



Overview of our Chaplaincy Program

Chaplaincy is a form of serving others to relieve suffering. Our chaplains volunteer to go into hospitals and prisons on a periodic basis (e.g. half a day per week). Each chaplain does this as a form of his or her own Buddhist practice - a form of **Dharma in Action**.

Buddhist chaplains offer emotional and spiritual support, loving-kindness and compassion. Buddhist chaplains bring a caring presence and willingness to listen, especially during times of difficulty.

We have ordained monastic chaplains (monks and nuns) as well as lay people with careers in addition to retirees. The Buddhist Council is a member of the Civil Chaplaincies Advisory Committee (CCAC), an interfaith group responsible to the Departments of Corrective Services, Health and Juvenile Justice. You can find out more about CCAC [here](#).

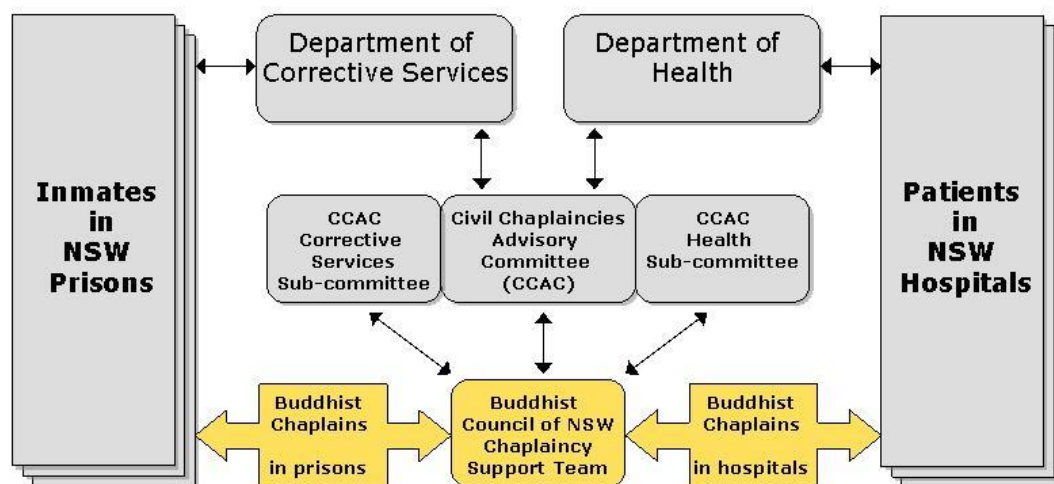


Figure 1. A chart of the different organisations the Buddhist Council interacts with to coordinate and maintain our Chaplaincy program.

Becoming a Chaplain

Those considering becoming a Buddhist Chaplain require a mature outlook and a caring and empathetic



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nature with good communications skills. It is also strongly recommended that the candidate is a regular meditation practitioner. Hospital Chaplains need to be able to cope with the demanding tasks of giving comfort to patients in the critical stages of their life i.e. the terminally ill and those on the verge of death. Prison Chaplains need an ability to relate in a practical manner that can be understood by inmates of different backgrounds.

The process for becoming a Buddhist Chaplain includes the following steps (assuming a **basic Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) course** has already been completed):

1. Chaplaincy Program Application form is completed and submitted to BCNSW
2. Chaplaincy Support team interviews the applicant
3. Prison/hospital requiring a Buddhist chaplain is identified
4. A letter of recommendation is prepared
5. Interview by prison/hospital system
6. Criminal record check; prison chaplains also need to attend a security awareness course
7. Induction and orientation; an identification badge is issued

If you are interested in becoming a chaplain please download the Chaplaincy Program Application form [here](#) and [email](#) the Chaplaincy Support Team for a discussion

Training for Chaplains

The Buddhist Council has teamed together with Rozelle CPE Centre to provide the Introduction to Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) course, which is endorsed by the College of Clinical Pastoral Education and provides credit towards higher studies in chaplaincy.





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The Introduction to CPE Course is the minimum training for part-time chaplains wishing to work in many public hospitals and is recommended for any new chaplain joining our Chaplaincy Program, whether for hospitals or for prisons. You can also enrol in similar courses elsewhere.

The CPE Course is carried out over 40 hours (5 days) and has been developed to allow the participants to learn from supervised encounters with people in a variety of situations where questions of ultimate concern are raised. The CPE Course also develops an ability to assess specific concerns arising from differences of cultural, spiritual, ethical, socioeconomic, psychological and emotional backgrounds. Here are some comments from participants of previous CPE Courses.

"A learning experience and a spiritual excursion not to be missed"

"Absolutely essential knowledge for everyone. I hope all can experience this course and become more empowered and compassionate"

"I have learned a lot about techniques and ways to help others in trouble"

"A great introduction to Buddhist chaplaincy for people who have no experience in health care sector but are considering pastoral service"

"This course has been very useful to me. It helps me to develop kindness for others"

"With the chaplaincy training, I would be in a position to help another person in need spiritually, and this would give me much satisfaction"



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Download: [Information about the CPE course](#)

Download: [CPE Application Form](#)

On-going Support for Chaplains

Our Chaplaincy Support Team supports all our chaplains through:

- Arranging periodic introductory training for Buddhist chaplains
- Arranging appointments of chaplains to hospitals and prisons
- Facilitating payments to chaplains to help cover their expenses
- Conducting periodic in-service workshops where chaplains learn from each other and from special guest speakers
- Providing books and other resources for chaplains to give out
- Maintaining an emergency number for hospitals needing a chaplain
- Providing administration and support for chaplains
- Maintaining a Chaplaincy Practice Guide (techniques and methods used in the provision of Buddhist chaplaincy services)

The following resources are available for chaplains:

- The BuddhistChaplainsNetwork.org serves the educational and informational needs of Buddhist chaplains and spiritual care givers
- The [Buddhist Care For the Dying Booklet](#) was published by the Buddhist Council of Victoria, with sponsorship from the Yun Yang Temple and the Victorian Multicultural Commission
- [Civil Chaplaincies Advisory Committee](#) coordinates chaplaincy in Health Services, Corrective Services and Juvenile Justice
- [Spiritual Care Australia](#) is the professional association for practitioners in chaplaincy, pastoral care and spiritual services