



ACPE RESEARCH NETWORK

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A Message from the ACPE Interim Executive Director

Greetings to our Research Leaders:

I was recently at a meeting of the member organizations of the Spiritual Care Collaborative as well as other interested organizations for the purpose of considering a project that needs doing together, that cannot be done by any one organization! What would you have chosen? Interestingly enough, on the day of the meeting, an article appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* on chaplaincy. It was called: "Bigger Roles for Chaplains on Patient Medical Teams," by Laura Landro.

There was an unusual opportunity that presented itself as we met – the chance to communicate back to the editor of the *WSJ* our joint appreciation for the article and offer a photo of our organizations' leadership. Laura responded back to us appreciatively. The story behind this story is our difficulty in truly embracing this opportunity.

An excerpt from the article:

Studies have shown that many transplant patients experience enhanced appreciation for life, re-ordered priorities, increased empathy and higher self-esteem. Yet they also often report lower spiritual well-being. "Negative religious coping"—feeling angry, unloved or abandoned by God, or doubting one's beliefs—has been associated with anxiety, depression and poorer social and emotional well-being. [*Wall Street Journal*, December 6, 2011; Section D3]

We are all eager to live out of the sense that we know the above to be true, yet we often leave the research to other professions. We cannot afford to do that. We must see research as our bread and butter in the world in which we want to serve – and to keep securing the basis to serve. Thanks for your leadership and faithfulness in bringing the issues to us.

Deryck Durston
Interim Executive Director, ACPE

Join the Research Network

The Research Network is for EVERYONE, and the resources of our website are freely available to all who are interested in the many ways that chaplains can better understand the work of pastoral care and CPE through scientific inquiry.

Supervisors, students, and clinical members are invited to browse our Articles-of-the-Month and to read the *Newsletters* for the latest developments in the field and for links to other sites. A special section offers guidance for incorporating research into CPE curricula.

You can support the Network by discussing and promoting research with peers and by becoming an active member. Individual memberships are \$20; institutional memberships are \$50. For more information, contact the Network Convener, John Ehman, at john.ehman@uphs.upenn.edu

100+ Key Articles Summarized with Guidance for Discussion

Our website highlights published studies of value to students, supervisors, staff chaplains, and researchers. Topics include:

- Burnout and Secondary Traumatic Stress in Chaplains
- Effect of Patients' Spiritual Concerns on Patient Satisfaction
- How Muslim & Non-Muslim Chaplains Serve Muslim Patients
- Patients' Spiritual Needs & Medical Costs at the End of Life
- Views of God as Predictive of HIV Disease Progression
- Chaplains' Access to Medical Records
- Chaplains & Disenfranchised Grief
- Distress re: Cancer --Using a Chaplain's Assessment
- Perspectives on Chaplaincy from Physicians & Chaplains
- Effect of Pastoral Care Services on Religious Coping
- Chaplains' *Presence* and Patients' Hopefulness
- The Provision of Chaplaincy Services in US Hospitals
- Patients' Expectations of Hospital Chaplains
- Mystical Experience in the Context of Health Care
- Differentiating Spiritual Experiences from Psychoses
- Spirituality vs. Secular Meditation re: Pain Outcomes
- Spirituality/Religion & Cognitive Decline in Alzheimer's
- JCOPE Measure of Religious Coping in Jewish Populations
- Prayer Books, in which Chapel Visitors Write Prayers

Articles are paired with *Suggestions for Discussion* and lists of *Related Items of Interest* for further reading.

Ideal Intervention Paper Project

The formal knowledge base of effective spiritual care interventions has traditionally been found in textbooks and manuals that take a deductive, "top down" approach to chaplaincy practice. In contrast, the Ideal Intervention Project (IIP) is building a comprehensive, publicly accessible database of examples of chaplains' work from the "bottom up," using an expansion of the verbatim learning process central to CPE. Once students have written verbatims and discussed them with peers and supervisors, they revisit the material in light of what they have learned and complete an IIP form describing their original intervention and how they now believe such a situation in which they were involved would ideally be handled. These records constitute a unique collection of what chaplains have actually done what they believe they *should* do, and they form a basis for research and quality improvement initiatives that are increasingly necessary for our profession's continued advancement. In relation to this project, an effectiveness questionnaire is under development that will be used to identify interventions for replication as spiritual care "best practices." The database -- freely available on the Research Network website -- currently contains over 220 reports categorized according to 24 themes. All CPE supervisors and students are urged to participate in this project. For forms and protocols, contact Jack Gleason at mariejohn50@att.net