

TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

The healthcare environment is unique, demanding, and challenging. To gain respect and credibility in this setting, **chaplains must come prepared with well-developed knowledge, skills, and character** to fulfill the demands of their role. HCMA's Clinical Pastoral Education Program is designed to equip chaplain trainees to be **effective ambassadors for Jesus Christ** within the healthcare ministry to which they feel called. Below are the values and principles underlying HCMA's perspective on chaplaincy care in healthcare.

The HCMA training philosophy **emphasizes a pastoral and spiritual focus** over a psychological ministry approach. HCMA's chaplaincy training **prioritizes spiritual issues above humanistic concerns**, centering pastoral care on **God rather than people alone**. The central task of an HCMA chaplain is to provide sufferers with **spiritual resources found in a personal relationship with the living God** while respecting each individual's beliefs.

HCMA's training is **vertically (eternally) focused**, encouraging chaplains to help patients **relate well to God as their primary role**. While sensitive to relational and psychosocial concerns, HCMA teaches that a chaplain's primary responsibility is to address **patients' eternal and spiritual needs rather than focusing solely on their immediate, temporal challenges**.

HCMA also **emphasizes personal ministry over theoretical study**. Each person is seen as an individual of worth, not merely a case. Chaplains are trained to be **compassionate, present, and engaged listeners**, following the example of **Jesus as the Good Shepherd**. This ministry is carried out through **transparent and empathetic support, active listening**, and, when appropriate, **prayer and Scripture** to meet specific needs.



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