



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**

*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*

## **Clinical Pastoral Education & Spiritual Care**

Nationwide Children's Hospital (NCH) is an ACPE accredited center that serves children from throughout Ohio and the United States. NCH is the second largest pediatric hospital in the country, with over 1.5 million patient visits each year. NCH is also ranked as one of the top ten children's centers in the nation by U.S. News and World Report. The inpatient units at NCH are organized primarily according to medical services, (i.e. short-term surgery, general surgery, isolation, neonatology, etc.) rather than by age groups. Medical care is provided to all children, newborn through nineteen years of age, as well as some adults with "pediatric" conditions. NCH has a strong appreciation for education, and Spiritual Care is just one of the many ongoing educational programs in the hospital. This creates a conducive atmosphere for the cohort chaplains' educational experience, as they are received with a spirit of cooperation and appreciation for what they contribute to the total care of patients, families, and staff.

NCH is accredited by ACPE to provide Levels 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B CPE as well as Certified Educator Candidate programs. Full-time and extended part-time programs of Clinical Pastoral Education consist of regular verbatim or inter-personal seminars where you will be encouraged to use your verbatim presentations as tools to not only gain better listening skills, but to interact with one another regarding your total functioning as a spiritual care provider. Along with structured class time, a weekly reflection, and clinical documentation will be required. Each chaplain will be responsible for ministry to specific hospital units. On these units you will have the opportunity to relate as a spiritual care provider with the entire medical team. You will be on-call to the hospital on a rotation basis. This will require that you sleep at the hospital approximately one night each week. A major part of your responsibility during this time will be to the Emergency Department. Here you will deal with the anxiety of parents and children in times of crisis. This part of the spiritual care program has come to be highly valued. There are weekly didactic seminars, which draw heavily on the resources of the hospital staff. Each cohort chaplain will have a weekly individual education seminar with their educator. Overall, you will be invited to interact with educators and the other participants as colleagues in ministry and will be given a substantial amount of responsibility for communicating and upholding the philosophy of the department. In fact, the effective delivery of spiritual care throughout the hospital depends upon your ability and willingness to assume this kind of responsibility, often when functioning alone.

Our philosophy of Clinical Pastoral Education centers around one primary objective: to aid persons in making the role of spiritual care provider a unique and integral part of themselves, and to accept this integration with enough pride so as to be able to participate in a creative and compassionate ministry. For some, this may mean sharpening their listening skills or obtaining renewed confidence in their organizational abilities. For others, this may mean the beginning of a process of recognizing themselves as worthwhile individuals who independently have something valuable to contribute and who are able to take initiative with this contribution.

As this primary focus is related to an accredited program of Clinical Pastoral Education some of its objectives are: to develop a greater awareness of spiritual care identity and authority; to think theologically/philosophically about the meaning and implications of one's work; to develop self-

awareness and self-understanding as these inform one's personal and professional identity and functioning; to develop sensitivity to the feelings of those with whom one works; to develop the ability to respond with empathy; to develop the ability to use appropriate religious resources in ministry; and to come to an understanding of the hospital as a health care delivery system with its related issues.

Our schedule for 2023 and 2024 is as follows (subject to change):

### **Part Time Intern Units**

- **Spring 2025:** January 14, 2025 – May 9, 2025 (17 Weeks)
  - *Meets on Mondays plus clinical hours and about 1 overnight shift per week*
- **Fall 2025:** September 2, 2025 – January 5, 2026 (17 Weeks)
  - *Meets on Mondays plus clinical hours and about 1 overnight shift per week*
- **Spring 2026:** January 13, 2026 – May 15, 2026 (17 Weeks)
  - *Meets on Mondays plus clinical hours and about 1 overnight shift per week*
- **Fall 2026:** September 1, 2026 – January 4, 2027
  - *Meets on Mondays plus clinical hours and about 1 overnight shift per week*

### **Full Time Intern Units**

- **Summer 2025:** May 27, 2025 – August 8, 2025 (11 Weeks)
- **Summer 2026:** May 26 – August 7, 2026 (11 Weeks)

*Typical schedule is 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday including about 1 overnight shift per week (rest time is provided before and after each overnight shift)*

### **Full-time Residencies**

Late May 2025 – May 2026

Late May 2026 – May 2027

Three (3) units of CPE are offered during the Residency Year. One prior unit of ACPE Accredited CPE is required for admissions to the Residency program. We have 3 residency positions available: Critical Care Resident, Behavioral Health Resident, AIM Team/Palliative Care Resident.

There is a \$25 non-refundable application fee that can be paid via credit card by calling the Spiritual Care office at 614-722-5250. Tuition is \$650 for each intern unit. Residents do not pay tuition and receive a stipend with benefits; successful completion of one unit of ACPE is required to be considered for a residency. An ACPE application for admission may be found here:

<https://www.acpe.edu/ACPE/Resources/Forms.aspx> After you have completed your material, please forward it to our office and we will be in touch. If you have any further questions, please feel to call.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Carrie Finegan, M.Div., BCC, ACPE Certified Educator  
Director, Spiritual Care, Nationwide Children's Hospital

The CPE program at Nationwide Children's Hospital is accredited by ACPE: The Standard for Spiritual Care and Education, [www.acpe.edu](http://www.acpe.edu), Phone: (404) 320-1472, Email: [acpe@acpe.edu](mailto:acpe@acpe.edu)

## **CPE COURSE OBJECTIVES**

All aspects of a unit of CPE are designed to assist the cohorts to Address the following aims of the ACPE Outcome categories.

### **Category A: Spiritual Formation and Integration**

Spiritual formation as a spiritual care provider includes the awareness and integration of one's narrative history, socio-cultural identity, and spiritual/values-based orienting systems. *ACPE defines the word "spiritual" as inclusive of theistic and non-theistic/values-based orientations.*

### **Category B: Awareness of Self and Others**

The CPE process helps build awareness of self and others as a vehicle for greater spiritual care. Awareness includes learning about oneself and developing greater awareness of the experiences and values of others.

### **Category C: Relational Dynamics**

Spiritual care and education require empathy and healthy relational boundaries grounded in warmheartedness for self and others. Empathy includes caring about and taking the perspective of others' experiences, values, beliefs, and practices. Healthy relational boundaries include respect for differences in spirituality. Empathy and relational boundaries work in tandem to ensure helpful, rather than harmful, spiritual care.

### **Category D: Spiritual Care Interventions**

Spiritual care providers inhabit a role that necessitates specialized knowledge and skills to address spiritual care needs. Understanding one's role and the power and authority embedded within it are essential to providing spiritual care interventions. Learning practical communication styles and skills are necessary to develop spiritual care relationships. One way of addressing the spiritual care needs of care receivers is to utilize cultural, religious, and spiritual resources that support wellbeing.

### **Category E: Professional Development**

Success in the formational and reflective process of CPE requires an engagement with one's own learning process and what it means to be a professional in spiritual care. Professional Development in the CPE process includes engaging the Clinical Method of Learning (action, reflection, new action), abiding by Ethical Practice and Professionalism, growing through Consultation and Feedback, investing in Teamwork and Collaboration, and becoming Research literate.

In CPE, the "action" of providing spiritual care is "reflected" upon in the educational time, which in turn leads to an improved "new action" when continuing to provide spiritual care.

## **SPIRITUAL CARE NOT JUST FOR PATIENTS**

In October of 1976, the Administration of Nationwide Children's Hospital took a major step toward their long-term goal of providing the best and most qualitatively sophisticated pediatric health care available. They created a Department of Spiritual Care, committed to being available around the clock in order to provide spiritual and emotional care to patients and families. The result of an extensive staff survey, this Department, through its training of clergy, and compassionate care, was to become an integral part of the total health care team at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

More than this, the Administration's vision for Spiritual Care was that it would become an employee benefit. For a hospital to conscientiously support a non-revenue producing Department as a benefit to its employees, as well as to its patients and families, was precedent-setting in a day of escalating prices for health care. It says that the well-being of its health care providers is just as important as the health it seeks to impart to its patients.

Since 1976 Nationwide Children's Hospital's Department of Spiritual Care has provided over 500 clergy from all over the United States with a 400-hour training experience in spiritual care and counseling, and provided its families and employees with individual and compassionate spiritual care so that they can better make sense of what is happening to them in their lives, personally and professionally. In fact, in one year Spiritual Care staff members spent 6,780 hours visiting nearly 20,570 patients and their families. A substantial part of this time was spent in the Hospital's Emergency Department where a Chaplain is available 24 hours a day. Chaplains also continue to offer tailored workshops and seminars to various departments throughout the hospital on a variety of subjects such as the spiritual and emotional impact of grief, stress, and the spirituality of children. Chaplains participate in the orientation of medical staff, and also contribute to the formation of medical residents and fellows by leading discussions on sharing bad news, grief and loss. They regularly provide religious services such as baptism and communion for hospital families, and staff, and offer regular worship experiences. We are proud to have an interfaith chapel that seats 50 people. This chapel was made possible by generous gifts of employees, families and community supporters.

Currently, there are eight chaplains in the department, representing a diversity of denominations. There are also three to six chaplain interns and residents at any given time. All are here to support our patients, families and staff.

Spiritual Care at Children's is not just for patients. We are the spiritual caregiver for the entire hospital community. We provide unparalleled care that is too expensive to buy, and cannot be found except in an institution which cares for the total health of all who enter its doors.



## **Brief History of Pastoral & Spiritual Care at NCH**

Even before the first Department of Pastoral Care was created in 1976, Nationwide Children's Hospital (NCH) recognized the value of holistic and family-centered care. Now called Spiritual Care, the department is committed to spiritual care that reflects a ministry of presence, to meet patients and families wherever they may be in their spiritual journeys. Chaplains function as members of multidisciplinary care teams. Our cohort Chaplains are part of an educational philosophy that values proven, yet innovative, care for patients, family, and staff.

- 1955 Dr. Arthur Becker, an educator in The Institute for Pastoral Care, arrived at Lutheran Theological Seminary (now Trinity Lutheran Seminary) and arranged with NCH for his introductory program in pastoral care. Cohort chaplains spent approximately 25% of their time at NCH.
- 1967 Dr. Becker conducted the first summer Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program and the hospital provided money for one student chaplain to work 20 hours a week.
- 1969 Rev. William Kibler was hired as chaplain on a 70% basis while maintaining his affiliation with Lutheran Social Service.
- 1970 NCH received its full accreditation in ACPE under Rev. William Kibler.
- 1972 Support for three student chaplains from Lutheran Seminary was added.
- 1975 Chaplain Kibler left NCH while two students from Lutheran Theological Seminary stayed. The hospital undertook a research project that indicated a need for a full-time chaplaincy position.
- 1976 Rev. Edwin R. Kopp was hired as the first full-time chaplain and Director of a new Department of Pastoral Care. The provisions for the work-study arrangement with Lutheran Theological Seminary were continued. A first extended unit, with the participants being seen as part of the staff of a new department, was run from October through May of 1976.
- 1983 The Department moved into a new office suite and added two Educators-in-Training, doubling the number of students that could be accepted for training and the number of programs. The residents were partially funded by monies from The Central Ohio CPE Cluster, of which NCH was a part.
- 1985 The Department received funding for its own Educator-in-Training program, and in 1988 Rev. Susan Kyser was hired as Educator-in-Training and Chaplain Coordinator.
- 1989 A second Chaplain Coordinator, Rev. Leslie Lippert, was added. The Central Ohio CPE Cluster ended a 23-year history of sharing student fees and collaborative efforts to train local clergy; however, NCH was able to use its student fees to create a residency program in Neonatology. These positions were buttressed by a generous monthly gift from Rail Van Incorporated.

- 1994 The department again experienced significant change. After 19 years and significant work to make Pastoral Care a strong and viable part of the health care team, Rev. Edwin Kopp left the department and Rev. Susan Kyser became the Director. Pastoral Care offered up to 5 programs of CPE annually, with over 25 student chaplains. These programs offered quality, spiritually grounded ministry.
- 1995 Rev. Leslie Lippert left and Rev. Paul Elhard became Chaplain Coordinator and Educator Candidate.
- 1996 Rev. Pat Shelden Ward replaced Rev. Paul Elhard as Educator Candidate.
- 1997 A new interfaith chapel was dedicated, and the department moved into larger office space, which included its own sleep room and conference room.
- 1998 Rev. Gary Cooper was hired as the NICU Chaplain.
- 1999 Hospice added a Chaplain position.
- 2001 Father Mark Hoying became our Catholic Chaplain.
- 2007 Rev. Sarah Reed moved from Hospice Chaplain to Chaplain Coordinator and Supervisory Education Student, with 20 students receiving training. Rev. Lynn Pease became Hospice Chaplain, Father Barry Eneh became Catholic Chaplain, and the Rev. Kamil Čák became Neonatal Chaplain. A new chapel was dedicated. The chapel continues its inclusive focus, with icons recognizing the world's five major religions and a "whisper wall" of sacred texts.
- 2010 Kamil Čák became the Spiritual & Family Care Coordinator for the Columbus Fetal Medicine Collaborative and Rev. Nancy Blakeslee joined the department as the PICU Chaplain.
- 2011 Rev. Ronald Davis became our Hematology/Oncology Chaplain. Fr. Sylvester Onyeachonam replaced Fr. Barry as Catholic Chaplain. Sarah Reed became an ACPE Associate Educator. The CPE program continued to maintain a strong presence in the department and hospital.
- 2012 Rev. Emily Corzine became a parish pastor and Rev. Margaret Yochum became a NICU chaplain.
- 2013 Rev. David Kuntz became the Spiritual & Family Care Coordinator for the Ohio Fetal Medicine Collaborative
- 2015 Rev. Sarah Reed retired, and the search began for a new Chaplain Coordinator
- 2016 Rev. William Dixon joined the department as the outpatient Hospice and Palliative Care chaplain.
- 2017 Rev. Carrie Finegan joined the department as Chaplain Coordinator and CPE Educator. Rev. Shawn Morris joined the department as the NICU chaplain and Bereavement Coordinator.
- 2018 Rev. Nancy Blakeslee retired, and Shawn Morris took her place as PICU chaplain. Fr. Matthew Moriak became a NICU chaplain and Patricia Phillips became our new Administrative Assistant.
- 2019 After 34 years, Rev. Susan Kyser retired as Director of Pastoral Care and Rev. Carrie Finegan took her place. Fr. Matthew Moriak became the Behavioral Health chaplain and Rev. Eliza Wertenberger was hired as a NICU chaplain.
- 2020 Rev. Mark Feldbush joined the department as the Chaplain Education Coordinator and CPE Educator. The CPE Residency program was revived in the Fall.

- 2021 Rev. William Dixon left NCH and moved out of state. Rev. Justin Wyatt was hired as the new Hospice Chaplain. Patricia Phillips left, and Sharon Page joined as the new Administrative Assistant. Rev. Lynn Pease retired, and Rev. Wyatt left NCH.
- 2022 Rev. Katie Steele joined the department as the AIM Team Chaplain and Rev. Kayla Peterson joined as the Hospice Chaplain. Rev. David Kuntz left NCH to become a VA Chaplain. We added additional CPE Resident positions for a cohort of 4 Residents. Rev. Shawn Morris was approved as a Certified Educator Candidate with ACPE and began co-supervising groups.
- In June of 2023, the depart officially changed its name to Spiritual Care Department.
- 2023 Fr. Ramon Owerá joined the Pastoral Care Depart serving Catholic patients on a part time basis. Rev. Katie Steele left NCH. Rev. Margaret Yochum also left NCH. A Chaplain Education Fellow position, designed to train CPE Educators, was added to the department in June and Rev. Todd Naille was hired into this position. He discerned away from this path a couple of months later, and he resigned. Rev. Kelsie Meyers was hired as the new AIM Team Chaplain. Rev. Shawn Morris discerned out of the CEC process in early Fall 2023. At the beginning of December, Rev. Ron Davis left the department for another position.
- 2024 Chaplain Erich Kassner was hired as the new NICU chaplain early in the year. In mid-spring, Rev. Kayla Peterson transitioned from her role with hospice to become the new chaplain for Hematology-Oncology, and Chaplain Zach Ostrem joined as the second NICU Chaplain. Rev. Shawn Morris left NCH for another position. Laura Whistler served as the Chaplain on the Hospice team Summer through late Fall. In the Fall, Rev. Thomas McGraw was hired as the Critical Care Chaplain, and Annie Eichelman was hired as the first full-time Bereavement Coordinator.

There are now eight staff chaplains, a Director, an Administrative Assistant, a Bereavement Coordinator, a Chaplain Education Coordinator, and CPE Interns and Residents. There has been an enormous amount of change; both in the hospital's growth and the department's visibility, since Dr. Becker and the first chaplains were here in 1967. However, one thing has not changed – namely, the dedication of those in the Department of Spiritual Care to a spiritually grounded compassionate ministry, in an institution that truly strives to serve the whole child and family.