



Fact Sheet – Pastoral Division
Landstuhl Regional Medical Center
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Clinical Pastoral Division

Mission:

The Clinical Pastoral Division at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) provides religious and counseling support to the military community, staff and patients Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC). The staff of Air Force, Army and Navy personnel consists of active duty, Guard and Reserve chaplains and chaplain's assistants, as well as full-time civilians and volunteers.

The role of LRMC chaplains is much like his or her civilian counterpart in the United States. They conduct religious services for a variety of faiths. If the needs of a particular religion cannot be met by the existing staff, LRMC chaplains strive to find a religious representative who can satisfy the needs of their particular faith.

Chaplains make daily bedside visits with sick and injured parishioners, Wounded Warriors, civilian contractors as well as coalition troops from 44 different countries treated at LRMC. When Wounded Warriors arrive at LRMC, a chaplain is the first person who greets them as they are unloaded from a military ambulance bus.

Unlike back home, however, LRMC chaplains are trained to provide counseling to Wounded Warriors to help them some make sense of the traumatic experiences of war. The Pastoral staff also monitors the emotional pulse of doctors, nurses and other staff members dealing with trauma on a continuous basis, and provided counseling as needed.

“It’s the best job I’ve ever had in the Army,” said Army Chaplain (Colonel) James Griffith, Chief of the Clinical Pastoral Division. “It’s one that’s directly contributing to the war effort and yet in a way that is directly making an impact on the lives of patients, family and staff members.”

Wounded Warrior Ministry Center:

In addition to their more traditional duties, LRMC chaplains also manage the Wounded Warrior Ministry Center, or more commonly referred to as the Chaplain’s Closet.

Because of the speed of transporting Wounded Warriors from the battlefield to medical treatment facilities, some arrive with little more than the clothes they’re wearing.

But thanks to the Chaplain’s Closet, by the time a Wounded Warrior departs LRMC for more long-term care in the U.S., he or she is loaded down with personal items such as clothing and toiletries thanks in part to the generosity of a long list of donors.

History of the Chaplain’s Closet:

In late 2002, as a steady stream of combat casualties flowed in from Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, Landstuhl nurses decided more could be done for their patients. Wounded Warriors were arriving straight from the battlefield, and it was winter. Until their bags caught up with them from downrange, they’d need clothes, shoes, toothbrushes, shampoo and music or DVDs to pass the time.

Soon after, boxes full of donations began arriving from the staff and community and were kept in an actual closet in a chaplain’s office. From that humble closet, the donated items were transferred to a couple of nearby temporary buildings where patients could pick up personal items to get them through a few days at the hospital. The Chaplain’s Closet is now a fixed facility adjacent to the Pastoral Division.

Donated items range across the board, including CDs, DVDs, phone cards, quilts, sweat suits, athletic shoes and duffel bags. Patients who are able to can “shop” for items

themselves. For those who are unable to leave their room, liaison officers and members of the chaplain's staff will take their request and help fill their needs.

The Chaplain's Closet is accessible 24/7 thanks in part to a staff of 22 volunteers who donate more than 600 hours a month. Some of those volunteers travel from the United States specifically to donate their time.

The hospital cannot and does not solicit contributions. Credit is given to churches, charities and veterans service organizations for providing these and other comfort. Since October 2001, the Chaplain's Closet has received approximately \$2.3 million in donated items and monetary contributions from about 3,000 donors.

(Current as of June 2009)