

CCAPS Presentation Notes
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Seventh Day Adventist International HQ, Silver Spring, Maryland
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From its beginnings in 1985 until 2003, CCAPS was known as JCAPS (Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Pastoral Services). In 2003, its name was changed to CCAPS - COMISS Commission for the Accreditation of Pastoral Services.¹

The current CCAPS Standards connect to a compelling story of visionary predecessors who were pioneers in establishing benchmarks (Standards) for the assessment of institutions that provided chaplaincy services within their organizational structures and provided accreditation of those institutions upon request and successful review.

Definitions: Accreditation is the measurement of institutions and organizations against a set of standards. Examples are CCAPS accredited organizations and clinical pastoral educational organizations accredited by a national accrediting body. Certification – the assessment of individuals against a set of standards, e.g. Board-Certified chaplains, certified CPE Educators.

1986. The original plans for CCAPS envisioned 60 accreditation visits a year and a budget that included a half-time administrator as well as dozens of commissioners.²

1991. The JCAPS Report to COMISS Annual Forum noted that there was very little interest among chaplains in seeking accreditation for their centers. In other words, the founders' dreams were never realized.

- My conclusion: The major contribution of JCAPS/CCAPS is its set of standards, not the actual number of accredited centers.

For the first 30 years, there was only one set of Standards (revised periodically) – for healthcare Institutions with departments of chaplaincy.

In 2023, however, we created a second set of Standards, for Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care Employing Organizations. Here is a side-by-side comparison of areas addressed by the Standards. The complete sets of Standards may be found on the COMISS website.

Healthcare Chaplaincy	Chaplaincy Employing Organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization seeking accreditation • Chaplaincy Services • Budget • Facilities – office, chapel, consultation, privacy, library • Professionalism: certification, endorsement, ethics, research literacy, standards of practice, continuing education • Director • Outside Clergy • Support Staff • Outreach • Integration • Documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization seeking accreditation • Chaplaincy Services • Budget • Policies • Personnel Records & Performance Evaluations • Chaplaincy Personnel • Chaplaincy Manager/Director • Support Staff • Team Meetings

The CCAPS story cannot be separated from the CPE Movement, the Pastoral Care and Counseling Movement, and COMISS itself.

CPE Movement. Thus, the CCAPS pre-history begins with the birth of CPE -- Clinical Pastoral Education, originally called Clinical Pastoral Training. An excellent history of the CPE movement is found in Hall, Charles E. *Head and Heart: The Story of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement*. Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, 1992.

Anecdote. When I was Executive Director of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, the number **1925** was handwritten on a 3x5 card stuck to a file cabinet in the ACPE Office. I asked about it and was told that on a bad day, we comfort ourselves with the fact that CPE has been around since 1925, and it will be around long after any bad day in the office.

1940-1960. Out of the CPE Movement developed the pastoral care and counseling (specialized ministry) movement. COC (1946), AMHC (1948), ACCA (American Correctional Chaplains Association), APCCA (American Protestant Correctional Chaplains Association), AAPC (1960s) and denominational faith-group endorsers.³

1967. ACPE formed out of a conjoining of the Council for Clinical Training, the Institute for Pastoral Care, and two denominational groups: Lutherans and Southern Baptists. Many special studies and committees began meeting including a joint ATS-ACPE committee to study mutual concerns in accreditation (Hall, p. 191).⁴

1970. The College of Chaplains invited cognate organizations to meet in what became known as the Interorganizational Consultation.

1974. The Interorganizational Consultation created a study committee on accreditation of pastoral care departments [Hall, p. 207].

1978. Chicago. Interorganizational Consultation recommended the formation of COMISS – Council on Ministry in Specialized Settings.

1979. The COMISS structure that developed included Advocacy, Communication, Research, Publications, Standards, and Fund Raising (Anton Boisen Fund).

Advocacy took many forms including establishing standards (JCAPS), and committees on promoting specialized ministry, research, publications, and Pastora Care Week (aka Spiritual Care Week).

ADVOCACY WAS NEEDED BECAUSE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- **Kentucky, 1971.** New governor downgraded qualifications for state employed correctional chaplains.
- **Pennsylvania, 1980.** New governor removed all 42 part-time state funded chaplains and severely reduced the number of full-time chaplains without consulting with the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, abandoning a 25-year practice.
- **Iowa, 1980.** Downgrading of qualifications for state employed chaplains.
- **Ohio Correctional Chaplains, 1984.** Major adverse changes to employment practices.
- **Georgia, 1991.** Nearly all chaplains in the Georgia State system were fired. COMISS did a site visit and issued a report via its Public Issues Task Force.
- **Connecticut, 1991.** Significant reduction in number of chaplains.

1988. COMISS was incorporated and launched at Dialog 88.⁵

- The C in COMISS changed from Council to Congress.
- Later the C changed to Coalition.
- And finally, the name changed to COMISS: The Network for Ministry in Specialized Settings.

1985. December. COMISS approved the JCAPS Standards⁶

1986. JCAPS Structure⁷ was approved in June by JIPCO [Joint Issues in Pastoral Care Organizations) and submitted for approval by COMISS in their December meeting.⁸

1998. JCAPS & JCAHO

The following article was published in *Chaplaincy Today* on the relationship between JCAPS & JCAHO.

Le Doux Sakurai, Michele, Tartaglia, Alexander, Waff, Razz. "JCAHO, JCAPS, and Pastoral Care: Significant Changes." *Chaplaincy Today* (1998), 14/2:52-56. [Note: JCAHO = Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, now known simply as The Joint Commission.]

Key Points:

- 1997 joint meeting of AMHC & COC included a JCAHO Team Leader for CAMH (Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals)
- 1998 – JCAPS led workshop for JCAHO accreditors on ways to evaluate pastoral services. {Razz Waff and Jo Schrader}
- a first-ever definition of qualified chaplains in the JCAHO surveyors' manual

At this point, we will switch from the history of CCAPS to the present day. To help us appreciate and understand the value of CCAPS standards and its accreditation process, let's turn to the story of Baptist Community Ministries of New Orleans.

Baptist Community Ministries of New Orleans. Interview with Larry Johnson, Vice President, Chaplaincy Services.⁹

On October 2, 2021, I received an email from Larry Johnson telling me there were problems with being able to download the CCAPS Standards from the website. That began email and telephone conversations in which we discovered that the CCAPS Standards for Healthcare Organizations wouldn't fit a Chaplaincy Employing Organization. So, that led to an 18-month process in which we developed a whole new set of Standards. And in June 2024 BCM was the first to be accredited under these Standards.

1. Larry: Tell us briefly about BCM – its history and structure -- and why you wanted accreditation. Larry shares as follows:

[BCM is a Christian faith-based philanthropic foundation domiciled in New Orleans, Louisiana. The organization originally existed as the Southern Baptist Hospital \(established in 1926\). The changing healthcare landscape in New Orleans led to the](#)

sale of the hospital, the proceeds from which were used to establish BCM. Currently, BCM is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees and led by a President & CEO. The three divisions comprising BCM are Chaplaincy Services, Congregational Wellness, and Grants. Each division is led by a Vice President, who reports to the Chief Operating Officer. BCM also has a general administration "division" composed of the accounting team, HR director, IT & Facilities director, office manager, and receptionist.

BCM pursued accreditation with CCAPS to assess and confirm its approach to chaplaincy. Formerly, BCM operated an ACPE center that had to meet established standards and received regular, cyclical feedback about services according to those established standards. Following the decision to place full-time chaplains instead of training chaplaincy residents, BCM's Chaplaincy Services Division did not have any established, peer-reviewed standards to assess chaplaincy services.

2. I'd love for everyone to hear about your chaplaincy program and the various settings your chaplains currently work in. Larry shares:

Chaplaincy Services is an integral part of our organization and has been since its days as Southern Baptist Hospital. We currently have eight full-time chaplains serving in various community settings in the Greater New Orleans region. We have five chaplains with the New Orleans Police Department, two chaplains at local hospitals, a chaplain at the emergency call center and also a chaplain at a drug rehabilitation center.

3. What was the CCAPS accreditation process like for you? Self-Study, Site Visit? And what has been the value for you and BCM? Larry shares as follows:

The process was thoroughly challenging, educational, and rewarding. The self-study facilitated organizational, professional, and divisional learning and self-reflection. Through the months-long process of self-study, we had to take a deep dive into our service offerings, processes, and rationale for the way we provide our services. We learned the historical basis for our current model, which led to asking whether we were in the right spaces and whether our processes meet community needs and our organizational goals.

The site visit was also a learning experience, especially for our executive team and Board of Trustees. The executive team had an opportunity to share its vision for chaplaincy services and demonstrate its support for the program. The board shared historical knowledge of the department and shared how involved it is in the quality and effectiveness of the chaplaincy program. In addition, the site visit allowed the organizations with whom BCM partners to share their impressions of BCM's chaplaincy program, including strengths and limitations of the services.

4. I understand your public safety chaplains were involved in providing support during the tragic New Year's Eve terrorist massacre, we'd love to hear about the ministry your chaplains provided. Larry shares as follows:

Yes, our public safety chaplains were actively engaged in providing support in the aftermath of the New Year's Eve terrorist attack. I have to say that BCM is always proud of our chaplaincy staff and work, but their response to the attack makes us even more proud. The first chaplain arrived on the scene within 45 minutes of the attack. BCM had three chaplains on scene within 1 hour and 15 minutes after the attack. All in all, six BCM chaplains actively provided support in response to the attack. Two chaplains were on the scene, two chaplains were at the nearest police district station, one chaplain was at the local level 1 trauma center hospital, and the VP went to the corporate office to open it up as the chaplaincy support operation center.

The chaplains provided individual pastoral care and counseling, including pastoral conversation, spiritual assessment, and pastoral presence to officers and affected civilians, especially those who witnessed the event. The chaplains also provided group care and counseling, including offering prayers for protection and other religious/spiritual rituals during officer roll calls. In addition, they provided chaplaincy care to 137 officers at 20 critical incident stress debriefings following the attacks.

Thanks, Larry, for sharing this inspiring story. Your ministry in New Orleans is a model for others.

ENDNOTES

¹ The document contains my presenter's notes and is in outline form, for the most part.

² Current Commissioners (2025) are David Plummer, Mario Ceballos, and Russell Haden Davis, PhD. Some of the chairs of CCAPS have been Helen Hayes, Razz Waff, Will Kinnaird, Alexander "Lex" Tartaglia, David Plummer, Michael Pollit, James R. Taylor, and Russell Haden Davis.

³ The Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) was formed in 1998 through a merger of two organizations: the COC and the AMHC. **COC** = College of Chaplains (COC), which was originally the Chaplains' Division of the American Protestant Hospital Association (APHA). The COC meetings were held in conjunction with the APHA. **AMHC** = Association of Mental Health Clergy. (formerly known as the Association of Mental Hospital Chaplains). The AMHC originally met in conjunction with the American Psychiatric Association. Food for Thought: What did we gain as a movement by the merger that formed APC and what did we lose in dissolving the connection of chaplains with the APHA and the American Psychiatric Association? **AAPC** = American Association of Pastoral Counselors. In 2019, AAPC consolidated with the [Association for Clinical Pastoral Education](#) (ACPE) and now exists within the organization as the ACPE Psychotherapy Commission.

⁴ Hall, Charles E. *Head and Heart: The Story of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement*. Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, 1992. ATS = Association of Theological Schools.

⁵ NOTE: COMISS is an organization of organizations. COMISS has no individual memberships. Each member organization is allowed to bring up to 3 members to the annual forum, but only one vote per organization is permitted in the business meeting.

⁶ Letter from A. Napier Baker, Convenor JIPCO Accreditation Consultation, to The Rev. Robert Duvall, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention dated July 17, 1986, with approved Structure attached. Duvall was to distribute the letter and attachment to COMISS & JIPCO members for COMISS deliberation and approval in December 1986. [Archives, Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Decatur, Georgia.]

⁷ The JCAPS Structure included

- (1) Introduction,
- (2) Description of The JCAPS Commission and Commissioners (COMISS appoints commissioners according to a representational plan, JCAPS officers, terms of service)
- (3) Accreditation Process including standards review, site visit, reports, and findings.
- (4) Budget.
- (5) Timetable – Site visits begin in 1987. Expectation 60 visits per year

⁸ Letter from A. Napier Baker, Convenor JIPCO Accreditation Consultation, to The Rev. Robert Duvall, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention dated July 17, 1986, with approved Structure attached. Duvall was to distribute the letter and attachment to COMISS & JIPCO members for COMISS deliberation and approval in December 1986. [Archives, Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Decatur, Georgia.]

⁹ The complete interview with Larry Johnson was recorded during the CNF2025 Forum. I'm not sure if that recording is available or not.