

STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION

ROMAN CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINS

The Standards are for Roman Catholic Applicants who wish to present for Certification by the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board

These Standards are set by the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB) and approved for use by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference

These Standards are effective from January 1, 2018

The Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB)

The HCB is a Sub Committee of the Council for Healthcare of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference

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INTRODUCTION

Catholic healthcare chaplains are called to embody the Church's caring ministry to persons who are suffering because of illness, trauma or tragedy. Embracing the new evangelization, they offer joyful witness to a tradition firmly grounded in Christ's mission of hope, healing and justice. Their pastoral outreach is underpinned by a comprehensive vision of the human person as an integrated whole, created in the image and likeness of God with unique dignity and purpose, and with an eternal destiny. Chaplains engage compassionately with individual human persons, family members and loved ones, and professional colleagues whose lives are shaken and human circumstances changed by painful and frightening health-related conditions and experiences. Spiritually inspired, theologically educated, ethically informed and professionally competent, Catholic healthcare chaplains serve as conduits and instruments of God's mercy to those whose lives are touched by any form of sickness or fragility.

An authentic response to the vocation of Catholic healthcare chaplains is rooted in a desire to continue the healing ministry of Christ as it finds expression in the faith and tradition of the Church. Through its chaplains, the Church collaborates with Government and other stakeholders in providing holistic care in public, voluntary and private healthcare facilities throughout the island of Ireland. Catholic healthcare chaplains are at the forefront of the Church's mission and have a privileged and important role. In an increasingly secularised societal milieu, chaplains facilitate an experience of Christ's healing and redeeming outreach, offering care, comfort and accompaniment through presence, word and sacrament.

Serving an increasingly more diverse population, Irish healthcare services are stretched to respond to growing healthcare needs and demands in the face of inadequate resources and investment. Within a shifting paradigm in twenty-first century Ireland, Catholic healthcare chaplains engage compassionately and confidently with the changes in health needs, and in healthcare structures and policies as inevitable challenges rather than as obstacles. Negotiating a complex and transitioning health system, they contribute toward a culture of care that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive, and at the service of persons of diverse cultural, racial, ethnic and religious/spiritual traditions. They are especially attentive to the advocacy needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

In an era of unprecedented movement and displacement of people globally with its adverse health consequences, chaplains are particularly attuned and attentive to the health needs, traditions and human rights of a growing migrant and refugee presence, and the desire of many in that community for spiritual care and integration. Catholic healthcare chaplains are acutely aware of the reality of human fragility and frailty, often most visible among those who are marginalized and isolated within the societal and cultural context. They are committed to exercising a faith-filled prophetic role that witnesses to merciful love, justice, hope and healing, often in the wake of raw experiences of violence, abandonment, neglect and isolation, which militate against health and wholeness.

Catholic Healthcare Chaplains are trained within the complexity and diversity of the multi-cultural healthcare milieu. Focused on providing quality spiritual care and emotional support in the face of intense suffering, grief and bereavement, chaplains work in collaboration with multi-disciplinary healthcare colleagues in the provision of holistic healthcare. They are especially attentive to the pastoral needs and wishes of those who are terminally ill or actively dying, offering sensitive and comforting outreach and sacramental care, and facilitating religious rituals as appropriate in an increasingly multi-faith and multi-cultural context. The practice of Catholic healthcare chaplaincy necessarily involves the attainment and maintenance of appropriate levels of personal maturity, of spiritual growth and formation, and of theological, ethical and professional competence.

The Catholic Church is conscious of the intense need for, and importance of high quality pastoral care within healthcare institutions and faith communities. Certification requires that one is a committed and theologically grounded Catholic whose life is nurtured through a living faith and Christian spirituality. These Standards of Certification aim at ensuring that candidates for certification have a clear understanding and appreciation of the privileged role and responsibility of Catholic healthcare chaplains, and that they demonstrate the ability to minister with the required levels of formation and competence within a diversity of clinical environments.

In order to maintain certification and to remain in good standing with the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB), chaplains are required to engage with, and to document forty hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) annually.

Standards for Certification in Catholic Healthcare Chaplaincy are reviewed every four years.

STANDARD 1: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

1.1 Theology and Theory of Pastoral Care

The candidate for certification will demonstrate:

- 1.1.1 an understanding of canon law and church discipline as it relates to pastoral care, chaplaincy and the administration of the sacraments (cf Book II and Book IV Code of Canon Law 1983);
- 1.1.2 an ability to articulate a Catholic theology of pastoral care that is integrated with a recognised theory of pastoral practice;
- 1.1.3 an understanding of scripture, moral theology, ecclesiology, sacramental theology and Catholic Social Teaching;
- 1.1.4 a knowledge of bioethics, and an ability to incorporate a working knowledge of ethics appropriate to the pastoral context;
- 1.1.5 a working knowledge of psychological and sociological disciplines, and of religious beliefs and practices in the provision of pastoral care;
- 1.1.6 a capacity to integrate the spiritual and emotional dimensions of human development into the practice of pastoral care.

1.2. Personal and Spiritual Identity

The candidate for certification will demonstrate the ability to:

- 1.2.1 articulate a spirituality nurtured through prayer and sacraments, and grounded in a relationship with God, self and others as a practising member of the Church community
- 1.2.2 function pastorally in a manner that respects the physical, emotional and spiritual boundaries of others;
- 1.2.3 use pastoral authority appropriately;
- 1.2.4 identify one's professional strengths and limitations in the provision of pastoral care;
- 1.2.5 be self-reflective;
- 1.2.6 articulate ways in which one's feelings, attitudes values and assumption affect one's care;
- 1.2.7 advocate for the persons in one's care;
- 1.2.8 attend to one's own spiritual, emotional and physical well-being;
- 1.2.9 communicate effectively orally and in writing;
- 1.2.10 present oneself in a manner that reflects professional behaviour.

1.3. Practice of Pastoral Care

The candidate for certification will demonstrate the ability to:

- 1.3.1 establish, deepen and terminate pastoral relationships with sensitivity, openness and respect;
- 1.3.2 offer and provide effective pastoral care and support that contributes to the well-being of patients, their families, and staff;
- 1.3.3 offer and provide pastoral care to persons experiencing loss and grief;
- 1.3.4 offer pastoral care resources appropriate to the care of patients, families, and staff that respects diversity and difference;
- 1.3.5 develop, coordinate and facilitate the celebration of liturgy, public worship, and spiritual practices appropriate to diverse settings and needs;
- 1.3.6 facilitate theological reflection in the practice of pastoral care;
- 1.3.7 triage and manage crisis in the practice of pastoral care.

1.4. Professional Competence

The candidate for certification will demonstrate the ability to:

- 1.4.1 promote the integration of pastoral care in the life and service of the healthcare institution;
- 1.4.2 establish and maintain professional and interdisciplinary relationships;
- 1.4.3 build peer relationships for the purpose of collaboration and active participation in the creation and maintenance of a healthy work environment;
- 1.4.4 adhere to the recognised standards for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults;
- 1.4.5 articulate an understanding of institutional culture and systems, and systemic relationships;
- 1.4.6 articulate a conceptual understanding of group dynamics and organizational behaviour;
- 1.4.7 support, promote, and encourage ethical decision-making and care, and document one's contribution of care effectively in the appropriate records;
- 1.4.8 foster a collaborative relationship with parish clergy and faith group leaders.

STANDARD 2: CERTIFICATION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

- 1.5 Candidates for certification require a Primary Degree in Catholic Theology that meets the requirements as laid down in **Appendix I:** (NFQ Level 8).
- 1.6 The theological appointee of the Irish Bishops' Conference to the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board will evaluate all theological requirements for certification in healthcare chaplaincy and advise the board accordingly. (c/f Appendix I).
- 1.7 All queries in relation to qualifications in theology must be submitted in writing to the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board. Such queries will be referred to the Irish Bishops' Conference theological appointee who shall advise the Board accordingly.
- 1.8 **RECIPROCITY:** Candidates, who are certified as healthcare chaplains in countries which have a reciprocal certification arrangement with Ireland, are required to undertake a familiarisation programme following consultation with the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board.

APPENDIX I:

THEOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION OF CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINS

1. It is the role of the theologian appointed to the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB) by the Irish Bishops' Conference to evaluate all theological qualifications of applicants for certification and to advise the Board accordingly.
2. **Level and duration of theology course**
Candidates for certification must possess a **Primary Degree in Theology** (NFQ Level 8). The degree programme must be of three years duration or equivalent. Each year of the degree programme must contain elements of theology.
3. **Minimum theology**
It is required that 35% of the applicant's primary degree is in Theology.
4. **Degree course content: specific requirements for Catholic healthcare chaplains**
In addition to Systematic Theology, Moral Theology, Scripture and Liturgy there are some areas of study required, which are specific to Catholic Healthcare Chaplaincy. These include:
 - 4.1 Specific consideration to the ecclesial nature of sacraments and ministry;
 - 4.2 Sacramental ministry: Pastoral practice and Catholic regulations surrounding the administration of the sacraments;
 - 4.3 Bioethics / Moral Theology;
 - 4.4 Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Dialogue.

APPENDIX II:

2. INTERVIEW PROCESS

2.1 In order to be certified as a Catholic Healthcare Chaplain the applicant must submit to the Secretary, Healthcare Chaplaincy Board as follows:

PHASE 1: APPLICATION

Application submitted on line

Documents required:

1. Completed application form
2. Degree parchment copy and transcript of primary degree (three year degree programme (NFQ Level 8) in which theology/theological studies is a core component)
3. Degree parchment copy and transcript for M.A. in Healthcare Chaplaincy & Supervisor's Report

or

Certificates for 3 CPE Units (two units in an acute general hospital and one unit at advanced level)

or

Ordination to the Priesthood following third level seminary pastoral formation; approved by the Irish Episcopal Conference. Priest candidates will also need 5 years pastoral experience with evidence of supervision

4. A recommendation from Local Ordinary (for priests), from Religious Superior, Congregational, Provincial or Regional (for religious and members of societies of apostolic life), from a member of the clergy in local parish (for lay persons).
5. Fee of 200 euros (after an applicant has been granted an interview the fee is non-refundable).

PHASE 11: SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL OF REQUIRED WRITTEN MATERIALS

1. Candidate is notified of Chairperson and members of interview team
2. Candidate sends the following to each member of the interview panel

Documents required:

- Detailed curriculum vitae
- PMAHC transcript for pastoral practice or copy of supervisor's evaluation of the candidate's final unit of CPE
- Evidence of current safeguarding training (children and vulnerable adults)
- Autobiographical history (1,000 words)
- A paper demonstrating the candidate's understanding and integration of each of the competencies listed in Standard 1 – Standards for Certification, Catholic Healthcare Chaplains(10 pages max)
- Four papers, each 1,000 words in length. Each paper to demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of and integration in practice of:
 - (i) Theology and Pastoral Practice
 - (ii) Theology and Practice of Sacramental Ministry to the Sick
 - (iii) Ministry in a Multi-faith Context
 - (iv) Bioethics and Moral Theology

All papers must follow the HCB's citation conventions. {Chicago manual of style (available online), (bibliographies and appendices not included in word count)}

GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS

Papers to illustrate and demonstrate the following:

- Articulate spirituality nurtured through prayer and sacraments, and grounded in relationship with God, self and others as a practicing member of the Church community;
- Identify one's professional strengths and limitations in the provision of pastoral care;
- Articulate ways in which one's feelings/ attitudes/ values and assumptions affect one's pastoral care;
- Demonstrate how one attends to one's own physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing including evidence of reflective practice.
- Evidence of one's concept of healthcare chaplaincy; in which he/she articulates an understanding of the healthcare system, institutional culture and systems and systemic relationships.
- Indicates how professional and interdisciplinary relationships are established and maintained and how to build peer relationships for the purpose of collaboration and active participation in the creation and maintenance of a healthy work environment. Demonstrates the ability to promote the integration of pastoral/spiritual care in the healthcare context;
- Incorporate a working knowledge of ethics appropriate to the healthcare context.

- Demonstrate how one functions pastorally in a manner that respects the physical, emotional and spiritual boundaries of others and uses pastoral authority appropriately.

PHASE 111: INTERVIEW

Subsequent to the consideration of required documentation the candidate may be offered a certification interview

Candidates who are unsuccessful in their certification interview may re-apply on a further one occasion. The report(s) from the previous certification panel(s) must be included as part of the application form for the subsequent interviews.

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW PANEL

The panel shall be appointed by the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB).

Candidates will be assessed according to their ability to demonstrate the required competencies as outlined in these Standards. An interview is granted only after the certification panel is satisfied that the required standard of competencies has been demonstrated in the submitted written material.

After the interview process the result of the interview shall be sent by the chairperson of the interview panel to the secretary of the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board. The result of the interview shall be notified to the candidate after ratification by the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board. All documents are then returned to the candidate.

APPENDIX 1V: ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS

Please see below accountability requirements for Catholic Healthcare Chaplains:

1. **Accountable to:** Local Bishop and Diocesan authority that have oversight for all Catholic Ministry within the Diocese.
2. **Accountable to:** The Healthcare facility where the Healthcare Chaplain is employed
3. **Accountable to:** The Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB) – Certifying body. The accountability requirement is 40 CPD hours annually which is mandatory in order to maintain certification.

Contact Details for the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB)

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