

Spiritual Care



**St Vincent's
Hospice**

the little hospice with the big heart



Spiritual Care

Hospice care is designed to treat the whole person including their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs in end-of-life care. This is why spiritual needs and end-of-life care often intersect regardless of whether the patient considers themselves religious or spiritual.

Spirituality and Care

Spiritual care is an important part of palliative care. Having a life limiting illness often leads people to think about their lives in new ways, and their spiritual needs may change.

Spirituality means different things to different people. For example, it can be about searching for meaning and purpose in life. Or it can mean finding the best relationship with ourselves, others, society or nature.

If someone's spiritual needs are not met, this can cause spiritual distress. Spiritual distress can affect someone's physical and mental health. Some studies suggest that spiritual distress can increase suffering at the end of life.

For some people spirituality might involve religion, but it's not the same as religious beliefs. Spiritual issues can affect everyone – people do not need to be religious to have spiritual needs.

Our Spiritual Care Lead can help explore the patient's spiritual needs, and identify when someone might need more support.

Spiritual Needs at End of Life

Spiritual needs in end-of-life care are so important that they are identified as soon as hospice care begins. Working with the rest of the care team our Spiritual Care and Inclusion Lead will be available to assist with the patient's spiritual care.

The spiritual needs of patients receiving hospice or palliative care can include:

- Connecting with the faith and practices of their religion
- Understanding what gives their life meaning
- Exploring how they wish to be remembered
- Asking for forgiveness for themselves
- Offering forgiveness to others
- Sharing their life story

Our Spiritual Care & Inclusion Lead will actively listen to patients and can address their spiritual questions and concerns. If requested, they can also connect the patient with a spiritual leader from their own faith including priests, rabbis, imams, or other ministers.



Maitrisattva Burns (pronounced My-tree-sat-vah) is our Spiritual Care & Inclusion Lead. He is an Ordained Buddhist and his name means 'He who has a friendly character'.



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