

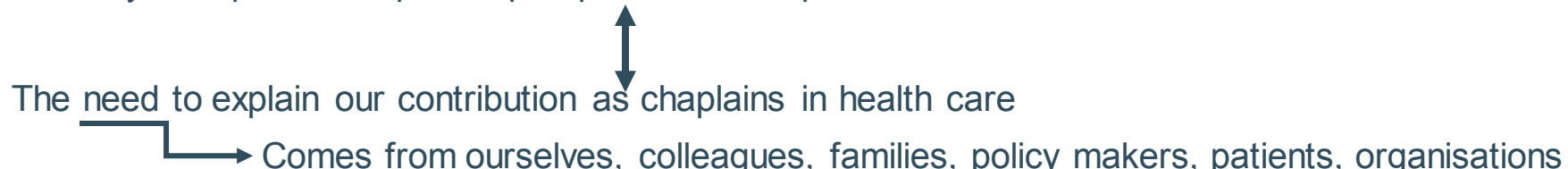
From a research
perspective:
case studies in Flanders

What chaplains have
learned in Flanders
case study research

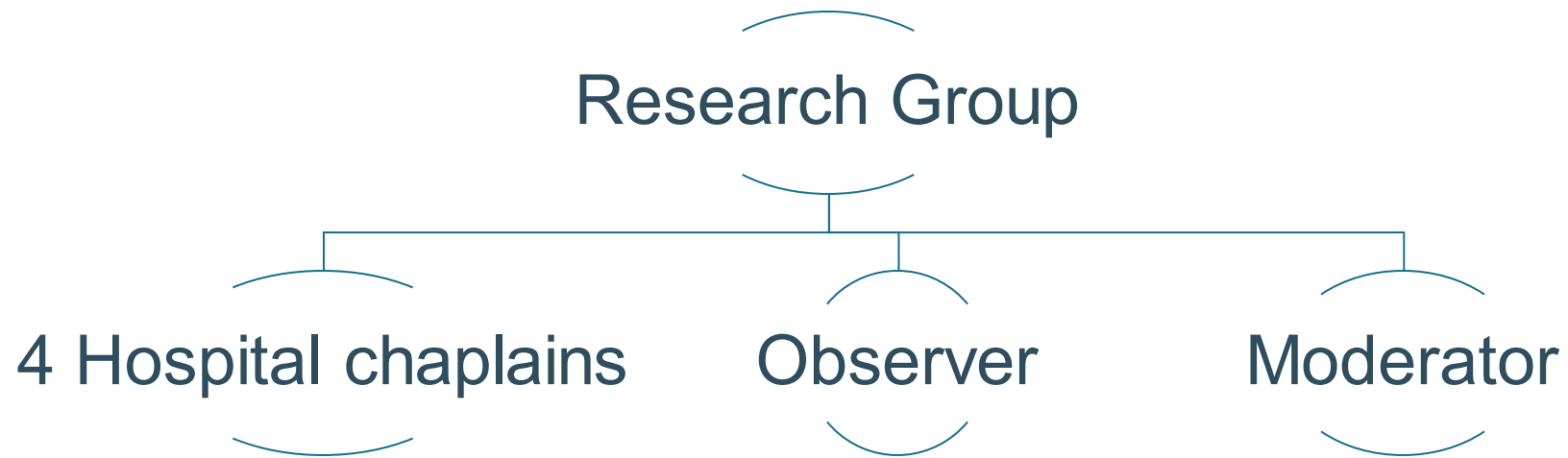
Lindsay Desmet – Coordinator ERICH
Academic Centre for Practical Theology
Chaplain in Elderly Care

Frieda Boeykens – Pastoral Supervisor
Academic Centre for Practical Theology
Hospital Chaplain

Context

- Actual situation:
Difficulty to explain the specific perspective of our profession to others


The need to explain our contribution as chaplains in health care
Comes from ourselves, colleagues, families, policy makers, patients, organisations
- Research Question:
How can chaplains learn to articulate our interventions and outcomes?
What are the interventions and outcomes of chaplains?
- Methodology:
George Fitchett & Steve Nolan
Format of Sjaak Körver & Martin Walton
- Flanders Research:
2017: Small Research Group Leuven – Master Thesis – Prof. Dr. Anne Vandenhoeck
Results: Nine interventions and outcomes formulated by four chaplains
- Presenters:
Lindsay Desmet: Results of working with case studies from a research perspective
Frieda Boeykens: Process of working with case studies from chaplains' perspective








- Format Körver & Walton
- Four case studies: Background and context of chaplain and patient
Why this case study?
Description of the contact with the patient
Interventions and outcomes
Reflection by the chaplain
- Introduction session – Exploring case studies (2x) – Concluding session
- Annex: Interventions and outcomes

My point of view

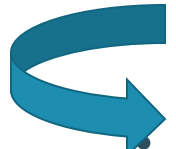
- Presentation of my observations in guiding the process during the case study research
- Experienced as pastoral supervisor
- First acquaintance with case study research and moderating group process in this context
- Curious about similarities and differences with my experiences in my supervision practice
- What do chaplains learn from the process in case study research?

My task as moderator

- Keep the group discussions in line with format of Walton and Körver
- Keep an eye on timing
- Guarantee a meta position in the process:
 -  group supervision
 -  consultation between colleagues
 -  ensure the focus of the group discussions in line with research boundaries
 -  transfer from narratives to data
 -  transfer from narrative discourse to informative discourse
- Working towards a result

Challenges – Safe conversational climate

Chaplains



- Starting point from daily practice as it is = exposing vulnerability
 - Stories, personal questions, uncertainties, doubts...
 - In need of reassurance

Moderator



- Dealing with tension between task of the case study research and person of the chaplain
- Finding balance between maintaining and letting go of the conversational outline

Challenges – Meta Position

- Observation:
 - Pastoral supervision = encouraging first person language
 - In this case study research = encouraging third person language as it was provided in the format in order to foster meta position
 - = Huge challenge!
 - Not succeeded in maintaining this language
 - Great inconvenience for chaplains
- Is the use of third person language necessary throughout the whole process to foster meta position?
- Cfr. own experience as hospital chaplain: registration in patient files in third person language
 - = helping in transfer to more informative discourse
 - registration = written language
 - afterwards reflection

Challenges – Group discussion

- Flemish nature?
- Pastoral culture?
- Culture of admiration and reassurance rather than culture of critical questioning

Challenges – Theoretical frameworks

- Spontaneously in written documents and group discussions little theoretical frameworks and concepts
- Clearly need for more theoretical input to gain more depth in the discussions
 cfr. transfer practice to praxis
- As moderator obliged to bring in concepts to encourage critical reflection on practice
- Lacking role of external researcher

Learning outcomes – Research role

Participants are encouraged to

- take a closer look at one's own professional practices
- to select one representative case
- to then observe oneself but also others within that case
- to describe and name one's own actions and outcomes
- to take the time for all this

They have learned

- that observing, writing down and discussing in a more methodological and systematic way can change their perceptions of the case
- to work with a more critical approach to their own professional practices, critical not in the sense of questioning themselves, but in the sense of questioning the profession
- that they can take on the role of researcher in their own daily practice

Learning outcomes – common jargon

The participants were encouraged

- To engage into a common jargon
- To let go personal questions, uncertainties and vulnerabilities
- To kept focus on what is meant by spiritual care in this case and spiritual care has achieved

Learning outcomes – Conceptual frameworks

- Aware of personal conceptual frameworks
- Acquaintance with new conceptual frameworks
- More capable in naming interventions and outcomes in spiritual care in more general concepts

Learning outcomes - Professionalism

Acquaintance with a certain view on professionalism

Cfr. Manon Ruijters and others define a professional as

someone who, by choice, dedicates him- or herself to the service of clients. This dedication is done in a competent and upright manner, using relevant knowledge and experience. By doing this, he or she uses and actively contributes to a community of professionals that continually develop the field.

M.C.P. Ruijters (red.) en co, *Je binnenste buiten. Over professionele identiteit in organisaties*, Vakmedianet, Deventer, 2015, p. 87.

Learning outcomes – personal and common

- Integration of individual and collective component
- Integration of spiritual component
- Personal development and development of colleagues
- Sharing knowledge, experience, personal expertise, reflections
- Addition: development of professional language, comprehensible for other disciplines, expression of chaplains own contribution



Experiencing working on two levels

- Personal level of their own story
- Common level of the field or profession which incorporates their own practices and stories and at the same time transcend them.

Comparison

Supervision

Personal learning process

Reflecting on acquirement or deepening
role of chaplain

Questioning oneself

Relevance of inner world

Process

First person language

Finding a language to communicate

Case study

- Needs of the field
- Result
- Questioning the profession
- Third person language
- Development of common jargon