

## SPIRITUAL CARE

### Tools for Providing Spiritual Care

There is more to being human than just our physical, cognitive, emotional, and social selves. While spirit may be less concretely understood than science and medicine, enough is known of its critical importance in human life. A hospice palliative care approach acknowledges that there is an integrated spiritual component to being a human being, and that tending to the spiritual needs and concerns of patients is an important part of caring for them fully and well.

### A Whole-Person Takes Whole-Team Care

Spiritual care is to be provided by the whole care team. For those team members who do not have additional training in spiritual care, their roles include screening and assessing patients and their families receiving palliative care for spiritual care needs. Activities such as active listening, and therapeutic presence can also be means of providing spiritual care to patients and their loved ones, as well as communicating a patient's wishes for spiritual care as part of their care plan and making appropriate referrals.

### Spiritual Care Screening

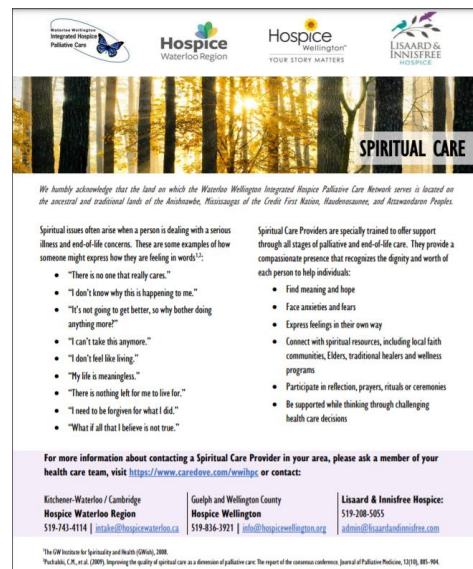
The life changes that come with life-limiting illness and moving toward end of life can spark thoughts, experiences and concerns of spiritual significance for patients and their families. Due to the possibility of spiritual care issues arising, it is important that all healthcare providers maintain an awareness of and openness to these needs through regular screening. The [Waterloo Wellington Integrated Hospice Palliative Care Spiritual Needs Screening Tool](#) is a useful resource.

### Spiritual Care Assessment

One evidence-based spiritual assessment tool that can be used by clinicians to better understand a patient's spiritual needs is the [FICA](#). To learn how to use the FICA tool, we encourage you to watch this brief [instructional video](#).

### Spiritual Care Providers (SCP) as Part of the Team

Patients and their families may or may not have current connections with faith, cultural or religious communities which provide them with spiritual support. SCPs may go by many titles with a wide variation of training and backgrounds, including but not limited to spiritual care providers, chaplains, religious leaders, and cultural healers. They can provide important insights for other members of the healthcare team into the care of the patient and their family.



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**YOUR STORY MATTERS**

**SPIRITUAL CARE**

*We humbly acknowledge that the land on which the Waterloo Wellington Integrated Hospice Palliative Care Network serves is located on the ancestral and traditional lands of the Anishnawbe, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Haudenosaunee, and Attawandaron Peoples.*

Spiritual issues often arise when a person is dealing with a serious illness and end-of-life concerns. There are some examples of how someone might express how they are feeling in words<sup>1,2</sup>:

- "There is no one that really cares."
- "I don't know why this is happening to me."
- "It's not going to get better, so why bother doing anything more?"
- "I can't take this anymore."
- "I don't feel like living."
- "My life is meaningless."
- "There is nothing left for me to live for."
- "I need to be forgiven for what I did."
- "What if all that I believe is not true?"

Spiritual Care Providers are specially trained to offer support through all stages of palliative and end-of-life care. They provide a compassionate presence that recognizes the dignity and worth of each person to help individuals:

- Find meaning and hope
- Face anxieties and fears
- Express feelings in their own way
- Connect with spiritual resources, including local faith communities, Elders, traditional healers and wellness programs
- Participate in reflection, prayers, rituals or ceremonies
- Be supported while thinking through challenging health care decisions

For more information about contacting a Spiritual Care Provider in your area, please ask a member of your health care team, visit <https://www.caredove.com/wwihpc> or contact:

<b>Kitchener-Waterloo / Cambridge</b> <b>Hospice Waterloo Region</b> 519-743-4114   <a href="mailto:intake@hospicewaterloo.ca">intake@hospicewaterloo.ca</a>	<b>Guelph and Wellington County</b> <b>Hospice Wellington</b> 519-836-3921   <a href="mailto:info@hospicewellington.org">info@hospicewellington.org</a>	<b>Lisaard &amp; Innisfree Hospice</b> 519-208-5055 <a href="mailto:admin@lisaardandinnisfree.com">admin@lisaardandinnisfree.com</a>
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The OH Institute for Spirituality and Health (OHIS), 2008.  
Puchalski, C.R., et al. (2009). Improving the quality of spiritual care as a dimension of palliative care: the report of the consensus conference. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 13(10), 885-904.

*For patients and families requiring formal spiritual care support, we have a network of spiritual care providers working throughout Waterloo Wellington region supported by our local hospices – see **Resources***

### Resources

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Kitchener-Waterloo / Cambridge

**Hospice Waterloo Region**

519-743-4114 | [intake@hospicewaterloo.ca](mailto:intake@hospicewaterloo.ca)

Guelph and Wellington County

**Hospice Wellington**

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