

The Chaplain is responsible for spiritual care at Louis Brier Home and Hospital and Weinberg Residence. In addition to being a chaplain, Rob Menes is also an ordained cantor (Hazzan) in the Conservative movement. As such he has a dual role here. Spiritual Care is the attention to the non-physical needs of the resident, including the need to make meaning and purpose, address emotional distress, and connect to the transcendent through faith and prayer. The chaplain's role is non-denominational, working with each resident within their faith tradition to improve their quality of life. Often, this means facilitating prayer and rituals in their religion, but it also means identifying avenues of spiritual engagement which enliven and give meaning to one's life outside of religion. By using specific skills for listening, assessing, and exploring with each individual, the chaplain enables each individual to journey, on their own terms, without judgment, to resolve distress or find a path to joy. This often requires a discussion about the end of life and the identification of what one values. However, sometimes it simply requires the presence of the chaplain, to make a connection with the resident, to be an advocate and a person they can trust. At other times, it requires the ability of the chaplain to reduce anxiety, provide words of inspiration, or sing music which can touch the soul.

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The chaplain cares for staff, and families as well as residents. Support includes direct conversations and group conferences. Through the pandemic, this meant the use of Zoom. The chaplain facilitates end of life arrangements when needed, and links residents with appropriate local clergy within their faith tradition. As the chair of the End of Life Team, co-chair of the Ethics Committee and facilitator for the Ritual Committee, the chaplain leads the effort to appropriately recognize the spiritual aspects of care. The chaplain works as part of the care team to ensure complete person-centred care, respecting religious and traditional practices and family relationships.

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The chaplain has developed and implemented Interfaith Services to meet the broad needs of the non-Jewish residents. Additionally, he has delivered programs to address other ways ways to engage residents, such as meditation, spiritual music, and ethics discussions. He also visits residents in the hospital if they are there for an extended stay.

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However, there is another part of the chaplain's functions which directly addresses the need for Jewish leadership on the Snider campus. As a cantor for over 20 years and previously an executive director and board member of various synagogues, the chaplain is well-versed in all aspects of Judaism, whether that be Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform. He provides daily information regarding the rituals and customs of Judaism and is the primary source of orientation for new staff. He leads Jewish services and Memorial services, and says prayers for Jewish residents as required (including vidui). On request, he has performed funerals and external memorial services. He develops and distributes written information regarding holidays and customs. While not the mara d'atra of the campus, he provides information for staff for kashrut, and the mitzvot as requested.