

# WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

Spirituality is a dynamic and intrinsic aspect of humanity through which persons seek ultimate **meaning, purpose, and transcendence**, and experience **relationship** to self, family, others, community, society, nature, and the significant or sacred.

**Spirituality is expressed through**



beliefs



values



traditions



practices

*Puchalski et al. 2014*

# WHAT IS WELLBEING?

**Wellbeing is a state of balance or alignment in:**



In this state we feel content; connected to purpose, people and community; peaceful and energised; resilient and safe. In short we are flourishing.

*Mary Jo Kreitzer*

## HOW DOES SPIRITUALITY AFFECT OUR WELLBEING?



Research has demonstrated the impact of religious, spiritual and existential beliefs, values and practices on people's:

Ability to transcend suffering

Way of life

Moral decision-making

Life choices

Interactions with others

**PRACTICING SPIRITUALITY BRINGS A SENSE OF MEANING, PURPOSE AND CONNECTION TO OUR LIVES.**

*Source: Puchalski and Ferrell. 2010*



*Spiritual Health Association*

## Spiritual, religious, existential and/or cultural practices can:

- Enhance a sense of wellbeing and improve quality of life  
*Cohen, et al. 2012*
- Provide social support  
*Spinale, et al. 2012*
- Generate feelings of love and forgiveness  
*Worthington, 2012*
- Enhance patient satisfaction  
*Marin et al 2015*



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**World Health Organization**

defined the four dimensions of well-being as physical, social, mental, and spiritual health.

# WHAT IS SPIRITUAL CARE?

Spiritual care is the provision of



assessment



counselling



support



ritual

in matters of a person's beliefs, traditions, values and practices enabling the person to access their own spiritual resources.

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# WHY IS SPIRITUAL CARE IMPORTANT?



“When spiritual needs are recognised and responded to as an integral part of person-centred care an essential contribution is made to peoples’ health and wellbeing”

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Addressing spiritual concerns positively impacts **patient satisfaction** and increases their **trust** in the **health care team**.

*Williams et al. 2011*



When spiritual needs are unmet, patients’ ratings of their satisfaction and **quality of care** are notably lower.

*Marin et al. 2015*

# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SPIRITUAL CARE?



Spiritual care offers you “freedom... being able to make up your own mind and make your decisions, your own choice... And you feel independent. There’s a dignity about everything that is done here. **We’re not just blobs in the bed, we’re people.**”

— Patient interview



Spiritual care provision is “an opportunity to express myself freely. Unlike with family and visitors [whom] I always put on a brave face-even though I often felt the opposite.”

— Patient interview



“Spiritual care is very important for my patients and **part of the whole care** which needs to be brought by professionals. It gives people a sense of meaning and of their inner framework.”

— Health care staff interview

87%

of respondents’ comments indicated that received spiritual care was a positive experience and it met their needs.

The presented evidence is taken from a series of publications by Spiritual Health Association related to the Patient Reported Outcome Measure (PROM), including:

- Tan, H., et al. (2020). "Understanding the outcomes of spiritual care as experienced by patients." *Journal of Health Care Chaplaincy*: 1-15.
- Gardner, F., et al. (2020). "What spirituality means for patients and families in health care." *Journal of religion and health* 59(1): 195-203.
- Tan, H., et al. (2020). "How is spiritual care/pastoral care understood and provided in general hospitals in Victoria, Australia? – Staff perspectives." *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* 10(2): 114-126.



Spiritual care was of considerable value when **provided by professional practitioners** and is an essential element of **whole person care** for patients, family members and staff.



Those who received spiritual care reported significantly higher **Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROM)** compared with those who did not receive spiritual care.



A **clearer referral system** would bring significant improvement in the level and quality of spiritual care provided.



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