

Spotlighting Columbine Health's Clinical Pastoral Education Program and Spiritual Care Leaders

Leading this program are two seasoned professionals: Peter Strening, the Chaplain and Director of CHSCPE, and Rebecca McFee, the Director of Chaplaincy.

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[Columbine Health](#) is dedicated to offering holistic care that addresses not only the physical but also the emotional and spiritual needs of its residents. This commitment is exemplified by the Columbine Health Systems [Clinical Pastoral Education \(CHSCPE\)](#) program, an accredited initiative designed to enrich spiritual care across its communities while training the next generation of chaplains. Leading this program are two seasoned professionals: Peter

Strening, the Chaplain and Director of CHSCPE, and Rebecca McFee, the Director of Chaplaincy. Together, they provide invaluable guidance and support to residents, their families, and staff.

The Vision Behind CHSCPE

The CHSCPE program stands as a beacon of Columbine Health's dedication to holistic care. By integrating spiritual care into the overall healthcare experience, the program addresses the emotional and existential challenges that many residents face as they age. Chaplain interns in the program gain hands-on experience under the leadership of Peter and Rebecca, learning to provide personal spiritual care through one-on-one interactions and group settings. This exchange benefits both residents and interns, as residents receive emotional support and companionship while interns develop their pastoral identity.



Spiritual care helps residents find strength, meaning, and a sense of purpose, especially during challenging times. Chaplains trained through the CHSCPE program offer grief counseling, facilitate end-of-life decision-making, lead faith discussions, and provide prayer and support. These services foster a sense of connection and hope, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting an environment of gratitude within the communities.

Meet Peter Strening

Peter Strening is the Chaplain at Columbine Health and also serves as the Director of the CHSCPE program. With a Masters in Divinity and extensive experience as a hospital chaplain and chaplain educator, Peter brings a deep understanding of spiritual care to his role. His daily responsibilities include providing one-on-one spiritual care to residents, creating and leading group activities, supporting staff, mentoring CHSCPE students, and managing the administrative aspects of spiritual care.

For Peter, the most fulfilling aspect of his job is building meaningful relationships with residents. He is

inspired by their courage, dignity, and life stories, and enjoys learning from their experiences. His role as part of the care teams across Columbine Health's communities allows him to witness the profound impact that spiritual care can have on individuals facing health challenges.

Outside of work, Peter is a family man who enjoys spending time with his spouse Doti, their two sons, and their granddaughter. An avid outdoorsman, he loves cycling and soaking in the beauty of Colorado. He also finds joy in music, adding a layer of personal enrichment that complements his professional dedication to providing holistic care.

Meet Rebecca McFee



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Equally dedicated to spiritual care is Rebecca McFee, the Director of Chaplaincy at Columbine Health. With a Masters in Divinity and a Master's in Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Rebecca is a board-certified chaplain with experience in trauma level 1 hospitals and long-term care settings. Her diverse educational background enables her to offer both emotional and spiritual support to residents facing illness or injury.

Rebecca has been an integral part of Columbine Health for over a decade, visiting five communities each week, including Dementia Care Units, where she leads spiritual care groups. Her work involves providing direct spiritual care, coordinating efforts with hospice and local clergy, and leading community memorials. Like Peter, she takes pride in the opportunity to offer compassion, kindness, and a listening ear to those in need.

A long-time Colorado resident, Rebecca enjoys spending her free time outdoors, traveling, reading, playing piano, and gardening. She is also a sports enthusiast, enjoying football, basketball, and tennis, although she prefers watching them from the sidelines. Rebecca's personal passions balance her professional life, where her dedication to spiritual care enriches the lives of everyone she meets.

The Importance of Spiritual Care

The work that Peter and Rebecca do at Columbine Health is invaluable, as they help create a compassionate and supportive environment for residents, staff, and families. Spiritual care offers residents a space to reflect on their beliefs, grapple with life transitions, and find solace in moments of uncertainty. As residents age, face health challenges, or deal with the loss of loved ones, spiritual care provides them with comfort, strength, and meaning.

Through the CHSCPE program, Peter and Rebecca are not only providing direct spiritual care but also training the next generation of chaplains to continue this important work. The program prepares chaplain interns to walk alongside individuals from diverse spiritual backgrounds, offering support, hope, and companionship to those in need. As Rebecca notes, there is a growing demand for trained chaplains in Northern Colorado, and the CHSCPE program provides high-quality training without the need for long-distance travel.

CHSCPE's Impact Across Columbine Health

Columbine Health aims to extend the CHSCPE program to all four of its skilled nursing facilities and three assisted living communities, ensuring that spiritual care is accessible to all residents. This ambitious goal reflects the organization's belief that spiritual care is not just a luxury, but an essential part of healthcare. As Peter and Rebecca continue to lead the program, they are creating a nurturing environment where residents feel heard, supported, and valued.

More than just an educational opportunity for chaplain interns, the CHSCPE program is a pathway to developing compassionate caregivers. By mentoring chaplain interns and providing direct spiritual care, Peter and Rebecca are making a profound impact on the well-being of residents, families, and staff across Columbine Health's communities.

The CHSCPE program and the dedicated work of Peter Strening and Rebecca McFee highlight Columbine Health's commitment to providing comprehensive, compassionate care. By offering spiritual care that addresses residents' emotional and existential needs, Columbine Health is ensuring that residents feel supported, connected, and valued during every stage of their healthcare journey. Peter and Rebecca's leadership in spiritual care enriches the lives of everyone they touch, making Columbine Health a place where holistic care truly thrives.

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