

Spiritual Care

A quick guide to get you started

Spirituality involves acknowledging and nurturing the uniqueness of each person. Dimensions of spirituality are complex and can be expressed in a variety of ways, eg through relationships, life stories, their meaning and purpose in life, their beliefs, hopes and faith or through nature or the arts. Religious practices or beliefs are only a part of spirituality. In the New Zealand context, Te Whare Tapa Wha shows the importance of the four domains of care, Te taha whanau (the family), Te taha hinengaro (the mind and emotions), Te taha tinana (the physical aspect) and Te taha wairua (the spiritual dimension). The house (whare) stands strong if all four domains of wellbeing are nurtured and balanced.

GOAL

Goal 3.1: The resident is given the opportunity to discuss what is important to them at this time e.g. their wishes, feelings, faith, beliefs, values.

Goal 3.2: The relative or carer is given the opportunity to discuss what is important to them at this time e.g. their wishes, feelings, faith, beliefs, values.

Irrespective of any previous discussions, it is important to readdress conversations when a person is in the dying phase. Identify the spiritual needs & spiritual history of the person and their family and offer appropriate support now, at the time of the person's death or after their death.

Specific 4 hourly assessments Goals: P, Q, R & S. However, spirituality and culture are important in **ALL** aspects of care.

Here are some suggested prompt questions that may help begin your conversations with residents, their family/whanau

- ❖ How have you made sense of the challenges and stresses that have occurred in your life?
- ❖ What matters to you most?
- ❖ Which faith or spiritual practices are important to you?
- ❖ What are the most important things to you in life?
- ❖ Are you part of a community that offers support?
- ❖ Who or what gives you strength at this time?
- ❖ Who brings you comfort?
- ❖ What is giving you the most anxiety at the moment?
- ❖ What memories are troubling you?
- ❖ Would you like to talk about those?
- ❖ Who can bring you a sense of peace?

MANAGEMENT

APPROACH:

- Timing, space and environment is important for any discussion.
- Person will need privacy (might want family to be part of discussion).
- Be welcoming, approachable
- Listen actively and attentive.
- Ensure you have made time for this important conversation.
- Compassion is key.

TEAM WORK

- Might need some input from family or community members
- Consider referral to appropriate services e.g. chaplain, spiritual advisor, social worker, family support.
- If needed, consider support of senior nurse or specialist palliative care

RESOURCES

- What is important to the person
 - Relationships
 - Belongings and places that hold a personal meaning
 - Music/art
 - Icons/spiritual symbols
 - Pets
 - Religious/faith texts, prayers or readings

SELF MANAGEMENT

- Awareness this may bring up your own issues and challenges
- Don't be afraid to access additional support e.g. chaplain, colleagues or clinical supervision
- Be mindful not to put your own beliefs on to that of the resident or family
- Keep on exploring and learning, access journals, books, websites and reflect on your own practice
- Attend conferences and educational sessions.

REFERENCES:

- 1.Puchalski CM (2012) *Spirituality as an essential domain of palliative care: caring for the whole person*. Progress in Palliative Care. 20 (2), 63-65
- 2.Spencer-Adams S. (2011) *Incorporating spirituality in end-of-life nursing care*. End of life Journal with St Christophers. 1 (3), 1-8
- 3.Boxall J. (2010) *Palliative Care Factsheet 4 : Spiritual Care*. Hospital Palliative Care Service, Wellington.
- 4.Royal College of Nursing. (2011) *Spirituality in nursing care: a pocket guide*.
- 5.Mason, Durie (1982). *Te Whare Tapa Wha Model*. Downloaded from www.careers.govt.nz, Careers New Zealand, 2012
6. CALD refers to **culturally and linguistically diverse groups** who are migrants and refugees from Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American and African (MELAA) backgrounds. Downloaded from <http://www.ecald.com>