Certification Procedures Manual

Part Three – Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification Procedures

CP31  NACC Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC) Chaplains are Roman Catholics who manifest proficiency in utilizing Catholic theology, holistic care, and ethical principles within interdisciplinary palliative and end-of-life ministry through the development of specialized Competencies. Advanced Certification is determined by successful completion of one (1) of two (2) tracks.

**Track one (1)** consists of written materials and an interview in which the Applicant demonstrates proficiency and the Interview Team assesses the Applicant’s competency for Advanced Certification.

**Track two (2)** consists of the participation in a two (2) day Action/Reflection workshop where all Competencies will be demonstrated to obtain certification. At the completion of the Action/Reflection workshop, the Applicant is assessed on their learning of the Competencies to obtain Advanced Certification.

The Interview Team or Workshop Team recommends or does not recommend the Applicant to the Certification Commission for certification. It is the decision of the Certification Commission to certify or not to certify.

The NACC encourages Applicants for Advanced Certification to engage in a mentoring relationship with a NACC or BCCi Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certified Chaplain upon entering the certification process.

CP32  Prerequisites

321  Full membership in the NACC. (Qualification 601.QUA1)

322  Board Certification as a NACC Chaplain or Educator for a minimum of one year. (Qualification 601.QUA2)

323  Direct clinical palliative care and/or hospice work experience spanning over three (3) years at a minimum of 520 hours per year. (Qualification 601.QUA3)

324  Completion of an intensive palliative care and/or hospice course equivalent to three (3) credit hours (45 hours). (Qualification 601.QUA4)

325  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.
CP33 Procedures

Applicants may apply for Advanced Certification utilizing one (1) of two (2) tracks:
- Track One (1) – Written Application and Interview (see CP331 - CP334); or
- Track Two (2) – Action/Reflection Workshop (see CP335 – CP338).

331 Written Application and Interview Application Process – Track One (1)

331.1 The Applicant contacts the NACC National Office for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification materials.

331.2 The NACC National Office responds electronically within fourteen (14) days with links to the following materials:

331.2a Application for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification.
331.2b Checklist for Supportive Materials required for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification Interview.
331.2c NACC Certification Procedures Manual - Part Three (3).

331.3 Applicant submits the following written materials to the NACC National Office postmarked by the applicable deadline and retains a copy of all materials submitted, including the application form. All applicable materials must be formatted in single-spaced, 12-point type (Arial, Garamond, or Times New Roman), with one-inch margins. Materials are submitted in a three-ring 1-inch binder.

331.3a Completed application form.
331.3b The Advanced Certification application fee. (Reference CP332.3 for refund policy)
331.3c A three (3) to four (4) page Progression Essay describing the following:

331.3c1 The palliative care or hospice program in which the Applicant works, including the programs disciplines, organizational structure, number of palliative care or hospice consults per month, and the Applicant’s role in the palliative care or hospice program.
331.3c2 The Applicant in this work and how his/her own personal loss/grief informs his/her work. An account of the Applicant’s own life experience(s) of loss and grief that inform his/her patient-centered care provided at the end of life.
331.3c3 The Applicant’s pursuit of palliative care and hospice certification.

331.3d Ten (10) to twelve (12) page Major Essay incorporating all of the Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification Competencies. The major essay has three (3) required components including:

331.3d1 Theory and practice of chaplaincy care in palliative care and hospice ministry.
331.3d2 Case presentation that is comprehensive in scope of care address, but not limited to, an evolving, comprehensive spiritual plan of care; progression of spiritual practice over the case; and integration of chaplaincy care to enhance other palliative care and hospice disciplines in providing holistic service to patient and/or family.

331.3d3 Written demonstration of participation in a quality improvement (QI) process that enhances the delivery of chaplaincy care in palliative care and hospice.

331.3e Three (3) current letters of recommendation in total. One (1) from the Applicant’s palliative care and/or hospice supervisor. And, two (2) from palliative care and/or hospice interdisciplinary care team members (limited to one (1) chaplain colleague who served with the Applicant).

The letters must include the quality of the Applicant’s interaction with patients, families and team members as well as the Applicant’s team collaboration, leadership and educational contributions within a hospice and palliative care team. Each letter is to be submitted directly to the NACC National Office by the person making the recommendation. Each letter is to be a signed original on letterhead. Current is defined as within one (1) year of application for certification.

331.3f If applicable, reports from each previous PCHAC interview and/or Action Reflection workshop.

332 NACC National Office Action – Track One (1)

332.1 Upon receipt of Applicant materials, the NACC National Office starts a file on the Applicant and reviews the Applicant’s materials in order to assess the completion of Certification Procedures 331.3a through 331.3f.

332.2 The NACC National Office forwards Applicant materials to the PCHAC Review Team who evaluates the materials and determines whether the Applicant meets the requirements to move forward with an interview. The PCHAC Review Team is comprised of NACC and BCCi Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certified Chaplains.

332.3 If any materials are missing or deemed unacceptable, the Applicant will have the opportunity to:

332.3a Continue in the certification process with the understanding that if they are denied advanced certification that no refund of application fee will occur, or

332.3b Withdraw their application for advanced certification and not proceed to an interview. Applicant will receive a full refund of the application fee. If application is withdrawn all documents are destroyed except those documents cited below in CP334.5.

332.4 If an interview is scheduled, the NACC National Office sends the Applicant:
332.4a  The names of the interview team.
332.4b  The date, time, and location of the interview.

332.5  The Applicant reviews interview team names for potential conflict of interest and alerts the NACC National Office if any conflict exists.

332.6  The NACC National Office sends a complete copy of materials 331.3a-331.3f (excluding 331.3b) to members of the interview team via electronic communication methods.

333  Interview Process – Track One (1)

333.1  The Advanced Certification interview is an interview in which the Applicant meets with an advanced practice chaplain interview team to determine if the Applicant meets the Competencies for the Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC).

333.2  The interview team is composed of a maximum of four (4) NACC or BCCi Board Certified Chaplains with Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification.

333.3  The interview team meets to collaboratively draft the Presenter’s Report Part I.

333.4  The Interview Team prepares and makes available the Presenter’s Report Part I to the Applicant seven (7) days prior to the interview.

333.5  The interview lasts approximately sixty (60) minutes.

333.6  Following the interview, the team deliberates and decides to either recommend or not to recommend the Applicant to the Certification Commission for Advanced Certification.

333.7  Within five (5) days of the deliberation process, the Applicant is provided an oral summary of the team’s recommendation. A written report of the team’s recommendation (Presenter’s Report Part II) will be sent to the Applicant within twenty-one (21) days of the interview.

333.8  The Presenter’s Report Part II, of this process, as well as the Presenter’s Report Part I, is forwarded to the Certification Commission for action.

334  Certification Commission Action – Track One (1)

334.1  The Certification Commission reviews Presenter’s Reports, Part I and II, and the recommendation of the interview team and determines whether the Applicant meets the Competencies for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC).

334.2  The Presenter’s Report Part II and the Certification Commission’s decision to grant or to deny the advanced certification is communicated to the Applicant within thirty (30) days of the Certification Commission’s action.

334.2a When advanced certification is granted, the Applicant receives a notification packet. The certificate is presented at the Missioning Ceremony of those newly certified during the Eucharistic Celebration at the next annual conference. If the Applicant is unable to attend the ceremony, or upon request, the certificate is mailed.

334.2b When advanced certification is denied, the Applicant has a right to appeal the decision (Competency 617.ACD) or reapply for advanced certification. Information about the appeals process is included with the notification of denial of advanced certification. The NACC National Office maintains a copy of the Applicant’s materials until the time of appeal has lapsed. If the Applicant decides to apply again, all PCHAC Competencies will be considered in subsequent interview(s) and/or Action/Reflection Workshops.

334.3 When an Applicant is granted advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following in its long-term certification files:

334.3a The Advanced Certification Application.
334.3b A copy of the certificate.
334.3c Interview Team Reports, Part I and II.
334.3d A copy of the NACC letter confirming advanced certification.
334.3e Certification Waivers (if applicable).
334.3f The Chaplain Notification Form.
334.3g Copies of the notification letters.
All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.

334.4 When an Applicant is denied advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following items in its electronic certification files:

334.4a The Advanced Certification Application.
334.4b Interview Team Reports, Part I and II.
334.4c A copy of the NACC letter denying advanced certification.
334.4d Certification Waivers (if applicable).

334.5 When the Applicant withdraws their application or is denied advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following items in its temporary files for the period of time indicated:

334.5a Three (3) current letters of recommendation in total. One from the Applicant’s palliative care and/or hospice supervisor. And, two (2) from palliative care and/or hospice interdisciplinary care team members (limited to one (1) chaplain colleague who served with the Applicant).
All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.
335 Action/Reflection Workshop Application Process – Track Two (2)

335.1 The Applicant contacts the NACC National Office for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification materials.

335.2 The NACC National Office responds electronically within fourteen (14) days with links to the following materials:

- Application for Palliative Care Hospice Advanced Certification Action/Reflection workshop.
- Checklist for Supportive Materials required for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification Action/Reflection workshop.
- Brochure for Advanced Certification Action/Reflection workshop.

335.3 Applicant submits electronically, in order and in one (1) email, the following written materials (except for the letters of recommendation) to the NACC National Office by the applicable deadline and retains a copy of all materials submitted, including the application form. All applicable materials must be formatted in single-spaced, 12-point type (Arial, Garamond, or Times New Roman), with one-inch margins.

- Completed application form.
- The Advanced Certification application fee. (Reference CP332.3 for refund policy)
- A three (3) to four (4) page Progression Essay describing the following:
  - The palliative care or hospice program in which the Applicant works, including the programs’ disciplines, organizational structure, number of palliative care or hospice consults per month, and the Applicant’s role in the palliative care or hospice program.
  - The Applicant in this work and how his/her own personal loss/grief informs his/her work. An account of the Applicant’s own life experience(s) of loss and grief that inform his/her patient-centered care provided at the end of life.
  - The Applicant’s pursuit of palliative care and hospice certification.
- Three (3) current letters of recommendation in total. One from the Applicant’s palliative care and/or hospice supervisor. And, two (2) from palliative care and/or hospice interdisciplinary care team members (limited to one (1) chaplain colleague who served with the Applicant).

The letters must include the quality of the Applicant’s interaction with patients, families and team members as well as the Applicant’s team collaboration, leadership and educational contributions within
a hospice and palliative care team. Each letter is to be submitted directly to the NACC National Office by the person making the recommendation. Each letter is to be a signed original on letterhead. Current is defined as within one (1) year of application for certification.

336 NACC National Office Action – Track Two (2)

336.1 Upon receipt of Applicant materials, the NACC National Office starts a file on the Applicant and reviews the Applicant’s materials in order to assess the completion of Certification Procedures 335.3a through 335.3d.

336.2 The NACC National Office forwards Applicant materials to the Action/Reflection Workshop team who evaluates the materials and determines whether or not the Applicant meets the requirements to move forward with participation in the Action Reflection Workshop. Applicants should not make travel arrangements until accepted to the Action/Reflection Workshop.

336.3 If any materials are missing or deemed unacceptable, the Applicant will have the opportunity to:

336.3a Continue in the certification process with the understanding that if they are denied advanced certification that no refund of application fee will occur, or

336.3b Withdraw their application for advanced certification and not proceed with the Action/Reflection workshop registration. Applicant will receive a full refund of the application fee. If application is withdrawn all documents are destroyed except those documents cited below in CP338.5.

336.4 If materials are deemed complete and acceptable, the Applicant will be registered for the Action/Reflection workshop and receive workshop information via email.

337 Action/Reflection Workshop Process – Track Two (2)

337.1 The Action/Reflection Workshop is an in-person workshop in which the Applicant demonstrates the competencies through experiential learning, practicing, and teaching.

337.2 The Action/Reflection Workshop is up to two (2) days in length.

337.3 The Action/Reflection Workshop is be led by a Workshop Team, comprised of two (2) to three (3) PCHAC presenters, who will assess if an Applicant meets the Competencies for the Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC).

337.4 The Workshop team considers all written materials as well as the content and the dynamics of workshop participation in determining its recommendation for certification.
337.5 Upon completion of the Action/Reflection Workshop, the Workshop team will deliberate and decide to either recommend or not to recommend the Applicant to the Certification Commission for Advanced Certification.

337.6 Following the deliberation process, the Applicant is provided an oral summary of the team’s recommendations. A written report of the team’s recommendation will be sent to the Applicant within twenty-one (21) days of the interview.

337.7 The written Action/Reflection Workshop Report is forwarded to the Certification Commission for action.

338 Certification Commission Action – Track Two (2)

338.1 The Certification Commission reviews the Applicant’s Action/Reflection Workshop Report and the recommendation of the Action/Reflection Workshop team and determines whether the Applicant meets the Competencies for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC).

338.2 The Action/Reflection Workshop Report and the Certification Commission’s decision to grant or deny advanced certification are communicated to the Applicant within thirty (30) days of the Certification Commission’s action.

338.2a When advanced certification is granted, the Applicant receives a notification packet. The certificate is presented at the Missioning Ceremony of those newly certified during the Eucharistic Celebration at the next annual conference. If the Applicant is unable to attend the ceremony, or upon request, the certificate is mailed.

338.2b When advanced certification is denied, the Applicant has a right to appeal the decision (Competency 617.ACD) or reapply for certification. Information about the appeals process is included with the notification of denial of certification. The NACC National Office maintains a copy of the Applicant’s materials until the time of appeal has lapsed. If the Applicant decides to apply again, all PCHAC Competencies will be considered in subsequent Action/Reflection Workshops and/or interviews.

338.3 When an Applicant is granted advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following in its long-term certification files:

338.3a The Advanced Certification Application.
338.3b A copy of the certificate.
338.3c A copy of the NACC letter confirming advanced certification.
338.3d The Chaplain Notification Form.
338.3e Copies of the notification letters.

All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.
338.4 When an Applicant is denied advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following items in its electronic certification files:

338.4a The Advanced Certification Application.
338.4c A copy of the NACC letter denying advanced certification.

338.5 When the Applicant is denied advanced certification, is not accepted for the workshop, or does complete the workshop, the NACC National Office retains the following items in its temporary files for the period of time indicated:

338.5a Three (3) current letters of recommendation in total. One from the Applicant’s palliative care and/or hospice supervisor. And, two (2) from palliative care and/or hospice interdisciplinary care team members (limited to one (1) chaplain colleague who served with the Applicant). Current is defined as within one (1) year of application for certification.

All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.