

The Importance of Clinicians Utilizing a Spiritual History Tool

Conducting a Spiritual History supports people with disabilities and their families by encouraging them to consider what their values are as they reflect upon how to address medical needs.

Also, this allows clinicians to understand the patient/family more fully.

In a 2020 survey conducted for parents of children with disabilities, participants reported:

- 66% needed more spiritual support at child's diagnosis
- 71% say their world view/beliefs have changed since having their child with a disability
- 48% feel anxious about the future
- 63% feel afraid of what will happen to their child when they die

When to Conduct a Spiritual History:

- *Upon first meeting/assessment*
- *When a patient/family are processing a new diagnosis*
- *When a patient/family are making important treatment decisions*
- *If a patient/family express difficulty coping, difficulty making decisions, or feelings of grief*



Recommended Spiritual History Tool to Utilize in Your Practice:

There are many spiritual history tools that are available for providers to utilize in their practice. Below is one of the most utilized models.

FICA Spiritual History Tool

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Category	Questions
F: Faith and Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are your sources of hope, strength, comfort, and peace?</i> • <i>Do you have spiritual beliefs that help you cope with stress?</i> • <i>If the patient responds "no," consider asking: what gives your life meaning?</i>
I: Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have your beliefs influenced how you take care of yourself in this illness?</i> • <i>What aspects of your spirituality/spiritual beliefs do you find most helpful? (Prayer, meditation, communing with nature, etc.)</i> • <i>What role do your beliefs play in regaining your health?</i>
C: Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are you part of a spiritual or religious community?</i> • <i>Is this of support to you, and how?</i>
A: Address in Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How would you like me to address these issues in your health care?</i> • <i>Does your current situation affect your ability to do the things that usually help you spiritually?</i> • <i>Are you worried about any conflicts between your beliefs and your healthcare?</i> • <i>Are there any specific practices or restrictions I should know about in providing your medical care?</i> • <i>How do your beliefs affect the kind of medical care you would like me to provide?</i>

For further information about spiritual history and clinical chaplain support, please reach out to:

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