Chaplain & Chaplaincy Evaluation

A Workshop at the 2014 Correctional Ministry Summit

Moderated by:

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PDF version of slides available by email upon request.
Agenda

• Introduction (Objectives, Moderators)
• Why Evaluate
• Things that make evaluation hard
• Suggested evaluation paradigm
  – Factors that need to be considered
    (chaplains, chaplaincies, institutional perspective)
  – A suggested paradigm
• Questions & Comments (20-30 minutes)
• Conclusion (5-10 minutes)
**Workshop Objectives**

- **Attendees** (show of hands re ministry: jail, prison, juvenile, community facilities)
- **Identify chaplaincy evaluation challenges**
  - Variety of services provided, facilities & populations served, ministry styles & objectives
  - Lack of widely-accepted standards & norms
  - Lack of objective evaluation data (vice subjective)
- **Suggest an evaluation paradigm** to stimulate discussion of chaplain & chaplaincy evaluation
  - Factors that should be considered
  - Suggested paradigm
Moderator Background

Dale K. Pace, ThD
Chaplain/Supervisor Chaplain

• Established & led programs in nearly 20 facilities: jail, prison, juvenile, halfway (reviewed ministries in jails in 4 states)

• Published materials in Protestant, Catholic, & Correctional publications:
  chaplaincy book, book chapter, & articles

Technical: Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab (Principal Professional Staff: op research); taught graduate courses at Hopkins & NWC
Moderator Background

W. Thomas Beckner, PhD

BA, Milligan College
MA, Kent State University and MS, Georgia State University
PhD, University of Tennessee

Dr. Beckner has been in correctional ministry 30+ years: prison chaplain, non-profit prison ministries senior staff, teacher/administrator in colleges and universities, & consultant to correctional ministry agencies. He founded the American Chaplaincy Training School (ACTS) in 1985. In 2008, he oversaw the merger of ACTS with the Institute of Prison Ministries and collaborated with the Institute in establishing its School for Correctional Ministries. He is the author of *Correctional Chaplains: Keepers of the Cloak.*
Why Evaluate Chaplains/Chaplaincies?

• Evaluation can facilitate improvement
  – Personally for the individual chaplain
  – Organizationally for the chaplain and chaplaincy
  – In ministry effectiveness

• What does it cost to evaluate?
  – Information development, collection, organization
  – Preparation and evaluation staff time
  – Generally several staff days per evaluation
    (usually less than a staff week)

Sometimes evaluation may not be worth doing
Hindrances to Chaplaincy Evaluation

• Variety of ministries: services, institutions, populations, approaches, etc.

Prison                             Jail                        Community

• Lack of widely accepted standards/norms for chaplains => evaluation criteria vary

• Limited objective info => use subjective info
Variety of Ministries\(^1\)

Makes Single Evaluation Approach Difficult

Different Kinds of Institutions/Services

- **Jails:** pre-trial ("innocents") & short sentences
  - high population turnover; both genders;
  - all classification levels; local government level;
  - limited government financing of chaplains

- **Prisons:** only convicted felons (long sentences);
  - limited population turnover; one gender;
  - state or federal government level;
  - may restrict classification levels at the prison;
  - often government financing of chaplains
Variety of Ministries
Makes Single Evaluation Approach Difficult

Different Kinds of Institutions/Services

– Juvenile Facilities: often local government level; sometimes more educational programs than jail/prison

– Community Programs:
  • Great variety of programs and services
  • May include voluntary and court-mandated people
  • May be grant funded

– Support Ministries:
  • Literature and material providers (may or may not focus on correctional ministry needs): Bible, tracts, etc.
  • Training & ministry development for chaplains & vols
Lack of Accepted Norms Makes Evaluation Difficult

No Credential Set Required for All Chaplains
  – Ordination/chaplain endorsement requirements vary with denomination or religious affiliation
  – Suggested credentials for prison chaplains vary among state & federal prison systems and/or for chaplains serving juvenile facilities
  – Credentials required for jail chaplains vary among chaplain providers (same for community program ministers)

Correctional literature has essentially nothing about chaplain or chaplaincy evaluation
Meaningful Evaluation Requires Reliable Information

Objective information does not vary significantly, regardless of who collects/reports it
  – Number of people attending an activity is an example of objective information

Subjective information often varies significantly, depending upon who collects/reports it
  – Attitude of people attending an activity is an example of subjective information
Kind of Information Used in Chaplain Evaluation

Some information for chaplain/chaplaincy evaluation is objective:

– Number in population to be served
– Number ministered to in services, counseling, etc.

Some evaluation information is subjective:

– What needs to be done that is not being done
– Quality of services, counseling, etc.

Use of subjective information makes evaluation subjective and less reliable.
Consider What You are Evaluating

External: Measuring the results of the ministry efforts.

Internal: Measuring that we are doing what we say we will do.
S M A R T Objectives Used in Chaplain Evaluation

S  pective
M  easurable
A  chievable
R  ealistic
T  ime Bound
What Should We Do re Evaluation?
Quit? or Try Something?
We Tried
Here’s Something to Consider

Paradigm for Chaplain & Chaplaincy Evaluation
Evaluation Factors to Consider

- Chaplaincy
  - Mission (responsiveness to God’s leading)
  - Resourcing (funds, staff, facilities)
  - Support community/organizational relationships
  - Legal and organizational constraints/etc.
  - Institution’s perspective

- Chaplain
  - Areas of responsibility (sets limits on the scope and basis for evaluation)
  - Theological/denominational considerations
Possible Evaluation Paradigm
Guiding Perspectives

• Fundamental basis for evaluation
  – What needs to be done constrained by what could be done

• Important constraints
  – Don’t include God’s prerogatives in the evaluation criteria
  – Be realistic about evaluation information/data

• Be comprehensive
  – Address body, soul, and spirit dimensions
  – Treat chaplain, chaplaincy, & institution concerns
Important Considerations

• Often ministries evaluate themselves on “spiritual” results (such as # of professions)
  – God (not human skill) determines who is saved
  – Examples abound of the same godly person doing the same thing with different results (e.g., R. G. Lee and his famous sermon)

  Such are not appropriate as evaluation standards (by results: Jonah was great; Jeremiah was a flop, but which one pleased God more?)

• Data realities: must use a lot of subjective information (might vary by who provides it)
Possible Evaluation Paradigm

• This paradigm is only concerned with Christian ministry – chaplain or chaplaincy responsibility for other things (e.g., coordination for other religious activities) are outside its scope.

• Only basic structure is suggested because of time limits – many details cannot be addressed.

• A preliminary description of the paradigm exists from a year ago as a rough draft of a possible paper on the subject – a PDF version can be emailed to any who request it.
Possible Chaplaincy Assessment

Assessment needs to be tailored by institution type served (clients = inmates/former inmate)

1. Have mechanisms been developed to determine if physical (body), personality (soul), and spiritual needs of clients are met?

   Yes or No

2. Have mechanisms been developed to meet such client needs?

   Yes or No

Scoring: Zero if either answer is No; otherwise it is the percentage of needs being met
Possible Chaplaincy Assessment

• Physical needs: typically met by institution, but sometimes more is needed (e.g., toiletries for indigent inmates) – chaplaincy should address needs not met by institution

• Personality needs: things that enable a person to function normally in society (being literate, having minimum education, reasonable thought processes, and emotional stability) – institutions now do a lot in these areas, but chaplaincy should address needs not met by institution’s other programs
Possible Chaplaincy Assessment

• Spiritual needs: these include personal Bible, access to worship services, religious education, discipleship training, & pastoral counseling).

• Do institutional policies/facilities prevent meeting some needs for some clients?
  – Is the chaplaincy trying to have such changed or working to develop ways to meet needs while complying with such?

Chaplaincy leadership: best suited to perform the assessment, which => “self-assessment”
Possible Chaplaincy Assessment

Organizational Considerations

• Is adequate time invested to know God’s will for the chaplaincy?  Yes or No

• Has the chaplaincy developed means to obtain adequate financial resources to support the ministry fully?  Yes or No

• Has the chaplaincy developed means to obtain adequate volunteer and community support for the ministry?  Yes or No

Scoring: Zero if any answer is No; otherwise average percentage of support developed
Possible Chaplaincy Assessment

Impact on the Institution

• Has the chaplaincy been doing all possible to enhance institution serenity/program stability?

• Institution leadership should answer the above question with Yes or No

• Then institution leadership rate chaplaincy impact on institution serenity/program stability as

  negligible  minor  significant  major
Comment about Priorities

• Many ministries choose to address a limited scope of activities (e.g., Bible societies only produce scripture; they do not establish churches)

• Evaluation should focus within ministry scope and not address areas outside its scope

• Within a ministry’s scope, prioritization determine what gets resources and which aspects are not emphasized – paradigm addresses development of needed resources
Possible Chaplain Assessment

• Chaplain evaluation is bounded by dimensions of chaplain’s assignment (e.g., chaplain only responsible for portion of inmate population) when chaplain is part of a multi-chaplain activity (otherwise the full chaplaincy assessment applies)

• All pertinent aspects of the chaplaincy to the chaplain’s responsibilities apply
Questions and Comments

• Questions for Pace or Beckner
• Comments
  – Evaluation objectives
  – Factors addressed
  – Suggested paradigm
  – Other items
• Suggestions
Conclusion

• What we tried to do
• Perspectives from the discussion
• Our suggestions for the future

Chaplain and chaplaincy evaluation needs serious discussion. We urge each of you to publish your ideas.

Thanks for your participation
Things You Might Want To Do

• Evaluate your own chaplaincy regularly and expect that to help you improve your ministry

• Share your ideas about chaplaincy evaluation with your colleagues

• Publish your ideas about chaplain and chaplaincy evaluation to:
  – Facilitate improvement in our profession
  – Provide evidence for a more objective basis for chaplaincy credentials and standards