



Chaplaincy at MHA

One of the areas which makes MHA different from other care providers is the provision of our Chaplaincy service in all our care homes and the majority of our retirement living communities.

We believe that our residents' spiritual wellbeing is as important as their physical and mental wellbeing and our 140 Chaplains provide a source of counsel, advice and guidance to more than 7,600 residents and their families and friends.

This support is not just religious. For us, spirituality means a lot of things and our Chaplains draw on that in their work within communities and regardless of people's beliefs. It is often about providing a listening ear to people who come from differing faiths or none at all.

The role of a Chaplain is varied. Many residents and families speak to them at a time of crisis, such as when they are moving in to the home. Others may seek counsel on a more regular basis.

Importantly, our Chaplains play an important wider community role, helping forge links between our residents and staff, volunteers, families and friends and the community in which the home or scheme is based in.

Providing support through unsettling times

Kathleen, who spent the last weeks of her life in our Abbey Park residence, found support and comfort in our chaplaincy service.

Kathleen moved into the Home when her husband who had looked after her for years died suddenly. So she faced not only the shock of bereavement but of moving house after nearly seventy years.

When Kathleen arrived at Abbey Park, our chaplain Pauline spent time getting to know her. She found out that Kathleen was too frail to attend her husband's funeral, and so arranged for a service to take place in Kathleen's room at the same time as the funeral.

Pauline spoke to Kathleen's family to find out which hymns, readings and addresses would be used and arranged for a friend to join them. After the funeral, Pauline spent time reading with Kathleen and supporting her through her bereavement.

Kathleen's son said: "Pauline provided vital, practical and spiritual support at a time of great sadness for my mother and us all. She found a way for my mother to feel connected to the funeral, even though she couldn't be there in person, and helped her grieve in the weeks afterwards. The care and compassion shown by Pauline helped her settle better into her new home during an otherwise very distressing time and really demonstrates how having a Chaplain makes a difference."