

Mental Health Integration for Chaplain Services

(MHICS)

Description and Course Overviews

The Mental Health Integration for Chaplain Services (MHICS) Certification is a one-year training program that aims to better equip chaplains in the provision of care to Veterans and Service members with mental health problems. The MHICS Certification is comprised of three 12-week courses. Each course is comprised of five distance modules and one face-to-face training. Distance modules typically include three 50-60-minute video didactics, readings, and a regularly scheduled one-hour group webinar/call. Each distance module can be completed at any time during a two-week span, with modules taking an estimated time of 8-12 hours each to complete. While the majority of the MHICS Certification will be accomplished through distance learning modalities, each of the three courses also includes an intensive 2.5 day face-to-face training.

Participants in the MHICS Certification should be prepared to devote at least one half-day per week or one full-day every other week during the distance learning portions of MHICS. Additionally, participants should be prepared to attend the three 2.5 day trainings. Over the course of the full year, approximately 10-15% of participants' professional effort should be devoted to this certification program.

While the majority of this certification will be completed via distance education, a number of assignments and activities are integrated throughout to enhance learning and interactivity. Distance modules include elements that stress application of learning in the clinical context. For example, modules include case presentations, analysis of clinical narratives (e.g., anecdotes and vignettes), and assignments that help further develop one's pastoral orientation. Additionally, interactive video engagement questions, surveys, threaded discussions, and consultation webinars/calls are used to make the learning as interactive and experiential as possible.

MHICS presenters include top experts from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and academic settings. Presenters represent such programs as the National Center for PTSD, the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, national VA and DoD suicide prevention offices, and many others. Some of the presenters include: Dr. Steve Hayes, Dr. Robyn Walser, Dr. Patricia Resick, Dr. John Fairbank, Dr. Richard Tedeschi, Dr. Keith Meador, Dr. Kent Drescher, Dr. Ken Pargament, Dr. John Williams, Dr. Jonathan Shay, Dr. William Nash, Dr. Arthur Nezu, Dr. Christine Nezu, Dr. Roy Stein, Dr. George Fitchett, Dr. Rajeev Ramchand, Dr. Shelly Rambo, Dr. George Handzo, Chaplain Keith Ethridge, Dr. Mark Bates, Dr. Elizabeth Stanley, Dr. Warren Kinghorn, Dr. Jeff Levin, Dr. Ellen Idler, Dr. John Forbes, Dr. John Ralph, Dr. John Yeaw, Dr. Jason Nieuwsma, Chaplain William Cantrell, Chaplain Lowell Kronick, Chaplain Shelia O'Mara, Chaplain Jeff Rhodes, Chaplain Jeni Cook, Dr. Onna Van Orden, Dr. Nathan Galbreath, and Dr. Melissa Foynes.

An overview of the three MHICS courses is provided below. Although substantial changes are not anticipated, course material remains subject to revision. Please contact Ms. Lokia McKnight (lokia.mcknight@va.gov) of Mental Health and Chaplaincy with any questions.

Course #1: January 25 – April 8, 2016

This first course involves a face-to-face kickoff that introduces chaplains to the MHICS program, followed by five modules that examine historical and contemporary possibilities for integrating spiritual and psychotherapeutic approaches to care, lay the groundwork for integrating these approaches, and introduce three evidence-based modalities that can synergize with spiritual care: Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT); Motivational Interviewing (MI); and Problem-Solving Training (PST).

- ❖ **Face-to-face meeting (2.5 days): January 27-29, 2016**
 - ❖ *Day 1: Developing the framework*
 - ❖ *Day 2: Integrating chaplaincy and mental health care*
 - ❖ *Day 3: Emerging possibilities for pastoral and psychological care (half day)*

- ❖ **Module 1: Pastoral care and approaches to psychotherapy (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 1.1: History of psychotherapy & pastoral care*
 - ❖ *Unit 1.2: Defining "evidence-based" in psychotherapy*
 - ❖ *Unit 1.3: Overview of contemporary psychotherapies*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 2: Spiritual care and innovations (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 2.1: Spiritual practices and contemporary psychotherapy*
 - ❖ *Unit 2.2: Mindfulness*
 - ❖ *Unit 2.3: Possibilities for spiritual care in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 3: Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT; 2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 3.1: Introduction to ACT: The perils of language*
 - ❖ *Unit 3.2: The practice of ACT: Facilitating the process of change*
 - ❖ *Unit 3.3: Applications of ACT within chaplaincy*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 4: Motivational Interviewing Training (MI; 2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 4.1: Motivational Interviewing (MI) Training: An introduction*
 - ❖ *Unit 4.2: Motivational Interviewing (MI) Training: Fundamental skills*
 - ❖ *Unit 4.3: Motivational Interviewing (MI) Training: Considerations and techniques*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 5: Problem-Solving Training (PST; 2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 5.1: Problem Solving (PST) Training: An introduction*
 - ❖ *Unit 5.2: Problem Solving (PST) Training: Treatment components and tools*
 - ❖ *Unit 5.3: Problem Solving (PST) Training: Applications for chaplaincy*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

Course content is subject to change.

Course #2: May 9 – July 22, 2016

The second MHICS course provides five modules of intensive training on mental health problems that are prevalent and/or are of particular importance within Veteran and Service member populations. Chaplains will be provided with a broad overview of approaches to and contexts for mental health care. Following this, the course will present information on the etiology and treatment of mood disorders, substance abuse, serious mental illness, suicide, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and moral injury.

- ❖ **Face-to-face meeting (2.5 days): May 11-13, 2016**
 - ❖ *Day 1: Applied ACT/PST/MI training*
 - ❖ *Day 2: Applied ACT/PST/MI training*
 - ❖ *Day 3: Applied ACT/PST/MI training (half day)*

- ❖ **Module 1: Mental health essentials (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 1.1: MH providers & settings*
 - ❖ *Unit 1.2: Mental health diagnoses*
 - ❖ *Unit 1.3: Pharmacotherapy*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 2: Mood disorders, substance abuse, and serious mental illness (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 2.1: Depression & mood disorders*
 - ❖ *Unit 2.2: Substance use disorders*
 - ❖ *Unit 2.3: Serious Mental Illness (SMI)*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 3: Suicide (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 3.1: Suicide in military and Veteran populations*
 - ❖ *Unit 3.2: Suicide prevention*
 - ❖ *Unit 3.3: Religion, spirituality, and suicide*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 4: Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD); 2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 4.1: Overview & evolution of PTSD*
 - ❖ *Unit 4.2: Evidence-based psychotherapy for PTSD*
 - ❖ *Unit 4.3: Military Sexual Trauma (MST)*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 5: Moral injury (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 5.1: Moral Injury Part I*
 - ❖ *Unit 5.2: Moral Injury Part II*
 - ❖ *Unit 5.3: Providing care for moral injury*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

Course content is subject to change.

Course #3: September 5 – November 18, 2016

The third MHICS course contains modules that focus on current topics of relevance at the intersection of chaplaincy, spirituality, and mental health care. The course overviews linkages between spirituality and mental health, covers standards of practice within chaplaincy, examines the complexities and necessity of care for the care provider and command, and looks at areas of current pastoral concerns in the care of Veterans and Service members. Finally, the course concludes by considering the topics of spirituality, suffering, and resilience.

- ❖ **Module 1: Spirituality and linkages to mental health (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 1.1: Examining the relationship between spirituality and health: Promises and pitfalls*
 - ❖ *Unit 1.2: Research growth and trends in spirituality and health*
 - ❖ *Unit 1.3: Spiritual care in a time of therapeutic technique*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 2: Chaplaincy standards of practice (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 2.1: Toward a research-informed chaplaincy*
 - ❖ *Unit 2.2: Spiritual assessment*
 - ❖ *Unit 3.3: Documentation of chaplaincy care*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 3: Care for the care provider (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 3.1: Stress response and self-care*
 - ❖ *Unit 3.2: Care for the care providers and command*
 - ❖ *Unit 3.3: ACT for the care provider*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 4: Current pastoral concerns (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 4.1: Post-deployment adjustment and spirituality among recent Veterans*
 - ❖ *Unit 4.2: Marriage and family issues for Veterans and Service members*
 - ❖ *Unit 4.3: Advanced topics in selected populations*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Module 5: Spirituality, suffering, and resilience (2 weeks)**
 - ❖ *Unit 5.1: A theological rethinking of trauma*
 - ❖ *Unit 5.2: Resilience*
 - ❖ *Unit 5.3: Human flourishing*
 - ❖ *LIVE Session*

- ❖ **Face-to-face meeting (2.5 days): November 16-18, 2016**
 - ❖ *Day 1: MHICS application*
 - ❖ *Day 2: Sustainability*
 - ❖ *Day 3: Course evaluation and graduation (half day)*

Course content is subject to change.