psycho-social, emotional, and spiritual pain.
  - 602.4 Demonstrate utilization of family systems theory incorporated in the practice of palliative care and hospice as applied to care recipients, families and health care providers.
  - 602.5 Apply culturally appropriate, evidence-informed strategies for addressing the breadth and depth of multifaceted grief including complicated and anticipatory grief to extend to bereavement resources.
  - 602.6 Incorporate a working knowledge and integration of psycho-socio, emotional and spiritual perspectives to function as a communication and emotional expert in the practice of palliative and hospice care.
  - 602.7 Demonstrate effective communication and facilitation of goals of care family meetings that align treatment plans with patient's values and or advanced care plans.
  - 602.8 Demonstrate collaborative and facilitative leadership with care recipients, family, teams and organizations.
  - 602.9 Demonstrate best practices in palliative care and hospice spiritual assessment and documentation to facilitate aligning patient values and goals with the treatment plan.
  - 602.10 Demonstrate a working knowledge of the difference in the provision of advanced practice chaplaincy care as care recipients and families negotiate through the trajectory of a life-threatening illness in various settings.
  - 602.11 Demonstrate knowledge and skill in addressing ethical dilemmas at end of life and concerns as related to spiritual and/or religious issues.
  - 602.12 Demonstrate and model the ability to attend to the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of the transdisciplinary team.
  - 602.13 Demonstrates the ability to teach and educate through articulating and integrating current research of best practices for the provision of palliative care and hospice chaplaincy care.
  - 602.14 Participate in quality improvement projects and/or research to increase standard of palliative care and hospice care provided.
- 603 Requirements for the Maintenance of Advanced Certification (MNT)
- In order to maintain status of Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification, the chaplain must follow his/her current schedule for renewal of certification as a Board Certified Chaplain and meet the requirements for a chaplain with advanced certification. See Certification Procedures Manual – Part Five (Renewal of Certification).
- 604 Appeals of Certification Decisions (ACD)
- The individual seeking an appeal of a certification decision:
- ACD1 Has a right to a timely and complete review of a negative recommendation.

- ACD2 Has access to a certification appeals panel free from conflict of interest, and panel members shall not have participated in the original recommendation.
- ACD3 Submits a written request for an appeal based on the grounds that such recommendation was an alleged violation of the Competencies and/or Procedures.
- ACD4 Accepts the decision of the Certification Appeals Panel as final and binding for the association.