

Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Department



We are here to support you while you are in
hospital.

The spiritual part of our lives can help us in our journey towards
recovery and wellbeing.

Chaplains seek to listen, with compassion, helping people to explore
their own sources of strength, comfort and hope.

Here are the stories of some people who have talked with us.



I've striven to be a perfect mother and I have two fantastic children. People have said that I have a beautiful singing voice.

I am such a mixture of all things that I've found myself overwhelmed by the different parts of me, and the effort of keeping myself all together has ultimately caused me to end up in hospital.



I've found a great sense of release in attending the chapel service and chatting with the chaplain. I know from how the chaplains are with everybody that you don't have to be a church-goer or even a religious person necessarily to talk with a chaplain. It's helped me to have someone to offload onto, and I've found it very therapeutic.



I grew up in Somaliland until the age of 19, when I came to England with my family. My oldest brother was Vice President in the government of Somaliland. I have ten brothers and three sisters.



In Somaliland I saw bad war, dead people and fighting all the time. I was scared and there was no safety. We had no schools, no hospitals and not enough food or water.

When I came to England I started to suffer from mental health issues and I have been in and out of hospital since that time.

I grew up as a Muslim and I pray every day. When I pray the voices become quieter. I feel very good when I see the chaplain and my faith feels stronger. He makes me feel good and happy and a faithful person. It is my faith that gives me hope in life.

I live with my partner of 21 years and I work full time as a care manager with social services.

I've got quite a large, close family and I'm especially close to my mum and dad and my niece. I've got two dogs and three cats and I absolutely adore them.

I have a diagnosis of borderline personality disorder and severe depression. I have long periods of normality and then low periods of suicidal ideation. I came into hospital because I was trying to kill myself.

I haven't been into a church, apart from going to weddings, since the age of 6. When I see the chaplain, I can sit down with someone who does not just want to talk about my mental health.

Before I came into hospital I didn't know if there was anything out there and if I was being punished by God. Talking to the chaplain and reading the Bible she gave me, has made me realise that there's always someone there 24/7 (God) who loves me for who I am and that I'm not going to be punished for making mistakes.

Overall, it's given me another coping method for my mental health: I can pray and ask for advice.



I was born in Bangladesh, and came to England in 1982. I'm proud of being a British citizen. Faith for me, as a Muslim, is a way of life, and a way of journeying through life.



The Spirituality Recovery Group brings the chaplain here each Monday, and she is polite, friendly, genuine, supportive and helpful.

The group brings me closer to God, and helps me to understand other people's religion, beliefs and lives. It helps me to look at different perspectives on the topics we discuss. The group brings people from all the different bungalows together.

There is unity and togetherness each week as we meet. The discussions, art projects and work we do help to bring me new insights. The chaplain gives me respect and dignity, which are really important to me. Each week I come back specially from my leave to attend the group because it is really important to me. I share what we do in the group with my family when they visit.



I've been unwell for many years but during that time I have had paid employment. After spending time in hospital with psychiatric problems, I'm now looking to gain paid employment in catering.

I do lots of sports: pool, football, table tennis, golf and mountaineering.

I went up Winn Hill last weekend, which was really steep. I've started an A level in psychology as an online course and have started to do voluntary work in a café. I hope to start a course in martial arts, and complete an NVQ 3 in catering.

I became a Christian many years ago when I was experiencing depression. Faith gives me inner strength, positivity, and hope. Exactly what my religion and faith mean to me is a journey, but I'm living and learning each day.

The chaplain helps me to discern which areas of my faith are based on my religion and personal beliefs and which of my beliefs are a part of my illness. It really helps me having a chaplain accompany me on my faith journey.



When I first came to the UK, I started work in London. I enjoyed a happy life with my wife and, not long after arriving here, I had my first child.



I was always concerned about the country I came from and always kept up to date with the situation in my birth country.

However Britain was my home. I worked hard for my family and felt I was doing my bit for Queen and country.

Up until the point of my illness, I hardly knew anything about mental health, more so because in the community it was a big taboo. People often confused mental health with spiritual illness.

It has been almost two and half years since I've been suffering from my illness. Since my family break up I've not been able to recover. I wish things could get better but it seems like I'm stuck.

My faith has always been important to me and seeing the Muslim chaplain always makes me feel happy. He prays for me and we often chat about issues relating to politics and culture.

His language is beautiful as he speaks in my own mother tongue, in a place where very few people speak Urdu or Punjabi. When he comes round, he reminds me of my faith, my culture, my way of life and, most importantly, who I am.

When I first came into hospital, I was really unwell.

When I was asked to come and talk with the chaplain in a group, I wasn't sure it was for me. I had a misconception (chaplaincy would just be about praying), but coming to the group for the past year has really helped me.

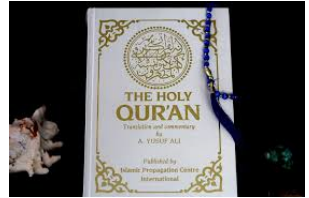
The chaplain is easy going. She comes in with an idea of topics we might discuss which gets us all talking. I like the way we're asked what we think and how we feel. The group is laid back and relaxed and the service users lead how topics develop.

The chaplain offers the other side of things too: she prays with people, gives communion and has done naming ceremonies, with prayers and Bible readings for service users. My naming ceremony meant a lot to me because my Nannan chose my names and she has sadly now died. I made her happy and I was close to her.

During my naming ceremony I prayed for my Nan, and knew she'd be listening and watching over me. Sometimes at night I look up at the stars twinkling in the sky and remember her.



I am a British Asian, born in a Pakistani family. My family is a normal family and we grew up with a mixture of Islam, Asian and British culture. Everything was normal up till the point I became ill.



I got two degrees and worked in the media industry. I enjoyed a good social life and worked really hard. It was while working in the media industry that the pressure of work was a trigger for my mental health illness.

Since 2010 I have been in and out of hospital. Whether its hearing voices or being depressed, my illness has taken its toll on my body and mind.

At all times, especially in my darkest moments, I fall back on my faith in God. Faith for me is the top of the agenda. Without my faith I find it hard to find strength to carry on. I believe in the power of prayer and I also believe that I will get better through my faith.

When the Muslim chaplain comes round it really helps me to cope. Sitting with him gives me peace and comfort. He recites the Qur'an in a beautiful tone. I feel protected and, because it's so familiar, I can just relax knowing that I'm in safe hands. I'm a proud Muslim and practicing my faith in hospital is very, very important to me. When I get better I want to return to studying, settle down, have kids and hopefully find work.



I come from a working class family and grew up in Handsworth.

I was a wild, tearaway kid and I like to still keep a link with my friends. I worked in engineering.

Just before coming into hospital, I asked God to take over my life as I was sick of making mistakes. I asked Him to make me the best person I could be. I have put all my trust in Jesus and God and it's made me more and more content.

If you want to have a good sing-a-long then go to the Sunday evening service led by the chaplains. And you can have a good laugh!



Did you know?

You can:

- Come to a Time For Me group about hope, peace, forgiveness, loss or identity and share ideas with others
- Attend a reflective worship service with space to sing, pray and draw close to God
- Talk with a chaplain on the ward.

Chaplains are here for service users, relatives and staff.

We support people of any faith and of no faith.



Please feel free to get in touch with us if you are in hospital and would like support.

Telephone: 0114 2718022

E-mail: chaplains@shsc.nhs.uk

Or mention it to one of the ward staff

We look forward to meeting you.

Siobhan Hoyes, Camran Munir and Sally Ross