

TELECHAPLAINCY: The Online Practice of Professional Chaplaincy

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The Rev. Amy Strano, M.Div.

HealthCare
Chaplaincy
Network™

Telechaplaincy – What is it?

- *Telechaplaincy* uses electronic information and telecommunications to support long distance chaplaincy care.



Telechaplaincy – Why?

Where are the majority of health care chaplains working?

Where is the majority of health care delivered?

ChaplainsOnHand.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of ChaplainsOnHand.org. At the top, there's a header with the HealthCare Chaplaincy Network logo and social media links. The main banner features a sunset over mountains with the text "Providing spiritual comfort - Chaplains On Hand" and "Help from professional health care chaplains for everyone — whoever you are, whatever you believe." Below the banner is a navigation menu with links: Home, About, For the Seriously Ill, For Caregivers, Help Guides, and Other Resources. The main content area includes a large image of a sunset with the text "Get help by email, phone or video. How may we help you? Start your chat here." To the right of this image is a vertical list of service categories: Spiritual Questions, Painful Feelings, Chronic Pain, Grief & Loss, and Planning Ahead, each with a play button icon. Below the main image is a "Find Help" section with three sub-sections: "For Those Who Are Seriously Ill", "For Caregivers", and "Tools & Checklists". Each sub-section has a small image and a "Learn More" link. To the right of the "Find Help" section is a "Donate Now" button with the text "Your gift helps more people in spiritual distress to find comfort and meaning." Below the "Donate Now" button is a search bar. At the bottom right, there's a section for "Chaplain Care for Veterans" with the text "Spiritual and emotional support for military veterans, those currently serving in the military, family and friends." and a "Find Support Now" button. At the very bottom, there's a "Can't Believe" section.

HealthCare Chaplaincy Network

Providing spiritual comfort -
Chaplains On Hand

Help from professional health care chaplains for everyone — *whoever* you are, *whatever* you believe.

Brought to you by HealthCare Chaplaincy Network

Home About For the Seriously Ill For Caregivers Help Guides Other Resources

Get help by email, phone or video
How may we help you? Start your chat here.

Spiritual Questions
Painful Feelings
Chronic Pain
Grief & Loss
Planning Ahead

Your gift helps more people in spiritual distress to find comfort and meaning.
Donate Now

Search

Chaplain Care for Veterans
Spiritual and emotional support for military veterans, those currently serving in the military, family and friends.
Find Support Now

Can't Believe

Find Help

For Those Who Are Seriously Ill
Find information and resources from professional chaplains who accept without judgment the person in pain's own beliefs, faith and practice as well as their doubts and misgivings.
[Learn More](#)

For Caregivers
Find information and resources from professional chaplains trained to walk into dark places and help bring in the light.
[Learn More](#)

Tools & Checklists

Questions to Define Your Spirituality
[Learn More](#)

Prayers & Meditations
Find prayers and meditations from a number of faiths and for those with no religious tradition.
[Learn More](#)

Get help by email, phone or video
How may we help you?
[Start Here](#)

- Launched **January 20, 2014**
- **176,934 visits** from **178 countries**
- **64%** of visits are from the U.S.
- Translated into **135 languages** as of April 8, 2015

CantBelieveIHaveCancer.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of the website. At the top, the title "Can't Believe I Have Cancer" is displayed in green and orange, with the tagline "Spiritual care for everyone facing cancer – whoever you are, whatever you believe, wherever you are." below it. A navigation bar includes links for Home, Spiritual Issues, Painful Feelings, Chronic Pain, Grief & Loss, and Planning Ahead. A "Get help for" section lists categories: Newly Diagnosed, In Treatment Now, Survivors, It's Not Going Well, Caregivers, and Friends. A "Tools to Help You" section features icons for Chat with a Chaplain, Request a Prayer, Spiritual Exercises & Resources, and Living with Cancer Support. A "Subscribe to free e-newsletter" box is also present. The footer includes the HealthCare Chaplaincy Network logo and a link to "Chaplain Care for Veterans".

Can't Believe I Have Cancer
Spiritual care for everyone facing cancer – whoever you are, whatever you believe, wherever you are.

Home Spiritual Issues Painful Feelings Chronic Pain Grief & Loss Planning Ahead

Why This Site Can Help You: A Welcome Note from President & CEO Eric J. Hall

Spiritual & Healing Prayers and Meditations

Healing Prayers for All Healing Prayers by Religion

Is This Site For Me?

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with cancer, this site was created for you. You are not alone. Serious illness, trauma or grief can create spiritual distress leaving one struggling with questions such as "Why is this happening to me?" "What do I have to live for?" "What now?"

As you live with cancer, you need to gather support and resources for your whole self. You need to know that there is a safe place where you can share your fears, your emotions, and your struggle to find meaning, comfort, and hope.

Read more: Is This Site For Me?

Get help for

Newly Diagnosed In Treatment Now Survivors It's Not Going Well Caregivers Friends

Your gift helps more people in spiritual distress to find comfort and meaning.

Donate Now

Search

Select Language

Subscribe to free e-newsletter for the latest news about spiritual care and health care.

Stay informed

Chaplain Care for Veterans

- Launched **July 3, 2014**
- **190,224 visits** from **191** countries
- **81%** of visits are from the U.S.
- **130 languages** as of April 8, 2015

ChaplainCareForVeterans.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of ChaplainCareForVeterans.org. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a home icon, 'About', 'Veterans', 'Currently Serving', 'Family & Friends', 'I'm Hurting', and 'Get Help'. A search bar and social media links (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) with a 'Donate Now' button are also present. The main header features the 'Chaplain Care for Veterans' logo and a tagline: 'Spiritual and emotional support for veterans, currently serving, and their family and friends – whoever you are, whatever you believe, wherever you are.' Below this is a large banner titled 'We Are With You' with a photo of a man carrying a child on his shoulders. The banner text reads: 'We salute your service. Military service and military families have earned our full support by their devotion and sacrifice in protecting the people of our nation and the world. Experiences associated with defending our nation can create feelings of sadness, anger, frustration, pain, and anxiety in some veterans or their loved ones.' A 'READ MORE' button is at the bottom left of the banner. Below the banner, there are three main sections: 'Self Care Strategies' with a photo of a woman and a 'LEARN MORE' button; 'Chat with a Chaplain' with a video thumbnail and a 'LEARN MORE' button; and 'A Veteran's Perspective' with a video thumbnail and a 'DONATE NOW' button. A 'Select Language' dropdown menu is also visible. At the bottom left, there is a 'HealthCare Chaplaincy Network' logo.

HealthCare Chaplaincy Network

Chaplain Care for Veterans

Spiritual and emotional support for veterans, currently serving, and their family and friends – whoever you are, whatever you believe, wherever you are.

Home About Veterans Currently Serving Family & Friends I'm Hurting Get Help

Search

We Are With You

We salute your service. Military service and military families have earned our full support by their devotion and sacrifice in protecting the people of our nation and the world. Experiences associated with defending our nation can create feelings of sadness, anger, frustration, pain, and anxiety in some veterans or their loved ones.

READ MORE

Home

Self Care Strategies

Explore what your soul needs through practices like meditation, prayer and guided imagery.

LEARN MORE

Chat with a Chaplain

Connect with a professional chaplain who will listen and offer spiritual comfort and support.

LEARN MORE

A Veteran's Perspective

Select Language

Your gift helps more people in spiritual and emotional distress to find comfort and meaning.

DONATE NOW

HealthCare Chaplaincy Network

- Launched **February 3, 2015**
- **4,247** visits from **49 countries**
- **86%** come from the U.S.
- **25 languages** as of April 8, 2015

Telechaplaincy



Phone



Web camera



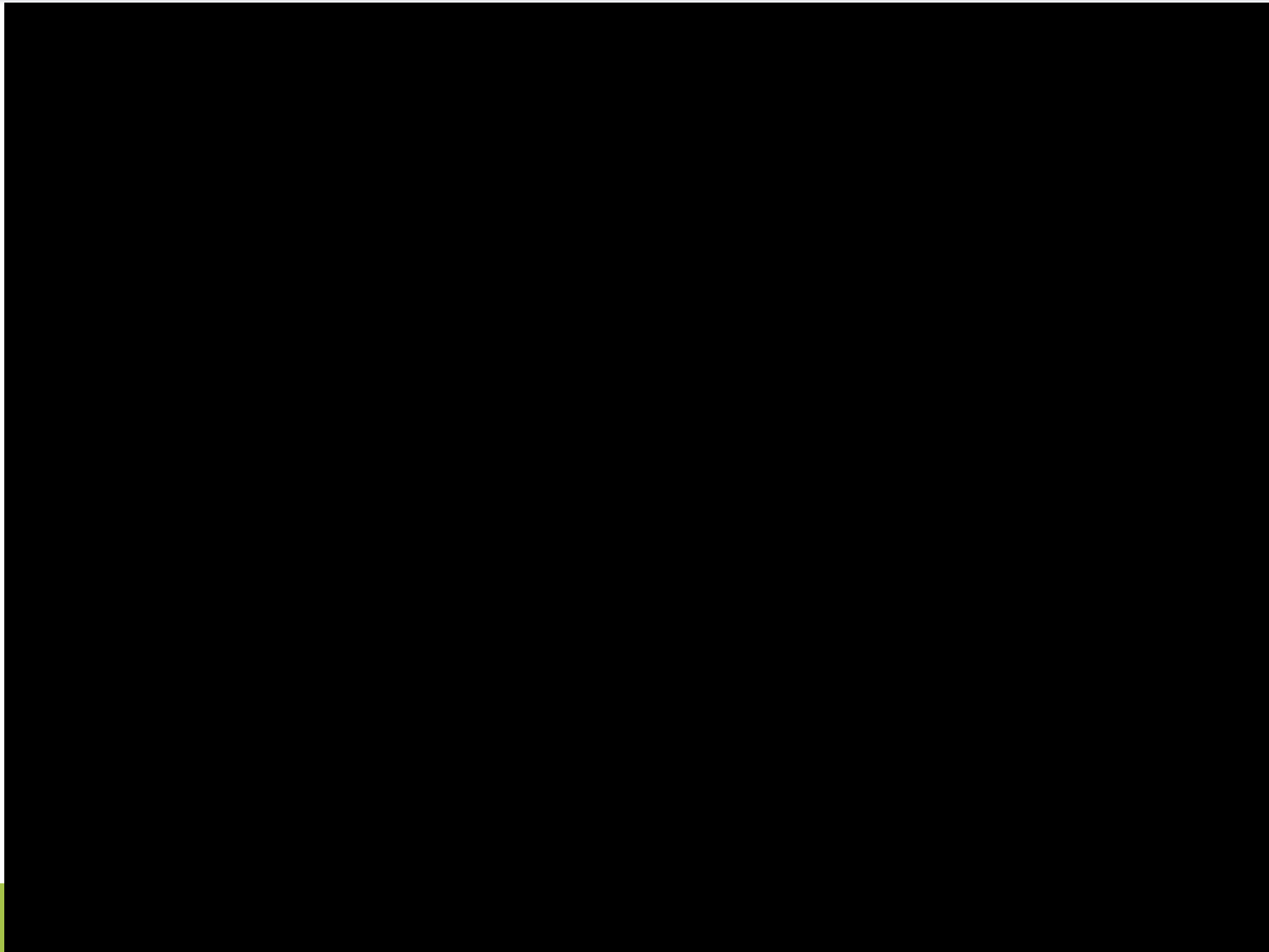
E-mail



Prayer Request

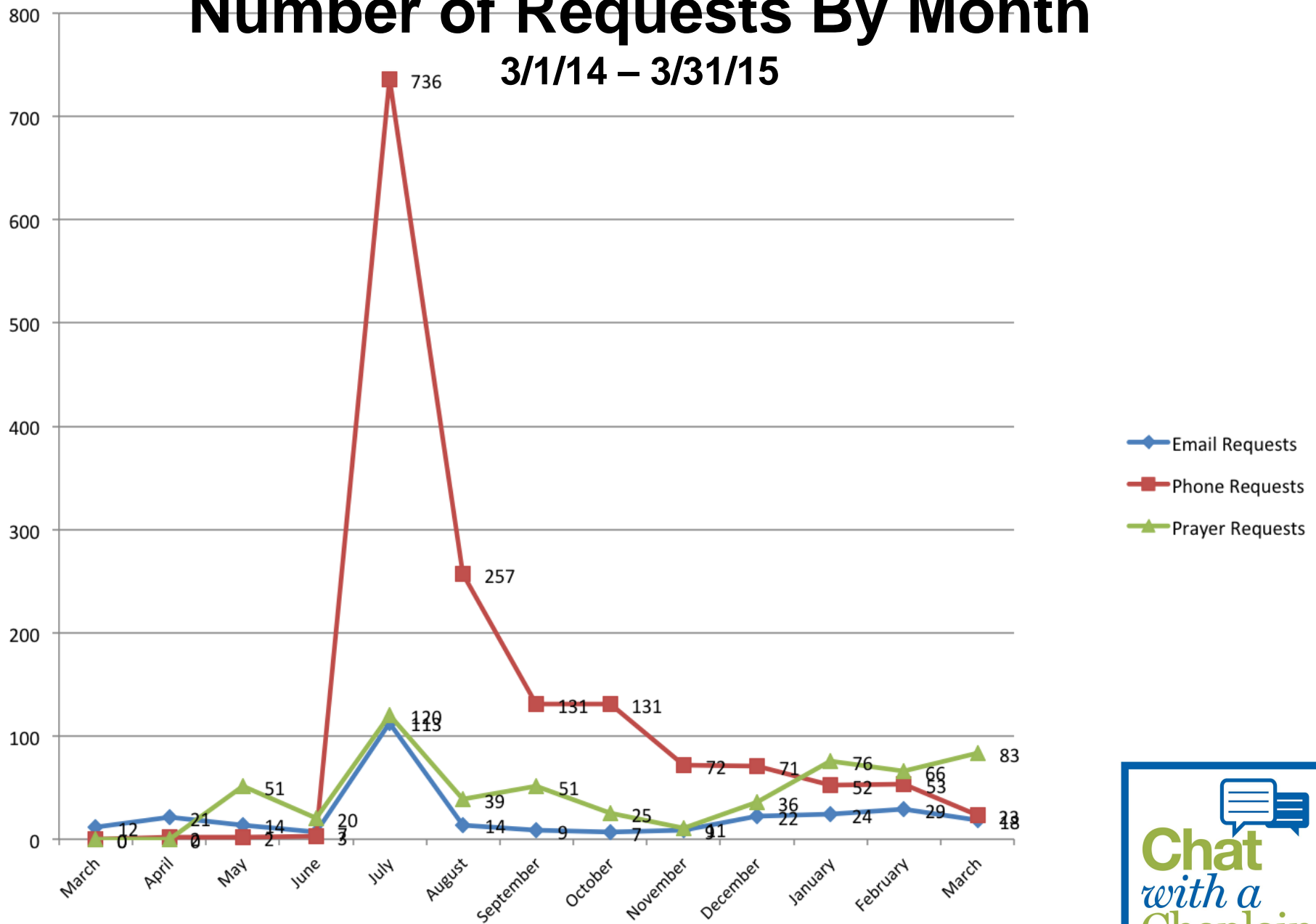


Telechaplaincy



Number of Requests By Month

3/1/14 – 3/31/15



Why the Spike in Calls?

The **AARP Bulletin** says
“**Spiritual Support
Just a Click Away**”
at ChaplainsOnHand.

[Read story](#)



Spiritual Support Just a Click Away

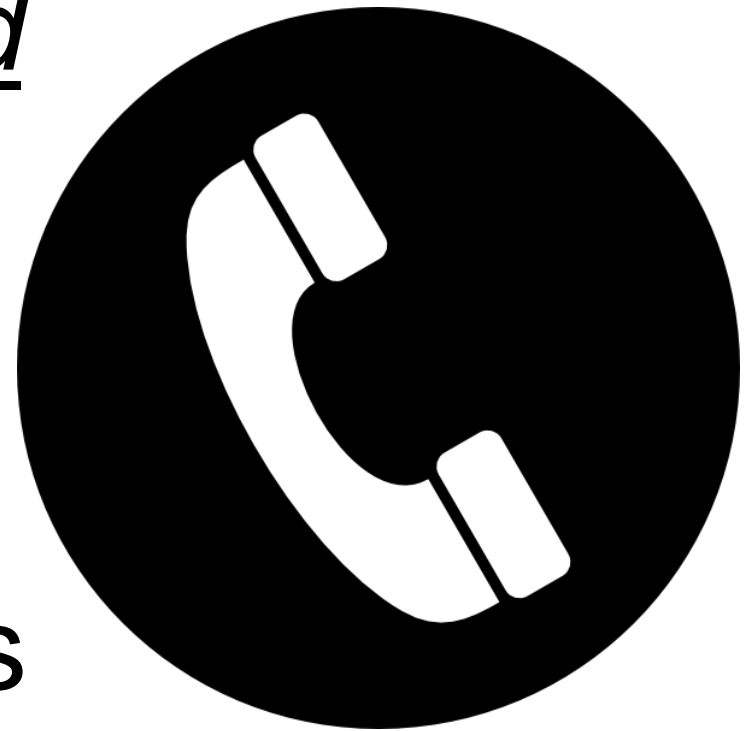
If you feel the need to bare your soul, a new website can help. ■ Chaplains on Hand offers 24/7 spiritual comfort and support to anyone, regardless of religious beliefs. It was created for those facing illness and grief and for caregivers, says the Rev. Eric J. Hall, president and CEO of HealthCare Chaplaincy Network, which runs the site. You'll find a chat button and be able to chat with a chaplain and be able to chat with a chaplain from the

Staffing



Who Contacted Us

- Most users called the service
- Average call lasted 20 minutes



844 – CHAPLAIN // 844-242-7524

Who Contacted Us

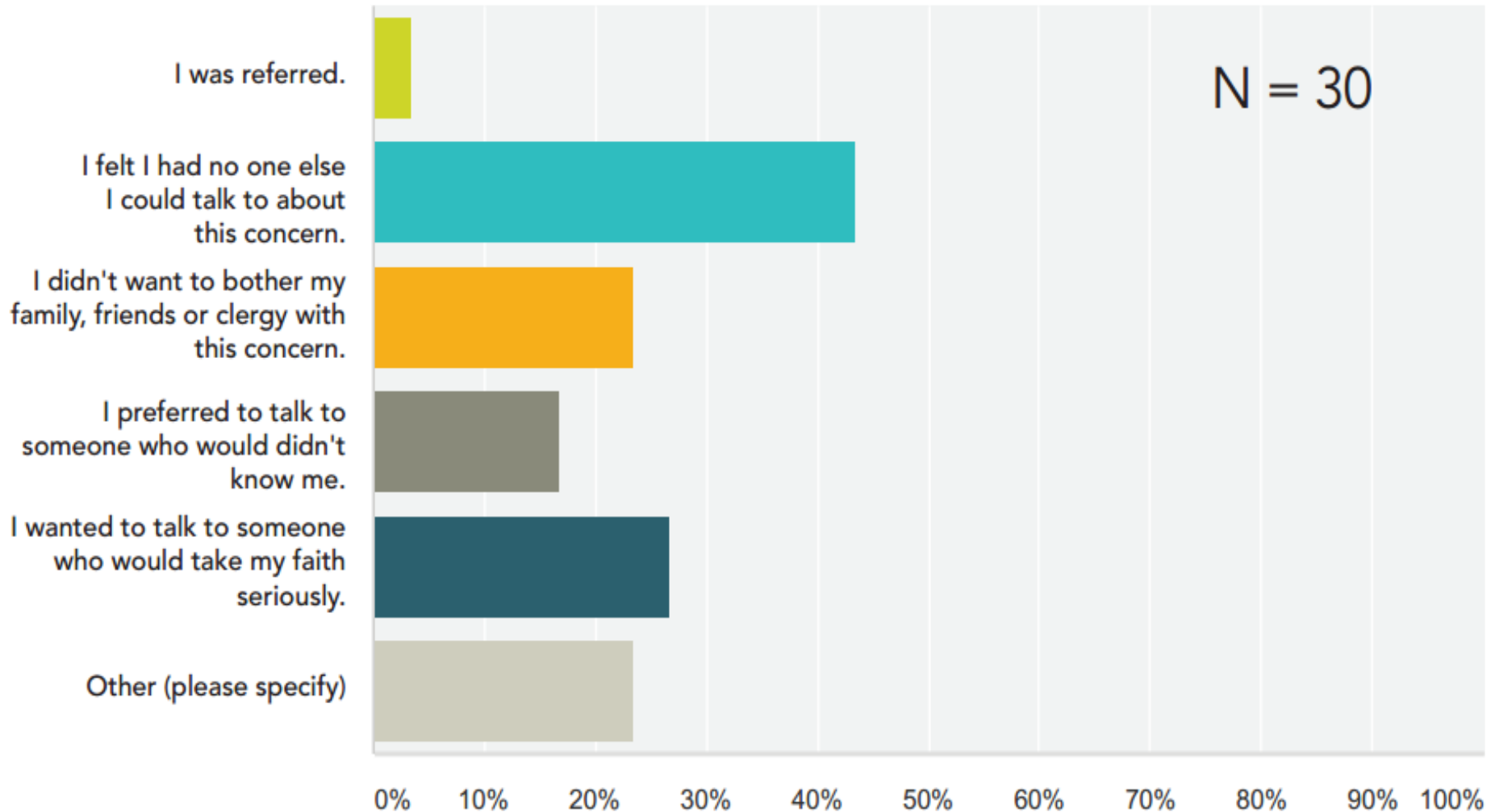
Average User

(Usage data from 3/1/14 – 3/31/15)

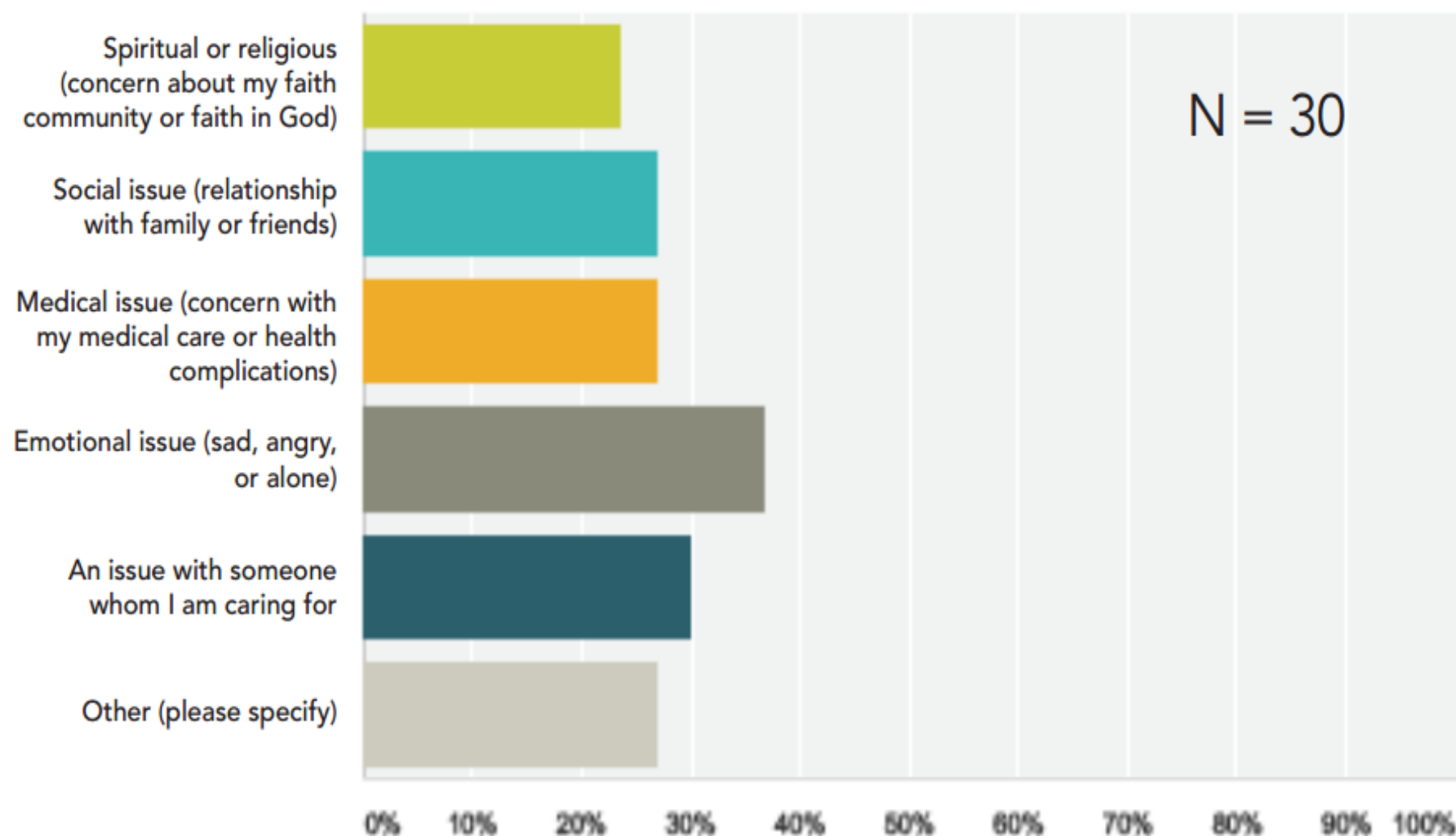
- 64.5 years old
- Woman
- Caucasian
- Christian



Why did you choose to call/email Chat with a Chaplain?



What was the issue or concern you were calling about?



Anecdotal Data

What chaplains reported hearing from callers

ISOLATION/LONELINESS:

"There is no one I can share with."

"Other people don't want to hear about my life."

"I'm unable to go out on my own anymore."



Anecdotal Data

An email we received:

“My twin sister passed away 3 weeks ago. I can’t begin to tell you how much hurt I have. Her death happened so quick from rotator cuff surgery. My heart is broken. I know that she is in Heaven and is so happy. It’s the emptiness that I have in my heart. Can you please help me?”



Anecdotal Data

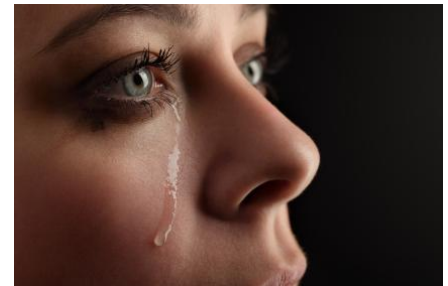
What chaplains reported hearing from callers

CAREGIVER STRESS:

"I'm overwhelmed."

"I can't keep doing this."

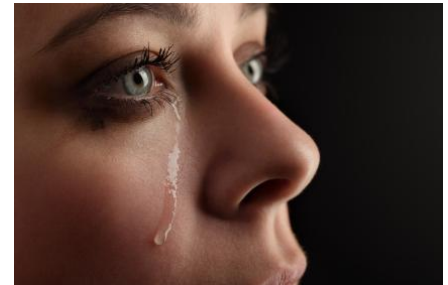
"I can't tell anyone what's going on here."



Anecdotal Data

An email we received:

“My father is 84 and dying. He has anemia...renal failure and other complications. Dad lost his ability to talk days ago... He was released from the hospital today after 4 days without improvement. It's complicated but my dad is a special man and loving father. I ask for prayers that my sister, mother, me and dad may feel peace, hope and eventual joy about his entrance into heaven. I pray that God will let dad communicate with me after his life on earth is finished. I pray I reach new heights in life – more than I ever dreamed of becoming, in honor of my father and mother.”



Anecdotal Data

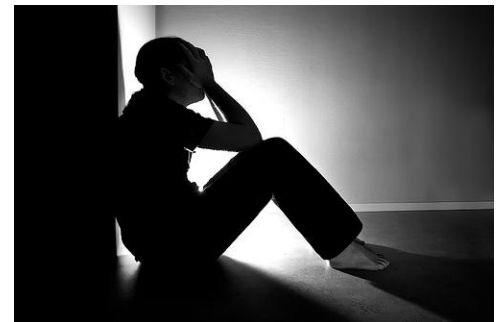
What chaplains reported hearing from callers

SPIRITUAL DISTRESS:

"I just don't feel like I can forgive."

"I miss my connection with God – I'm not feeling it."

"How could a loving God allow this to happen?"



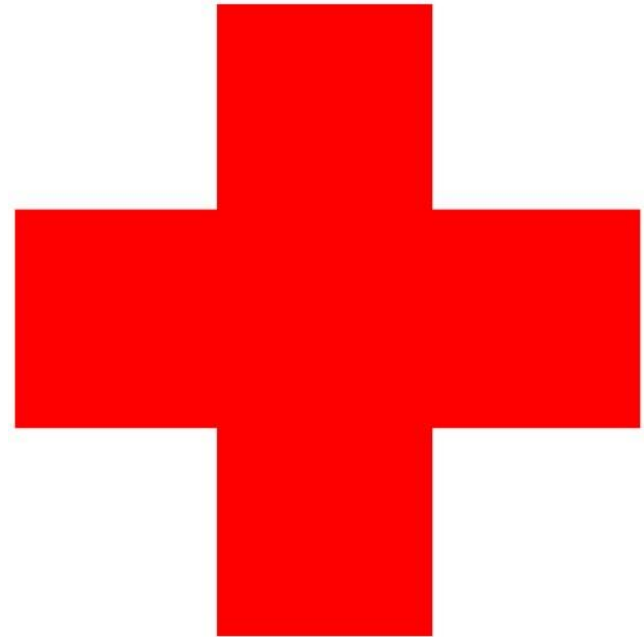
Differences Between Inpatient Chaplaincy and Telechaplaincy Care

Chaplaincy Visit	Telechaplaincy Visit
Chaplain often initiates contact	Chaplain is contacted by client
Chaplain has access to client's name and medical information in EMR	Chaplain encounters anonymous clients
Chaplain provides non-verbal cues to convey engagement	Chaplain may provide verbal cues to convey engagement
Chaplain is a member of an interdisciplinary health care team	Chaplain operates alone as "spiritual first responder"
Chaplain has immediate access to referral services	Chaplain encourages client to reach out to local resources

Telechaplaincy as Spiritual First Aid

Spiritual First Aid

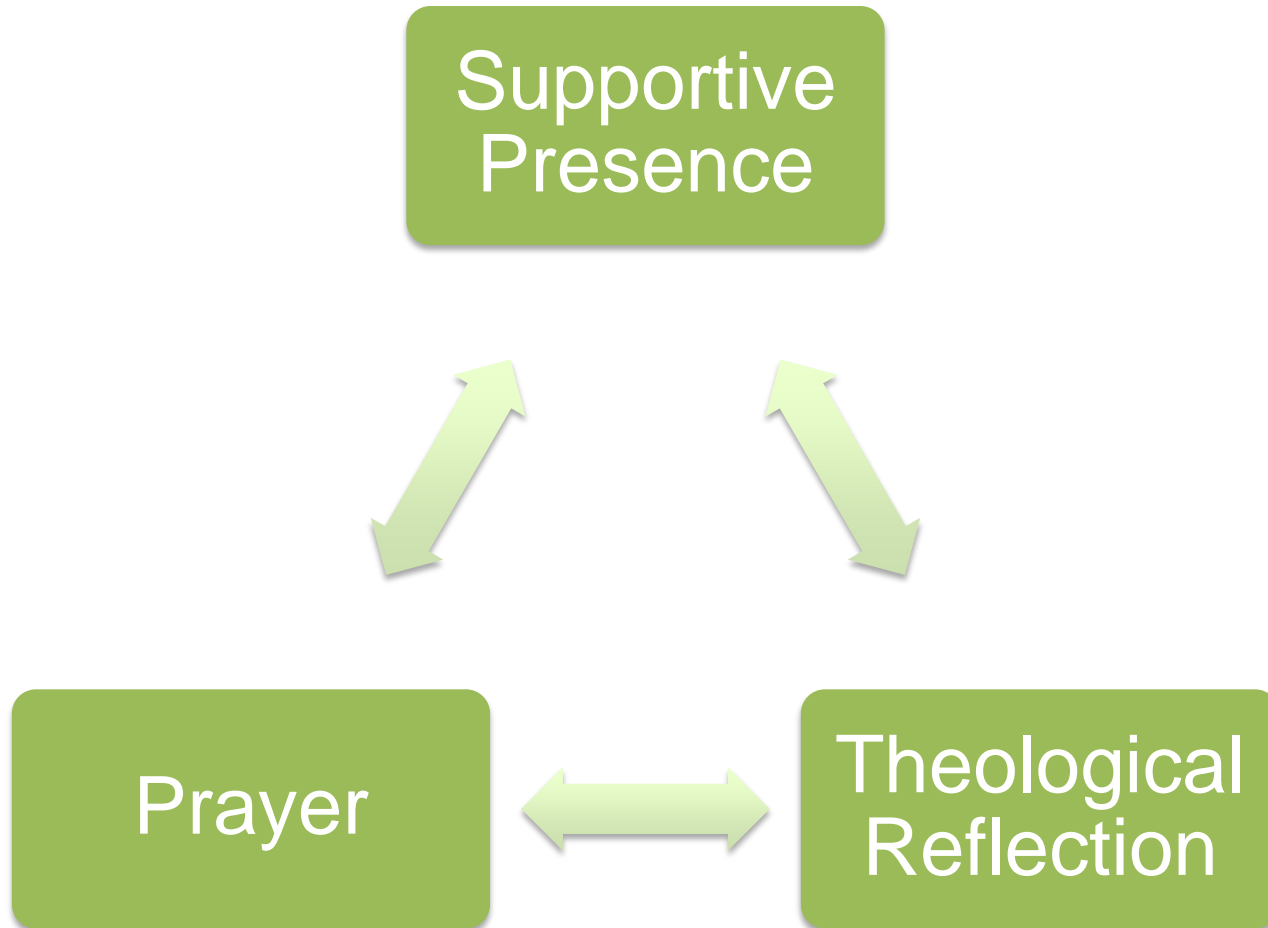
- For short-term use
- Aims to mitigate,
NOT solve
suffering



FIRST AID

Julie Taylor, "Spiritual First Aid," *Disaster Spiritual Care*, Rabbi Stephen B. Roberts and Rev. Willard W. C. Ashley, eds. Woodstock: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2008. 109-117.

Telechaplaincy Interventions



Next Steps

Social Distress Screening Question

“Do you have as much social contact as you would like with friends and relatives?”

Prognostic Importance of Social and Economic Resources Among Medically Treated Patients With Angiographically Documented Coronary Artery Disease

Redford B. Williams, MD; John C. Barefoot, PhD; Robert M. Califf, MD; Thomas L. Haney, MPH; William B. Saunders, MPH; David B. Pryor, MD; Mark A. Hlatky, MD; Ilene C. Siegler, PhD, MPH; Daniel B. Mark, MD, MPH

Objective.—To evaluate the hypothesis that diminished social and economic resources impact adversely on cardiovascular mortality in patients with coronary artery disease.

Design.—Inception cohort study of patients undergoing cardiac catheterization from 1974 through 1990 and followed up through 1999.

Setting.—Tertiary care university medical center.

Patients.—Consecutive sample of 1965 medically treated patients with stenosis 75% or greater of at least one major coronary artery. Five hundred patients were not enrolled due to logistic problems; 33 refused; 84 had missing data on key medical variables. The final study population included 1368 patients, 82% male, with a median age of 52 years.

Main Outcome Measure.—Survival time until cardiovascular death.

Results.—Independent of all known baseline invasive and noninvasive medical prognostic factors, patients with annual household incomes of \$40 000 or more had an unadjusted 5-year survival of 0.91, compared with 0.76 in patients with incomes of \$10 000 or less (Cox model adjusted hazard ratio, 1.9; 95% confidence interval, 1.57 to 2.32; $P = .002$). Similarly, unmarried patients without a confidant had an unadjusted 5-year survival rate of 0.50, compared with 0.82 in patients who were married, had a confidant, or both (adjusted hazard ratio, 3.34; 95% confidence interval, 1.84 to 6.20; $P < .0001$).

Conclusions.—Low levels of social and economic resources identify an important high-risk group among medically treated patients with coronary artery disease, independent of important medical prognostic factors. Additional study will be required to see if interventions to increase these resources improve prognosis.

(*JAMA*. 1992;267:520-524)

REDUCED social and economic resources have been implicated in both the

etiology of major illnesses and the likelihood of death once clinical disease is present.¹⁻³ The association between social factors and all-cause mortality has been demonstrated prospectively in several studies of apparently healthy populations.⁴⁻⁶ Social factors have also been shown to affect mortality in patients with established coronary artery disease (CAD). In a prospective study of men en-

rolled in the Beta Blocker Heart Attack Trial who initially survived myocardial infarction, Ruberman and colleagues⁷ found that patients with higher scores on indexes of life stress and social isolation had a higher mortality rate. Lower levels of economic resources, as measured by markers such as educational attainment and annual income, have also been found to identify groups with increased mortality risk, both in the general population and in patients with CAD.^{8,9} In addition, reduced social and economic resources have been shown to affect levels of cardiovascular risk factors, such as smoking cessation^{10,11} and hypertension control,¹² which may provide at least one mechanism for their mortality effects.

See also pp 515 and 559.

Although the consistency of previous findings has bolstered the hypothesis that social and economic factors must be considered in the etiology and outcome of coronary disease, it is possible that the poor prognosis of patients with lower levels of social and economic resources is actually due to more extensive disease rather than an effect of the socioeconomic factors themselves. Previous studies have been limited in their evaluation of this issue by the need to use indirect measures of the severity of the disease. Accordingly, the prognostic importance of socioeconomic factors after considering the risk attributable to direct measurement of the extent of disease has not yet been established.

520 JAMA, January 22/29, 1992—Vol 267, No. 4

Social Resources and CAD—Williams et al

Williams, R. (1992). Prognostic importance of social and economic resources among medically treated patients with angiographically documented coronary artery disease. *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 267(4), 520-524.

Next Steps

New Satisfaction Survey



“Would you be willing to take a survey about this service?”




Next Steps




Expanding Telechaplaincy

 [Donate Now](#)

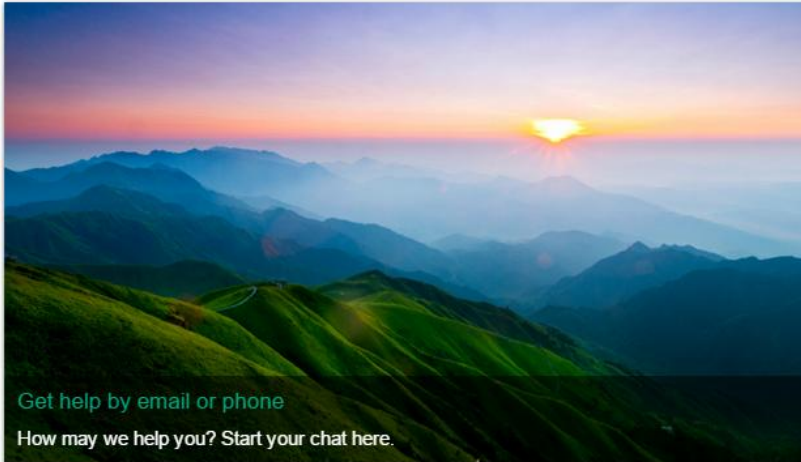


Help from professional health care chaplains for everyone — *whoever* you are, *whatever* you believe.

Powered by
Chaplain^{On}Hand



[+ Home](#) [+ About](#) [+ For the Seriously Ill](#) [+ For Caregivers](#) [+ Help Guides](#) [+ Other Resources](#)



Get help by email or phone
How may we help you? Start your chat here.

[Spiritual Questions](#)

[Painful Feelings](#)

[Chronic Pain](#)


[Grief & Loss](#)

[Planning Ahead](#)

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Find Help



For Those Who Are Seriously Ill

Find information and resources from professional chaplains who accept without judgment the person in pain's own beliefs, faith and practice as well as their doubts and misgivings.

[Learn More](#)



Support: Part 10 Social/Emotional

-  Living Well with Illness
Article
-  Patient Story: Living with Illness
Video: 2:39 min
-  Making New Meaning
Article
-  Losing Functions, Dreams, and Plans
Article
-  Painful Feelings
Article

Now Viewing:

Video: Patient Story Living with Illness

Text Size: - +

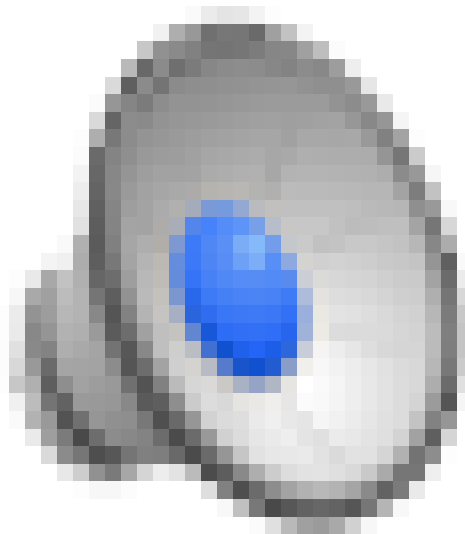


Next Segment >

Estimated Completion Time: 6 minutes



Expanding Telechaplaincy – HCCN-TV



Telechaplaincy

Extending the reach of chaplaincy care



Questions?

For More Info

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