

SP- 01 Policy on Spiritual Care

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General Note

NHS Fife acknowledges and agrees with the importance of regular and timely review of policy/procedure statements and aims to review policies within the timescales set out. New policies/procedures will be subject to a review date of no more than 1 year from the date of first issue.

Reviewed policies/procedures will have a review date set that is relevant to the content (advised by the author) but will be no longer than 3 years.

If a policy/procedure is past its review date then the content will remain extant until such time as the policy/procedure review is complete and the new version published, or there are national policy or legislative changes.

1. FUNCTION

1.1 NHS Fife affirms the importance of spiritual care, and will seek to identify and meet, as appropriate, the spiritual care needs of patients, carers, volunteers and staff.

1.2 This Policy aims to promote person-centred Spiritual Care throughout NHS Fife which is safe, accessible, caring and compassionate.

1.3 This policy is informed by the proposed “National Delivery Plan for Spiritual Care within NHS Scotland” and will continue to be informed by local and national developments.

2. SCOPE

2.1 Spiritual Care is fundamental to personal centred care and is offered to all patients, carers, volunteers and staff.

2.2 This policy applies across all health and social care settings within NHS Fife; including domiciliary settings where healthcare professionals provide care.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Best practice in health and social care attends to the whole person – the physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects of human living. Spiritual care is a core and fundamental component of holistic person-centred care. When emotional and spiritual needs are expressed, identified and addressed, individuals can experience a greater sense of personal wellbeing and resilience when dealing with ill health or other life experiences.

3.2 The terms “spirituality” and “spiritual care” cover those areas of our human experience where we feel connected to a larger dimension of meaning and understanding. It extends beyond the boundaries of formalised religion and is therefore relevant for all, including those with no religious faith. Spiritual care comes into focus in times of emotional stress, illness, loss, bereavement and death. Spirituality includes that which gives a person hope, meaning and purpose to their “being”.

3.3 Spiritual Care can be given in one to one or group relationships; it is person-centred and makes no assumptions about personal conviction or life orientation. Religious care is given in the context of the shared religious beliefs, values, liturgies and lifestyles of a belief community. Spiritual care is not necessarily religious, but good religious care is always spiritual.

3.4 Spiritual care:

- offers a space in which individuals and their needs are regarded as central;
- offers person-centred rather than staff or system-centred care;
- elicits and honours an individual’s story;
- journeys with an individual into the pain, darkness, uncertainty or unknowing;
- holds out the possibility of other ways of seeing or understanding, without imposing personal views or frameworks;
- fosters autonomy and self-management rather than dependence and direction;
- is characterised by an equitable, respectful and non-judgemental relationship between two human beings.

4. POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 NHS Scotland defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

4.2 Compassionate, safe and person centred care involves care for the physical, mental, physiological, social and spiritual aspects of the person. All five contribute to the health and well being of individuals or a community.

4.3 It is recognised that everyone has spiritual care needs that may require to be met when facing times of illness or uncertainty. NHS Fife recognises that those of different beliefs, and of those who would not wish to be associated with any particular belief system or faith community will have varying spiritual care needs, and will seek to meet these appropriately and timely way.

4.5 Spiritual Care can help individuals and communities to find *hope, meaning and purpose* in the midst of illness or uncertainty; affirming that tears and laughter, pain and joy are all part of normal human experience.

NHS Fife is committed to the provision of a service that is fair, accessible and meets the needs of all individuals

5. Purpose of the Policy

5.1 The purpose of this Policy is to;

- Formally acknowledge the role of Spiritual Care within NHS Fife in relation to person centred holistic care within health and social care settings.
- Set out the core principles governing the provision of Spiritual Care within NHS Fife and provide a set of procedures to ensure good working practice.
- Define the roles, rights and responsibilities of the organisation in relation to the provision of Spiritual Care.
- Define the roles, remit and responsibilities of Department of Spiritual Care.
- Set out the core principles governing the role and responsibilities of Healthcare Chaplains in relation to the provision of Spiritual Care.
- Encourage partnership working with belief communities, faith groups and voluntary organisations to support the delivery of Spiritual Care within Health and Social settings.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

6.1 Responsibility of Nurse Director

6.1.1 The Head of Spiritual Care will report strategically to NHS Fife Board through the Director of Nursing, who is the Executive Lead for Spiritual Care.

6.1.2 The Department is operationally responsible, through the Head of Spiritual Care, to the Associate Director of Nursing (Corporate).

6.2 Responsibility of Head of Spiritual Care

6.2.1 The Head of Spiritual Care is responsible for developing operational procedures, including a model of care / service delivery plan across NHS Fife that supports the delivery of spiritual care.

6.2.2 The Head of Spiritual Care will liaise with colleagues locally and nationally, as well as with service users and relevant stakeholders, to ensure that all developments meet national and regional requirements and reflect the delivery of a safe, effective and person centred spiritual care service.

6.3 Responsibility of Managers

6.3.1 All Heads of Service and Senior Managers have a responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and in ensuring that arrangements are in place within their spheres of responsibility to facilitate the delivery of appropriate and sensitive spiritual care.

6.3.2 Managers should support staff in the development of procedures and processes that evidence compliance with this policy.

6.3.3 Managers should ensure staff have access to appropriate training resources and support.

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6.4 Responsibility of NHS Fife Staff

6.4.1 Spiritual Care is provided, within the context of holistic, person-centred care, acknowledging diversity of belief and recognising that each person has needs far beyond the physical.

6.4.2 NHS Fife recognises that all staff have an important role to play in the provision of Spiritual Care which is a core element of holistic person-centred care.

6.4.3 Staff should be aware of, and familiar with, the systems and processes in place to support referrals to Healthcare Chaplains.

7. Operational System

7.1 NHS Fife:

7.1.1 respects the wide-ranging beliefs, lifestyles and cultural backgrounds of communities within NHS Fife;

7.1.2 is committed to meeting the requirements of the national outcomes as set out in the proposed Scottish Governments National Delivery Plan for Spiritual Care;

7.1.3 recognises that the Department of Spiritual Care constitutes a significant resource to the NHS and has a distinct contribution to make to the well-being of patients, carers, volunteers and staff. This policy provides a Standard Operating Procedure for the Department of Spiritual Care (Appendix 1) and a Local Delivery Plan (Appendix 2) to ensure good working practice;

7.1.4 recognises the role of belief and faith communities in providing Spiritual Care, including specific religious care, to members of their community;

7.1.5 values and supports the important role that partnership agencies and volunteers play in the delivery of spiritual, religious and cultural care;

7.1.6 NHS Fife recognises that, at times, staff may require access to specific and relevant patient information to carry out their duties. Access to appropriate information systems is essential for Healthcare Chaplains to provide appropriate spiritual care. Access to such information is subject to relevant NHS Fife policies that must be observed by all staff.

8. Monitoring and Review of the Spiritual Care Policy

8.1 NHS Fife is committed to an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation of this policy in consultation with all relevant parties. The policy will reflect and complement NHS Fife's corporate objectives, the Spiritual Care Local Delivery Plan and the stated priorities in relation to improving health, tackling inequalities and promoting equalities.

8.2 NHS Fife, through the Department of Spiritual Care, shall report annually to the proposed National Spiritual Care Board of progress in relation to the implementation of the Local Delivery Plan and the proposed National Delivery Plan.

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9. Risk Management

9.1 NHS Fife Board requires assurance that spiritual care is provided in accordance with all appropriate policies and procedures;

9.2 The key risks involved in implementing this policy are:

- Lack of awareness amongst staff of the importance of spiritual care may result in the spiritual needs of services users remaining unmet.
- The organisational culture and staff personal values may hinder implementation of the policy
- There may be budgetary constraints affecting the provision of appropriate staff and resources

9.3 Fulfilling the policy requirements will mitigate these risks.

9.4 All risks associated with Spiritual Care will be recorded on the NHSFBD Nursing Directorate Risk Register

10. RELATED DOCUMENTS

NHS Fife Policy - HR41: Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Policy

NHS Fife Policy – GP/V3: Volunteering Policy

NHS Fife Policy – GP/C9: Confidentiality

NHS Fife Policy – GP/D3: Data Protection Policy

11. REFERENCES

The Equality Act 2010. HM Government, London 2009.

Spiritual Care Matters: An Introductory Resource for all NHS Scotland Staff. Glasgow: NHS Education for Scotland Healthcare Chaplaincy Training and Development Unit.

Spirituality survey 2010: A report by the Royal College of Nursing on members' views on spirituality and spiritual care in nursing practice. London: Royal College of Nursing.

Spiritual Care & Chaplaincy 2009. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

Appendix 1

NHS Fife Department of Spiritual Care: Standard Operating Procedure

Core Services

Arising out of HDL (2002) 76 and CEL (2008) 49, together with the increasing integration and development of Spiritual Care, core requirements for the delivery of spiritual care services across both inpatient and primary care as well as integrated care settings are:

- Employment of Healthcare Chaplains on the basis of their qualifications, experience, abilities and capacity to demonstrate a mature, reflective, spiritual world view.
- Levels of staffing commensurate with the delivery of a high quality, integrated, proactive, responsive, 24/7 spiritual care service including the provision of 24/7 cover for inpatient settings only.
- Provision of dedicated, administrative support.
- Dedicated sanctuary and quiet room space in inpatient settings.
- Provision of practical resources including office space, computers and mobile telephones.
- Access to such patient information as required ensuring the appropriate delivery of high quality, proactive, spiritual care.
- The right of individuals to request and have access to specialist spiritual care services.

The Department of Spiritual Care:

The Department of Spiritual Care exists to care for the spiritual needs of patients, carers and staff. Healthcare Chaplains are experienced in providing spiritual and pastoral care, in using presence, active listening, therapeutic narrative and other interventions. They deliver care in an open and accepting manner regardless of the presence or absence of faith, belief and life stance, assisting others in addressing painful or traumatic experiences.

The Department provides a Fife wide service supporting the provision of spiritual care to patients, carers, volunteers and staff ensuring that people remain at the centre of health and wellbeing by supporting:

- Spiritual Care
- Religious Care
- Cultural Care
- Bereavement Care
- Listening Services
- Staff Wellbeing and support

The Department shall:

- Be characterised by openness, sensitivity, compassion and the capacity to make and maintain attentive, helpful, supportive and caring relationships with patients, carers and all staff groups.
- Be impartial, accessible and available 24 hours (within in-patient settings) to all regardless of their personal belief or faith.
- Act as a significant resource for information and support to the organisation, supporting education and training when requested or when a need is identified.
- Provide an informed resource on ethical, spiritual and religious matters.

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The Department of Spiritual Care – Management Structure:

NHS Fife Board has appointed the Director of Nursing as the Executive Lead for Spiritual Care. The Head of Spiritual Care will report strategically to NHS Fife Board through the Executive Lead by submitting a report in March of each year. The Department will report, as required, to the National Spiritual Care Board.

Operationally, the Department is responsible, to the Associate Director of Nursing (Corporate) through the Head of Spiritual Care. The Head of Spiritual Care will have strategic oversight and operational responsibility for workforce planning, service development and quality improvement. In addition, the Head of Spiritual Care will act as the Professional Lead for all Healthcare Chaplains and as the line manager will be responsible for the performance appraisal and professional development of members of the Department.

Healthcare Chaplains will work in accordance with local and national Spiritual Care policies and protocols and the “Local Delivery Plan for Spiritual Care within NHS Fife” to ensure that spiritual care is provided in ways that are equitable, effective and safe. Healthcare Chaplains are personally and professionally responsible to ensure that they maintain their fitness to practice.

National Work-streams

NHS Scotland, through NES has developed three Scotland-wide programmes of work, which relate to the areas of staff engagement and practice, co-production, client self-management, dignity and resilience, and the care experience:

- Values Based Reflective Practice (VBRP®) - to help chaplains and other health and social care staff reflect on practice and maintain a focus on holistic person-centred care;
- Community Chaplaincy Listening (CCL) - a short term, early intervention, proactive listening service, deployed primarily through GP surgeries and primary care contexts;
- Spiritual Care Patient Reported Outcome Measure (PROM), (already used extensively within CCL) to further build the evidence base for the effectiveness of spiritual care interventions.

NHS Fife Department of Spiritual Care has fully integrated these work-streams into core service delivery and remains committed to the ongoing development of these areas of work as strategic priorities

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an expression of trust that enables people to talk about personal and private concerns relevant to their spiritual health and wellbeing. All members of the Department of Spiritual Care must be familiar with; and implement the appropriate policies and protocols regarding the writing, storing and communicating of information

In relation to informing representative from the belief communities about an individual’s admission to hospital, the legal position is that a patient’s admission is confidential information. As such the information can only be made available to another party with a service user’s explicit and informed consent. Guidance from the UK and Scottish Information Commissioner’s Offices indicates that consent to make available information relating to a patient’s or service user’s faith or belief stance, may be given, either in writing or orally, at any time throughout the care process. NHS Fife will ensure that systems and processes are in place to support referrals to Healthcare Chaplains.

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Record keeping

Each Healthcare Chaplain will ensure that they maintain accurate, comprehensive and concise records concerning encounters with patients, carers and staff.

Healthcare Chaplain will ensure that records are maintained in accordance with all relevant NHS Fife standards and policies. All healthcare Chaplains employed by NHS Fife will record in patient notes that they have responded to referrals and any discussion significant to patient care while maintaining confidentiality.

Referral Protocol

The Department provides a 24/7 service including 'out of hours/on call service' to enable round the clock service delivery. Any member of the multi-disciplinary team, patient or carer can make a referral to the Department.

Referrals to the Department can be made by contacting a Healthcare Chaplain through the appropriate extension number. Where a more immediate response is required or during "Out of Hours", the Duty Chaplain can be contacted through main switchboard.

Managers, in partnership with the Department of Spiritual Care, will ensure that systems and processes are in place to support informed and consented referrals from service users to representatives of the Belief Communities

Sacred Spaces

All NHS hospitals are required to provide at least one room set aside exclusively for worship, meditation or reflection. The room's title should make it clear it is a multi-faith facility, readily adaptable for the use of members of all belief communities or none. Within NHS Fife such rooms will be called; "Sanctuary", "Haven" or "Quiet Room".

Such spaces will be managed, on behalf of NHS Fife, by the Department of Spiritual Care and are provided for the benefit of the whole hospital community. Facilities, where they are provided, are available to all people regardless of their beliefs. They will be accessible 24 hours a day and may be visited as places of quiet by patients, relatives and staff at any time. Where such a room / space is requested but not provided, the Department in partnership with local managers will identify an appropriate space for prayer and / or reflection.

Staff Support

Working within a modern health care setting whilst rewarding can, at times, bring its own stresses and concerns. Situations can arise which may negatively impact staff. The Department of Spiritual Care is committed to providing staff support that is person-centred and tailored to meet the needs of individual staff.

The Staff Listening Service is just one of the interventions which the Department provides to support staff well-being within a sensitive, non-judgmental and confidential setting. The service seeks to help staff find purpose, meaning and strength during difficult times.

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Partnership working

NHS Fife's Department of Spiritual Care will work with other healthcare professionals, volunteers and colleagues in the wider community to develop a person-centred service providing equity of care to all patients, carers and staff while promoting best practice in spiritual care.

All members of staff have an important role in facilitating spiritual care for patients, carers and colleagues. The Department will support staff by;

- developing an efficient referral system
- providing training and workshops on particular issues related to spiritual care
- providing support either individually or corporately to embed spiritual care as a fundamental part of patient care

NHS Fife recognises values and supports the important role that partnership agencies and volunteers play in the work and culture of NHS Fife.

The Department of Spiritual Care recognises that patients and carers have a different perspective to staff and accessing their views alongside those of staff, opens up new and creative forms of service delivery. Healthcare Chaplains are committed to working in partnership with staff, patients, carers and volunteers to develop and deliver the highest standards of Spiritual Care.

Department Volunteers

NHS Fife has a longstanding commitment to volunteering and recognises the benefits derived from having volunteers in place to support. The role of a volunteer is clearly defined as a role which predominantly is there to improve the experience of people using NHS Fife services. The Department recognises the experience and skills volunteers bring to the provision of spiritual care.

The Department of Spiritual Care will identify and recruit volunteers according to the skills, formation and experience that they bring. The Department will provide Volunteers with appropriate training and supervision to support them in their roles.

Belief and Faith Communities

NHS Fife, through the Department of Spiritual Care, seeks to work in partnership with Belief Communities by providing opportunities to explore and consider particular issues related to the provision of spiritual and religious care within health and social care settings. The Department will organise (and host) a "Health and Belief in Dialogue" event at least annually to facilitate this.

NHS Fife recognises the role of Belief Community Leaders in meeting the spiritual, religious and pastoral needs of members of their community. The Department of Spiritual Care affirms the unique pastoral relationships which are often established over many years and, where appropriate, will facilitate visits from Belief Community Leaders who may be best placed person to offer spiritual, religious or pastoral care. Whilst the Department of Spiritual Care is happy to take referrals from Belief Communities and Leaders, Healthcare Chaplains are unable to share information about patients without the patients explicit consent.

For the sake of clarity NHS Fife is unable to support the appointment of Honorary Chaplains or Belief Visitors.

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Appendix 2

NHS Fife – Spiritual Care Delivery Plan (2018 – 2022)

Since the publication of the previous guidance on Spiritual Care, CEL (2008) 49 (Scottish Government 2009b), the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 has been published establishing Health and Social Care Partnerships. NHS Fife recognises that due to the completely different nature of spiritual care in social care settings, traditional hospital based models and approaches to, and delivery of, Spiritual Care may not always be appropriate.

The challenges facing Spiritual Care services in the next five years are not insignificant. The proposed National Delivery Plan sets out five overarching outcomes which encompass: patient and carer engagement; staff care; evidenced-based practice; workforce development and service-wide practice and accountability.

- **Outcome 1:** To promote assets-based approaches to resilience and wellbeing in all areas of practice
- **Outcome 2:** To enable and support Health and Social Care staff to enhance spiritual wellbeing
- **Outcome 3:** To further develop evidence-based practice
- **Outcome 4:** To build and sustain a flexible workforce whose primary resource is the intentional use of self
- **Outcome 5:** To develop service-wide consistency of practice and accountability

Within NHS Fife, the Department of Spiritual Care has developed, and supports, a variety of innovative and collaborative initiatives. These developments reflect the considerable changes within Healthcare Chaplaincy and the increased professionalism of spiritual care provision over the last ten years.

As Registered Healthcare Professionals, Healthcare Chaplains are taking a person-centred, assets-based and evaluative approach to all of their core activities: day to day work, departmental referrals, reactive responses to emergency calls as well as the national programmes of work that are being actively developed.

NHS Fife Local Action Plan for Spiritual Care is informed by, and reflects, the principles and priorities sent out in the *Healthcare Quality Strategy* (Scottish Government, 2010) and NHS Fife Strategic Framework. In particular the drivers for Local Action Plan seek to build on current provision and develop a Spiritual Care service within NHS Fife that is:

- A Person Centred Service
- A Clinically Excellent Service
- An Accessible and Sustainable Service
- An Exemplar Employer

A Person Centred Service

Healthcare Chaplains will respond to referrals from staff, patients and carers and will respond to direction from staff and individual patients or carers when particular needs arise.

Healthcare Chaplains will ensure that the rights of patients to be visited (or not visited) by a Healthcare Chaplain, religious leader or a representative from a belief community are upheld.

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Healthcare Chaplains are employed by NHS Fife as part of the Healthcare Team to provide specialist spiritual care in a sensitive, non-judgemental and confidential manner.

A Clinically Excellent Service

NHS Fife will support the creation of an appropriate local delivery plan based on the proposed Scottish Government National Delivery Plan.

The Department of Spiritual Care and Healthcare Chaplains will maintain accurate records of all work undertaken.

An Accessible and Sustainable Service

The Head of Spiritual Care will, in collaboration with senior staff and Human Resources, be responsible for workforce planning ensuring that:

- The service is developed in a safe and effective manner
- Staff deliver quality and excellence;
- Critical roles and skills for service delivery / development are identified
- There is flexibility within the workforce to respond quickly to changing needs

NHS Fife will develop and promote good relationships with local belief communities ensuring inclusive partnerships when developing Spiritual Care services.

NHS Fife values and supports the important part volunteers have in work of the Department and the delivery of Spiritual Care.

The Department of Spiritual Care will provide appropriate training and supervision to support volunteers in the roles and responsibilities they are given.

An Exemplar Employer

NHS Fife will support the provision of professional supervision (pro rata) to allow staff to access supervision during working hours. This ensures the ongoing fitness to practice of spiritual care staff and supports the continued delivery of safe, effective and person-centred care.

The Department of Spiritual Care will support access to adequate local and national CPD opportunities for all Healthcare Chaplains based on 30 hours per year (pro rata).

NHS Fife respects the beliefs and faith of individual members of staff. NHS Fife recognises that, whilst, Healthcare Chaplains may hold a personal faith or life stance; NHS Fife does not employ faith chaplains.

Related Publications

- [NHS Fife Department of Spiritual Care : Local Delivery Plan 2018 – 2022](#)
- [SC-01 - APPENDIX 1](#)
- [SC-01 - APPENDIX 2](#)
- [SC-01 - EQIA FORM](#)

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NHS Fife Department of Spiritual Care : Local Delivery Plan 2018 – 2022

