

STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION

ROMAN CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINS



The Standards are for Roman Catholic Applicants who 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

Standards effective from January 1, 2023

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

The Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB) is the body with responsibility for the Certification of Roman Catholic Healthcare Chaplains. Healthcare chaplains bring Christ's ministry of care and compassion in the 'thin places' between life and death. They share the joyful witness of Christ's mission of hope and healing through listening and presence, word and sacrament.

The healthcare chaplain is the spiritual care specialist in the health care team. They support patients, families, their caregivers and staff to draw on their spiritual, religious, emotional, and cultural resources, as well as their personal values to cope with their experiences in the health care context. They are unique and essential members of the interdisciplinary team with the goal of providing person-centered care.

Pastoral ministry 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. The work of healthcare chaplains around meaning-making, and their abilities to support people in the midst of difficult and traumatic events make healthcare chaplaincy a unique and privileged role.

Healthcare chaplains require theological and clinical pastoral education to prepare them to foster meaningful interpersonal relations with persons of all backgrounds while remaining grounded in their own faith tradition. Healthcare chaplains also require counselling and relationship skills and the leadership skills required to navigate the organizations where they work.

Catholic Healthcare Chaplains are trained within the complexity and diversity of the multi-cultural healthcare environment. They are focused on providing quality pastoral care in the face of intense suffering, grief and bereavement. Healthcare chaplains require the highest level of personal maturity, spiritual growth as well as theological, ethical and professional competence.

The objective of these Standards for Certification is to ensure that candidates have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities. To maintain certification with the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB), chaplains are required to document forty hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) annually (see: www.catholicbishops.ie/healthcare/).

PHASE I: Requirements for Application

Healthcare Chaplaincy Board Certification in Healthcare Chaplaincy (Board Certified Chaplain)

1. Theological Qualification:

Undergraduate Primary Degree in Theology from a Recognised Institute and accepted by the HCB.

2. Qualification in Practical Theology and Pastoral Practice:

One of the following Qualifications:

- (i) Post Graduate Higher Diploma in Pastoral Theology (Healthcare Chaplaincy) from St. Patrick's, The Pontifical University, Maynooth, Kildare (NFQ Level 8).
- (ii) Masters in Pastoral Theology (Healthcare Chaplaincy) from St. Patrick's, The Pontifical University, Maynooth, Kildare (NFQ Level 8), or at another Educational University recognised by the HCB.
- (iii) Ordination to the priesthood with seminary pastoral formation approved by the Irish Episcopal Conference. Currently in active pastoral ministry. Priest candidates are required to have pastoral experience in the Irish context and evidence of Pastoral Supervision of practice.
- (iv) Provide documentation of a minimum of three Units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) from an Accredited CPE Centre. Two units of Clinical Pastoral Education to take place in an Acute General Hospital, and one unit at Advanced Level II.

3. Endorsement:

Provide documentation of current endorsement or good standing 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 (for non-ordained persons)

STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Standard 1. Integration of Theology and Theory of Pastoral Care

The candidate for certification must:

- 1.1 Articulate Catholic theology that is rooted in the Roman Catholic faith tradition and that is integrated with a theory of pastoral practice.
- 1.2 Articulate 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).
- 1.3 Incorporate an understanding of Scripture, Moral Theology, Ecclesiology, Sacramental Theology, and Catholic Social Teaching.
- 1.4 Articulate a knowledge of Bioethics, and an ability to incorporate a working knowledge of Ethics appropriate to the pastoral context.
- 1.5 Incorporate a working knowledge of religious beliefs and practices and psychological and sociological disciplines, in the provision of pastoral care.
- 1.6 Incorporate a capacity to integrate the spiritual and emotional dimensions of human development into the practice of pastoral care.

Standard 2. Professional and Spiritual Identity

The candidate for certification must:

- 2.1 Demonstrate 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.
- 2.2 Use pastoral authority appropriately and function pastorally in a manner that respects the physical, emotional and spiritual boundaries of others.
- 2.3 Be self-reflective and identify one's professional strengths and limitations in the provision of pastoral care.
- 2.4 Articulate ways in which personal feelings, attitudes, values and assumptions affect one's care.

- 2.5 Facilitate theological/spiritual reflection in the practice of pastoral care and be acquainted with the use of tools and instruments for spiritual assessments, interventions, outcomes, care plans to provide an effective service.
- 2.6 Develop, coordinate and preside at the celebration of liturgy and spiritual practices appropriate to diverse healthcare settings.

Standard 3. Professional Practice and Competencies

The candidate for certification will demonstrate the ability to:

- 3.1 Have a capacity for empathetic listening and reflective practice as core competencies for ministry.
- 3.2 Establish, deepen and conclude professional pastoral relationships with sensitivity, openness, compassion and respect.
- 3.3 Articulate ways in which one's feelings, attitudes, values, and assumptions affect professional practice.
- 3.4 Provide effective pastoral care that contributes to the well-being of patients, their families, and staff including persons experiencing loss and grief. Triage and manage crises in the practice of pastoral care.
- 3.5 Provide effective pastoral care that respects diversity and differences.
- 3.6 Attend to one's own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being, and present oneself in a manner that reflects professional behaviour.

Standard 4. Organisational Leadership Competencies

The candidate for certification will demonstrate the ability to:

- 4.1 Promote the integration of a pastoral care service in the organisation.
- 4.2 Establish and maintain professional and interdisciplinary relationships. Build peer relationships for the purpose of collaboration and active participation in the creation and maintenance of a healthy work environment.

- 4.3 Articulate an understanding of institutional culture and systems, and systemic relationships; articulate a conceptual understanding of group dynamics and organizational behaviour.
- 4.4 Support, promote, and encourage ethical decision-making and care, and document one's contribution of care effectively in the appropriate records; foster a collaborative relationship with parish clergy and other faith and non-faith leaders.
- 4.5 Adhere to the recognised standards for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons.
- 4.6 Communicate effectively, orally (English) and in writing, and present oneself in a manner that reflects professional behaviour including dress code.

THEOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

Level and Duration of Theology Degree

Candidates for certification must possess a Primary Degree in Theology (NFQ Level 8).

It is required that the primary degree of the applicant must include 35% theology, including courses of theology in each academic year.

Apart from the Sacred Scripture, Liturgy, Systematic Theology, Moral Theology and Canon Law the following components which are specific to Catholic Healthcare Chaplaincy are to be incorporated in the academic formation. These include:

- Ecclesial nature specific to sacraments and ministry
- Catholic regulations of pastoral practices surrounding the administration of the sacraments
- Bioethics / Moral Theology;
- Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Dialogue.

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.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR CERTIFICATION

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

Application Form:

Application Form available from
www.irishcatholicbishops.ie/pastoralcare/healthcare

Theological Qualification:

Copy of Degree Parchment and Transcript of Primary Degree.

Qualification in Practical Theology and Pastoral Practice:

Copies of Degree/Diploma Transcripts, or Certificates for One of the following Qualifications:

- (i) Post Graduate Higher Diploma in Pastoral Theology (Healthcare Chaplaincy) from St. Patrick's, The Pontifical University Maynooth (NFQ Level 8);
- (ii) Masters in Pastoral Theology (Healthcare Chaplaincy) from St. Patrick's, The Pontifical University Maynooth (NFQ 8); or at another Educational University recognised by the HCB.
- (iii) Three Units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) from Accredited CPE Centres: Two of which take at a University Teaching Hospital, and One of which is at Advanced Level;
- (iv) Ordination to the Priesthood following third level seminary pastoral formation; approved by the Irish Episcopal Conference. Priest candidates will also need 5 years of pastoral experience with evidence of supervision.

Recommendation:

A letter of 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 (for lay persons).

Fee:

The application fee: After an applicant has been granted a dialogue process the fee is non-refundable.

PHASE II: THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN MATERIALS

1. A Candidate is notified of the chairperson and members of dialogue process panel.
2. The Candidate sends the following documents to each member of the panel:
 - Curriculum Vitae
 - PMAHC transcript for pastoral practice or copy of supervisor's evaluation of the candidate's third (advanced level) unit of Clinical Pastoral Education.
 - Evidence of current Safeguarding Training (children and vulnerable adults).
 - Autobiographical History
 - A written paper demonstrating the candidate's understanding and integration of the competencies as listed in Standard 1.
 - Four written 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 - bibliographies and appendices not included in word count).

Papers to 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 well-being 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, mental, emotional and spiritual boundaries of others and uses pastoral authority appropriately.

PHASE II: THE CERTIFICATION DIALOGUE PROCESS

A certification dialogue process is granted only after the panel is satisfied that the required standard of competencies has been demonstrated in the submitted written material.

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

After the certification dialogue process the result of the panel will be sent by the chairperson to the secretary of the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board. The result will be notified in writing to the candidate after ratification by the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board. Following the dialogue process all documentation will be held for one month.

Any appeal must be made within this period.

Candidates who are unsuccessful in their certification dialogue process may re-apply on a further one occasion. The report from the previous certification panel must be included as part of the application form.

It is yearly requirement of 40 Continuous Professional Development (CPD) hours annually to maintain Certification as a Board Certified Chaplain by the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board.

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

Review History

Date	Review No.	Change	Ref. Section	Consulted with: