OPERATION BALM
THE GEORGIA VOLUNTEER HOSPITAL CHAPLAINS INITIATIVE

Operation Balm is a combined effort of the Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC) to place trained volunteer chaplains in the smaller hospitals in the state of Georgia. The training provided by Operation Balm is designed to be used by volunteer desiring to be a volunteer chaplain for any size hospital in the state of Georgia.

MISSION: The mission of Operation Balm is to identify, enlist, equip, endorse and maintain qualified individuals to serve as volunteer chaplains in the hospitals in the state of Georgia. Any pastor, staff person, or layperson is eligible to attend this excellent training in order to minister as a chaplain in their local hospital.

DESCRIPTION: Operation Balm is a training that teaches the volunteer the basic of “Hospital Visitation”, “Culture Diversity”, “Grief Ministry”, “Crisis Ministry”, “Medical Ethics and Patient Rights”.

BENEFITS: The excellent training offered through Operation Balm will be extremely beneficial to the busy pastor, the hospital community, the patient, and the Kingdom of God.

Although most pastors visit their hospitalized church members, it is estimated that six out of ten hospital patients are unchurched. Therefore, during their hospital stay, which may be critical or even terminal, the patient and his family have no spiritual balm offered to them. When the situation is grave, hospital staff appreciate being able to say to frightened patients or grief-stricken family members, “Would you like for me to call our hospital chaplain?”

The ministry of a hospital chaplain benefits the patient as the chaplain shows concern, offers prayers, and shares the love of Christ. Operation Balm benefits the church by enhancing the church’s reputation in the community, identifying prospective church members and providing a unique opportunity to share Christ and minister in Jesus’ name. This ministry benefits the hospital and the community by offering a trained chaplain to patients as well as doctors, nurses, and other community members who are on staff at the hospital. Finally, Operation Balm benefits the pastor who realizes the value of this excellent training at no cost. Many busy pastors delegate this ministry to another church staff member or a competent lay person. Some pastors recognize that Operation Balm training increases credibility and trust and has the potential to open future doors for vocational chaplaincy positions.