

Dr. Naomi Paget, BCC, BCETS, Ministry During Pandemic: From Awareness to Implementation, March 2020, p. 59.

## Chapter 12

### Practical Applications in Pandemic:

#### Bullet Points for the Chaplain and Minister

- Social distancing may require online ministry
- Community education is necessary regarding death and dying
- Families need resources for home religious services, including funerals
- People tend to “fight or flight” during crisis—that will exacerbate pandemic
- Mass burials may be necessary – how do we “dignify” mass burials?
- The military may assume all responsibility for law enforcement—martial law may be in effect
- There will be wide-spread chaos and panic, perhaps even rioting
- Isolation and quarantine may increase panic among people
- Patient tracking during quarantine will be difficult
- Small businesses may fail; large business may struggle
- Some people will refuse to cooperate—how do you deal with them?
- Each family, institution, and agency must have a designated point of contact and a communicator or public information officer (e.g. in the Tom Smith family, Mary is the person who contacts all the other family members with updates and information and Mary is the person extended family, church, and friends call to check on the Tom Smith family)
- Chaplains and ministers must maintain their own personal protective equipment (e.g. disposable gloves, hand sanitizers, disposable respirators [masks], tissues)
- Personal rights may be limited by the needs of the community
- Schools may be closed—child care will be necessary
- Insurance companies will be overwhelmed
- Church members, institutions, and agencies will struggle with many ethical dilemmas including obligation, duty, and responsibility to constituents, and unaffiliated fellow citizens
- Insurance policies may have exclusions for some aspects of pandemic

- Pastor/chaplains and ministers may be forced to choose between church and agency
- Line of succession and chain of command must be clearly identified
- Bodies in mass graves may never be recovered
- We must accommodate multiple cultural and faith needs in mass burials
- Who will receive church ministry? Members? "Friends?"  
Neighborhood? Community?
- Special need populations (elderly, disabled, seriously ill, etc.) may receive special accommodations or priority treatment (or not) against the will of some citizens
- Someone must decide if citizens receive treatment before "foreigners" or non-US citizens
- Churches must decide if they have a responsibility to store food and be prepared to care for its members and the neighboring community
- Institutions or agencies must communicate their responsibility to employees or staff during quarantines or long periods of isolation
- Even extensive planning will be imperfect and inadequate - the unexpected will occur
- The Ministry of Presence must happen albeit without physical presence
- Chaplains and ministers and other leaders will be forced to assume field responsibility and leadership that involves difficult decision making
- Faith leaders will struggle with self care and duty to serve