 **Canada & Bermuda Territory - Social Services Department**

**Spiritual & Religious Care**

**Hospital & Hospice Ministry**

**Top 10 List: When to Call a Chaplain**

1. **“Why?” Questions**

The patient is asking questions such as “Why is this happening to me?” “What did I do to deserve this?” or “Why is God punishing me?”

2. **Anxiously Awaiting Diagnosis**

The patient expresses anxiety while awaiting a diagnosis, especially if a life-threatening disease is being confirmed (or ruled out). Also applies if usual diagnostic tests have not yet confirmed a diagnosis, especially if the patient is still awaiting news after several days.

3. **Potentially Life-Threatening Diagnosis**

The patient is newly diagnosed with a potentially life-threatening disease or condition.

4. **Serious or Repeated Set-backs**

The patient is WAY off the clinical pathway. There have been a series of set-backs, complications, or other unexpected events. This applies especially if the patient’s discharge is being delayed or recovery worsens.

5. **Terminal or Dying**

All patients believed to be dying should be assessed for spiritual needs by the chaplain.

6. **Bereavement**

The patient mentions bereavement during the last year, or an anniversary of bereavement, or ANY OTHER LOSS (e.g. job, marriage, death of pet). Also refer any patient who becomes bereaved while in the hospital.

7. **Persistent Negative Feelings**

The patient expresses persistent feelings of hopelessness, sadness, guilt, fear, anxiety or homesickness.

8. **Pain**

The patient still complains of feeling pain in spite of all appropriate pharmacological measures being taken.

9. **Family Members**

The family members of patients in any of the above circumstances may need care.

10. **Family Members Making Decisions**

Family members feeling anxious or guilty over decisions being made on behalf of a patient (e.g. – D.N.R., withdrawing of life support, residential placement, etc) may need care.

**Contact a Chaplain anytime patients or families request spiritual or religious care, or whenever you believe there may be a spiritual need.**