



CENTRE FOR
PAEDIATRIC
SPIRITUAL CARE

NEWSLETTER

June 2017

The Birmingham Children's Hospital Annual Memorial Service took place in May at St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham. This was organised and run primarily by the Chaplaincy, Bereavement and Palliative Care, and PICU teams, with support from other staff from around the hospital. All families who lost a child who was a BCH patient in the past year received an invitation, as well as all families who attended the previous year's memorial service. Many families choose to come back to remember their child at the service every year.

This is the twelfth year that we have run the service, and we had what we think was the largest number of attendees that we have ever had, with around 330 people attending, as well as staff helping out and singing in the choir.



Some of the key parts of the service are specially written hymns, a reflection given by one of the chaplains and the reading of names of children of the families present. Families had an opportunity to submit poems or tributes to their child in advance, and these were printed on an anthology booklet which all families received a copy of at the service, and some families read these out during the service.

There are two activities in the service for people to take part in. Each family receives a candle with their child's name on, and they are invited to light this and place it on a table at the front of the Cathedral. These burn throughout the service, and can be taken home by the family afterwards.

Each family is given a paper leaf to write a dedication to their child on. Families are invited to tie their leaf to a decorated tree, and these tributes are then kept in the Chapel at Birmingham Children's Hospital, and families are able to add to the memorial tree throughout the year.

Families often bring siblings and other children to the service, so there is a space for children to take part in art activities. Children are encouraged to decorate a display of photos made up of pictures submitted by parents, which creates a very beautiful effect.

Feedback from attendees tells us that parents and families value a time and space to come together and remember their child in a supportive environment.





CENTRE FOR PAEDIATRIC SPIRITUAL CARE

Blog Post

This month Kathryn Darby, Christian Chaplain at Birmingham Children's Hospital, has written about the launch of the European Research Institute for Chaplains in Healthcare (ERICH) in Belgium. The aim of ERICH is to promote and support chaplaincy research in Europe to make sure that chaplains are delivering high quality spiritual care. Kathryn attended the launch of this event and has shared some of the key points from the day, as well as some of her own reflections.



Upcoming dates

Multi-Faith and Cultural Festivals

9th July—Dharma Day
Buddhist

Paediatric Spiritual Care Activities Day

27th September 2017
10am-4pm
Birmingham Children's Hospital

Find out more about the spiritual care activities offered by Birmingham Children's Hospital's multi-faith chaplaincy team. The day will be spent shadowing members of the team trialling and using spiritual care resources with patients and as appropriate their families.

Cost: £35 (includes a resource bag or £44 to include the book *Spiritual Care with Sick Children and Young People*).

Contact: For more information and to book a place please contact Rev Paul Nash:
0121-333-8526
p.nash@nhs.net

Featured Article

Vanstone, M., Toledo, F., Clarke, F. et al (2016) *Narrative medicine and death in the ICU: word clouds as a visual legacy* *BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care*, Advance Online Publication. DOI:10.1136/bmjspcare-2016-001179
<http://spcare.bmj.com/content/early/2016/11/24/bmjspcare-2016-001179>

This article describes how word clouds were used as a form of narrative support for palliative patients and their families. Family and patient narratives were distilled into key words or phrases, and a word cloud was created. These word clouds were initially developed as a gift for families, but became a way for clinicians to engage with patients on a personal level, and to give members of the care team a deeper understanding of their patient through reading the word cloud.

