

Local Hospital Tour Pre-Class Assignment

January 2027 COSS

Objective:

To familiarize yourself with the physical layout, services, and spiritual resources of your local hospital, as well as to build a connection with the hospital chaplain. This exercise is designed to help you understand the hospital environment and its role in crisis ministry.

Instructions:

1. Plan Your Visit:

- Choose a time during regular visiting hours when the hospital is likely to be less busy (e.g., mid-morning or mid-afternoon).
- Dress appropriately in business casual attire to reflect the professionalism expected in ministry settings.

2. Explore Key Areas:

During your visit, locate and make note of the following areas in the hospital:

- **Emergency Room (ER):** Find the entrance and observe the layout. Where is the waiting area?
- **Registration/Reception:** Identify the central area where patients and visitors check in.
- **Chapel or Meditation Room:** Spend a few minutes in prayer, reflecting on the ministry that takes place in this setting.
- **Cafeteria or Dining Area:** Familiarize yourself with the space often frequented by staff, patients, and visitors.
- **Do not enter patient care areas or any restricted spaces.**

3. Observe the Environment:

- Take note of the general atmosphere: Is it welcoming? Organized? Stressful?
- Observe any signage or directories that provide guidance for visitors.
- Pay attention to areas where people might gather during crises, such as family waiting rooms or the ER.
- Canvas the neighborhood around the hospital, note services, businesses and housing in the area. Is the hospital accessible for people without transportation?

4. Connect with the Chaplain:

- Reach out to the hospital chaplain (if available) in advance or during your visit.

- Introduce yourself as a student in crisis ministry and express interest in learning more about their work.
- Ask about their role, typical responsibilities, and any challenges they face in their ministry.

5. Reflect and Note Other Areas:

- Look for additional spaces or services you might not have considered, such as social work offices, patient advocacy, or counseling areas.
- Consider how these areas may intersect with your role as a pastoral caregiver.

6. Reflection Paper:

After your visit, write a **1–2 page reflection paper** that includes the following:

- Name of the hospital, address, date visited, length of stay, name of chaplain.
- A summary of your observations, including the layout and atmosphere of the hospital.
- Insights gained from your time in the chapel.
- Key takeaways from your conversation with the chaplain.
- Your thoughts on how this experience shapes your understanding of crisis ministry in a hospital setting.

Important Guidelines:

- This assignment is to be completed independently of any hospital visit made for other purposes, such as visiting a patient.
- Adhere to all hospital policies and respect patient privacy during your visit.
- **Do not enter patient care areas or any restricted spaces.**

Due Date: January 15, 2027 by 11:59pm via Canvas.