



Spiritual Health Association

# Capability Framework

For Spiritual Care Practitioners in Health (2020)

*Compassionate, person-centred health care.*

# Compassionate person-centered health care



Spiritual  
Health  
Association

©Spiritual Health Association

This document is copyright. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process, nor may any other exclusive right be exercised without the permission of Spiritual Health Association, 3 Albert Coates Lane, Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia.

## **Recommended citation**

Spiritual Health Association. (2020) Capability Framework for Spiritual Care Practitioners in Health. Melbourne, Australia.



# Acknowledgements

**Spiritual Health Association acknowledges with gratitude the contributions of the following people in the development and review of this *Framework*:**

**Consultant:**

- **Craig Bossie**, External Consultant

**Working Group Members:**

- **Harriet Ziegler**, Executive Officer, Spiritual Care Australia
- **Carl Aiken**, Former Spiritual Care Manager/practitioner, South Australia

**Document Reviewers:**

- **David Paterson**, Pastoral Care Coordinator, Northern Health, Victoria
- **Kären Lunney**, Manager, Pastoral Care Services, Bendigo Health, Victoria
- **David Glenister**, Coordinator, Spiritual and Pastoral Care, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Victoria
- **Susanne Schmidt**, Pastoral Care Manager, Calvary John James Hospital, Canberra, ACT
- **Julie Binstead**, Allied Health Manager, Spiritual Care, Eastern Health, Victoria
- **Annie Forrest**, Manager Pastoral Services, St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, Victoria

**Public Consultation:**

- All those who responded to the online survey

**Spiritual Health Association thanks Safer Care Victoria for their support.**

Spiritual Health Association acknowledges that our work takes place on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



# Foreword

I am delighted to present this revised edition of the *Capability Framework for Spiritual Care Practitioners in Health 2020 (Framework)*.

This edition of the *Framework* builds on the strategic alignment we introduced in 2016 with the National Common Health Capability Resource<sup>1</sup> and the Allied Health: Credentialling, Competency and Capability Framework<sup>2</sup>. The *Framework* strengthens and sharpens the focus on the core scope of practice for spiritual care practitioners working in the health sector.

The national *Health Professionals and Support Services Award 2020* provides the basis for the four levels of professional spiritual care practitioners described in the *Framework*. Developed through extensive evaluation and consultation, this *Framework* presents a clear, progressive approach to ensure professional, safe and high-quality spiritual care provision across health services.

As we experience the impact of a global pandemic this year, we are more aware than ever that inner resources need to be recognised and nurtured to support peoples' mental health and wellbeing.

At Spiritual Health Association, we believe that 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. Implementation of this *Framework* will ensure that the spiritual care workforce have the capabilities needed to respond to the diverse spiritual needs of patients, carers and staff.

Together with Spiritual Health Association's *Guidelines for Quality Spiritual Care in Health (2020)* and *Spiritual Care in Medical Records: A Guide to Reporting and Documenting Spiritual Care Services in Health (2019)*, this *Framework* establishes spiritual care's professional credentials as a key contributor to the delivery of person-centred health care.

## Cheryl Holmes OAM

CEO, Spiritual Health Association

“At Spiritual Health Association, we believe that 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.”

1. Health Workforce Australia. (2013). National Common Health Capability Resource: shared activities and behaviours in the Australian health workforce. Commonwealth Government of Australia.

2. Allied Health: credentialling, competency and capability framework – Driving effective workforce practice in a changing health environment. (2014). Victorian Government.



# Contents

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>ABOUT THIS FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>7</b>
Target Audience	8
Relationship to Spiritual Care Australia Membership Requirements	8
<b>CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>9</b>
Overview of Framework	10
Overview of Capability Levels	11
Summary of Domains and Sub-domains	12
Domain 1 – Provision of Care	13
Domain 2 – Collaborative Care	18
Domain 3 – Health Values	21
Domain 4 – Professional Integrity	22
Domain 5 – Professional Development	24
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>GLOSSARY</b>	<b>27</b>



# Purpose

The *Capability Framework for Spiritual Care Practitioners in Health 2020 (Framework)* seeks to inform spiritual care practice within a professional health care setting.

The *Framework* outlines a structure compatible with inter-professional practice for the efficient provision of health care. It supports a consistent approach for providing safe and high-quality spiritual care to patients, families, carers and staff.

The *National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards 2017 (2nd Edition)* (1), *The National Palliative Care Standards (5th Edition)* (2) and the Spiritual Care Australia (SCA) *Standards of Practice* (3) recognise the obligation to respond professionally to people's diverse spiritual needs.

This *Framework* outlines a progressive approach to practice, aligned to identified stages of professional development and scope of practice.

Spiritual care practitioners are qualified and credentialled according to industry standards<sup>3</sup> and appointed and credentialled by the health service in which they are employed.

This *Framework* recognises that spiritual care practitioners are committed to professional development and specifically considers career pathways within health care settings. It offers an approach for consistent professional practice that is responsive to diverse spiritual needs, recognising that spiritual care practitioners come from a diverse range of beliefs, traditions and values.

The role of volunteers is out of scope for this document.

The *Framework* is intended as a resource for spiritual care practitioners, for those with responsibility for the appointment of spiritual care practitioners, and for education and training providers.

The *Framework* may be used to:

- Assist in job design and writing position descriptions based on the required scope of practice
- Accurately indicate the level at which a role is to be considered, and the implied requirements
- Guide developing education, training and work-based learning
- Inform the process of professional review
- Support planning for personal and professional development
- Support planning for team development
- Support development of clear pathways for career progression

3. Industry Standards are set by Spiritual Care Australia:  
<https://www.spiritualcareaustralia.org.au/about-us/standards-and-policies>



# Background

In today's healthcare settings, spiritual care practitioners work alongside many others in providing the multi-dimensional care that reflects the World Health Organisation's (WHO, 2007) view of health and health care (4). As health professionals working in highly complex environments, spiritual care practitioners need to work collaboratively, with a clear understanding of their contributions to providing compassionate, person-centred care to individuals, families, carers and staff.

The *Capabilities Framework for Pastoral Care & Chaplaincy* was produced by Spiritual Health Victoria (SHV) in 2009. In 2016, SHV revised this *Framework* and produced the *Capability Framework for Spiritual Care Practitioners in Health Services*, consistent with other allied health professions.

In response to this, and other documentation, the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) recognised spiritual care as an allied health profession. The notable shift in language between 2009 and 2016 acknowledged the evolving landscape of spiritual care as an increasingly integrated dimension of health care.

This *Framework* concisely sets out the capabilities and scope of practice required for the current context.

## About this Framework

This edition of the *Framework* follows the review of extensive feedback from some 50 managers, educators and practitioners who used the 2016 framework within their respective professional settings, gathered through a survey and captured in an evaluation report with recommendations.

The *Framework* was then revised in consultation with a Working Group of senior spiritual care professionals, and thereafter provided to the wider community for further comment via an online survey, which was subsequently incorporated into this final document.

The decision to base this new *Framework* on the four levels of the national *Health Professionals and Support Services Award 2020* (5) came out of the process described above. The level descriptors of the award inform the expected capability and scope of practice applicable to each domain and related elements.

The *Framework* serves as a resource to clarify the expected skills, experience and attributes required for this work, and the ways that these can be developed appropriately over time. Focused on the individual spiritual care practitioner's capabilities, the *Framework* provides a structure for career progression based on incremental development of those capabilities over time, cognisant that this process will depend on the relative size of a health service.



## Target Audience

The primary audience for the *Framework* includes:

- spiritual care practitioners
- spiritual care coordinators/managers/directors
- allied health directors/managers
- spiritual care management\*\*
- safety and quality managers
- people and culture managers
- educators and training providers.

## Relationship to Spiritual Care Australia Membership Requirements

The four levels in the *Framework* align with Spiritual Care Australia (SCA) membership requirements, as follows:

- Level 1 – Member
- Level 2 – Certified Member
- Levels 3 and 4 – Certified Advanced Member.

These membership requirements are currently under review by SCA and information in this document will be updated as the changes become available.<sup>4</sup> Adherence to the SCA Code of Conduct and Standards of Practice is recommended.

\*\* Terms marked in this colour are defined in the Glossary.

“As health professionals working in highly complex environments, spiritual care practitioners need to work collaboratively, with a clear understanding of their contributions to providing compassionate, person-centred care to individuals, families, carers and staff.

4. For the most up to date information please refer to the Spiritual Care Australia website:  
<https://www.spiritualcareaustralia.org.au/membership/membership-criteria>



# Capability Framework

This *Framework* outlines the expected capabilities and scope of practice for four levels of qualified and credentialled spiritual care practitioners.

*Compassionate, person-centred health care.*



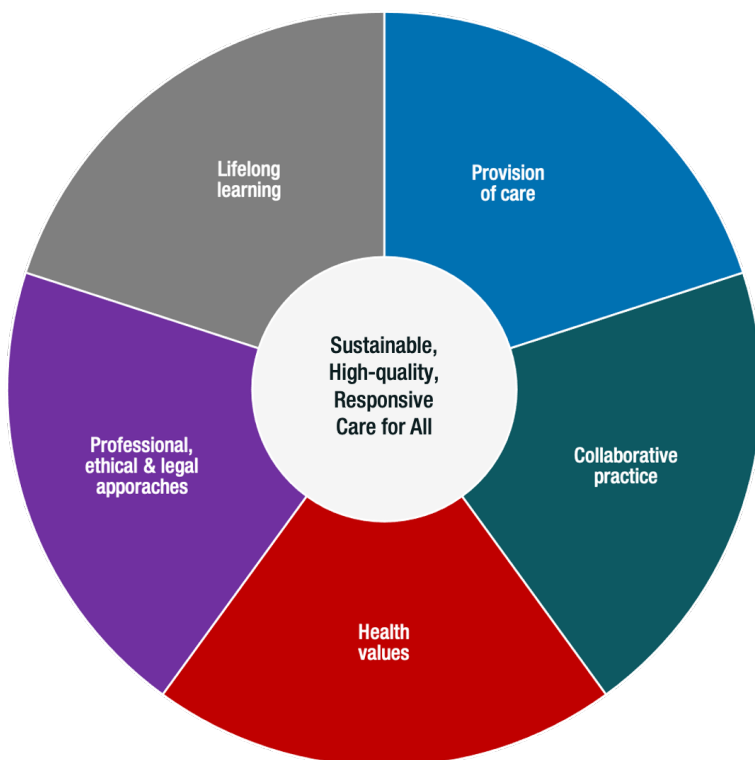
# Overview of Framework

This *Framework* outlines the expected **capabilities** and **scope of practice** for four levels of **qualified and credentialled spiritual care practitioners**. As stated, these align with the national *Health Professionals and Support Services Award 2020* (5). A summary of each level is provided in the overview table found on page 11.

These capabilities are to be viewed as progressive stages according to the scope of practice for practitioners, that is, capabilities at Level 1 are assumed for Level 2, and so forth across the levels.

Each level speaks to the parameters within which practitioners are expected to work, across five domains of practice. Each domain is sectioned and contains specific elements applicable to practice in a health care setting. Each domain is briefly described at the beginning of each section.

Figure 1: The five domains of the Framework





## OVERVIEW OF CAPABILITY LEVELS:

Each level assumes the inclusion of capabilities identified for previous levels.			
Level 1: Entry-level	Level 2: Independent Practice	Level 3: Service Coordination	Level 4: Strategic Management
Spiritual care practitioner able to identify and respond to spiritual needs and consults with senior practitioners in complex cases.	Spiritual care practitioner able to work independently in routine cases and identifies appropriate pathways in responding to complex spiritual needs.	Senior spiritual care practitioner able to provide specialist care, coordinate a spiritual care service and influence service development.	Senior spiritual care practitioner able to manage spiritual care department and provide high level strategic direction and advice to organisational executive.
<p>Practitioners at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake routine professional tasks using specific spiritual care skills and knowledge within scope of practice.</li> <li>Work within a team environment according to service guidelines and procedures.</li> <li>Identify professional limitations requiring guidance from senior practitioners.</li> <li>Operate effectively in a multidisciplinary context.</li> <li>Actively engage in professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Practitioners at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work independently and exercise judgment in routine cases.</li> <li>Contribute to quality improvement processes and research activities.</li> <li>Contribute to review of service guidelines and procedures.</li> <li>Contribute to professional development initiatives.</li> <li>Provide advice to graduate (Level 1) practitioners, students and volunteers regarding routine service matters.</li> <li>May require supervision when involved with complex cases.</li> </ul>	<p>Practitioners at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work independently with high level of specialist knowledge and skills.</li> <li>Provide supervision and support to Level 1 and Level 2 practitioners.</li> <li>Are responsible and accountable for efficient service delivery in specific organisational contexts.</li> <li>Initiate quality improvement and research programs.</li> <li>Identify professional development needs and facilitate education programs.</li> <li>May be responsible for service-related budgets and resourcing.</li> </ul>	<p>Practitioners at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work at a high level of professional knowledge and skills.</li> <li>Provide advice regarding complex and critical cases.</li> <li>Are responsible and accountable for effective service delivery, resource management and setting priorities in accordance with organisational vision, values and objectives.</li> <li>Develop and implement strategic plans for service efficiency.</li> <li>Are responsible for all aspects of human resource management within the service department.</li> </ul>
Capabilities within this level align to Level 2 of the Health Professional and Support Services Award 2010.	Capabilities within this level align to Level 2 of the Health Professional and Support Services Award 2010.	Capabilities within this level align to Level 3 of the Health Professional and Support Services Award 2010.	Capabilities within this level align to Level 4 of the Health Professional and Support Services Award 2010.



## SUMMARY OF DOMAINS AND SUB-DOMAINS:

The Domain headings and subheadings of this *Framework* are summarised in the table below:

1. Provision of Care	2. Collaborative Care	3. Health values	4. Professional integrity	5. Professional development
1.1 Plan and prepare	2.1 Role clarity	3.1 Equity and diversity	4.1 Ethical and legal practice	5.1 Individual development
1.2 Client engagement	2.2 Workplace communication	3.2 Wellbeing and holistic care	4.2 Self-regulation	5.2 Self-reflection
1.3 Perform and deliver	2.3 Integrated care	3.3 Responsible use of resources	4.3 Accountability	5.3 Professional networking
1.4 Monitor and review	2.4 Conflict management			5.4 Performance review



## DOMAIN 1: PROVISION OF CARE

Participates in the planning, delivery and management of evidence-based patient or client care				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
1.1 Plan and prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise and respond to routine referrals in accordance with service procedures and guidelines.</li> <li>• Identify and become familiar with resources and information for introduction of service to client.</li> <li>• Clearly identify client capacity and agreement to give consent to service provision.</li> <li>• Identify personal and professional limitations and seek further advice as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise and respond to complex referrals in accordance with service procedures and guidelines.</li> <li>• Identify and recommend service resources and information for review and implementation.</li> <li>• Provide input to referral processes as required.</li> <li>• Identify personal and professional limitations regarding complex cases and seek further advice from team leader or other health care professionals as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate and integrate client information from multiple sources to inform case management of clients with complex health care needs.</li> <li>• Revise referral processes for efficiency in identifying spiritual care needs.</li> <li>• Make recommendations to service management regarding updates and improvement of service information for clients and staff.</li> <li>• Identify compromised client decision-making capacity and make representation to service management accordingly.</li> <li>• Identify and plan for complex case scenarios requiring referral for spiritual care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage spiritual care teams and ensure preparatory information and procedures are current and relevant to service delivery.</li> <li>• Represent spiritual care service at executive level regarding integration of service within operations and organisational policy.</li> <li>• Liaise with senior health professionals regarding formulation of referral procedures and identifying client spiritual need.</li> </ul>



Participates in the planning, delivery and management of evidence-based patient or client care				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
1.2 Client engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish rapport and engage with client for provision of spiritual care.</li> <li>Establish appropriate professional boundaries according to scope of practice.</li> <li>Use active listening skills to respond compassionately to client spiritual needs.</li> <li>Demonstrate understanding, respect and acceptance of client beliefs, culture, values, preferences and expressed needs.</li> <li>Ensure client empowerment in personal decision-making regarding spiritual needs.</li> <li>Provide client with relevant health care information and community resources as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure client self-determination is maintained</li> <li>Partner with client to develop spiritual care plan in accordance with agreed interventions.</li> <li>Identify clients requiring advocacy for recommendation to spiritual care management.</li> <li>Ensure client is informed regarding their rights and procedures for accessing personal medical records and complaint processes as needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurture a service culture of respectful relationships and client empowerment.</li> <li>Advocate for client where stated priorities and best interests are not being recognised.</li> <li>Identify and recommend effective strategies to ensure client actively participates in their spiritual care.</li> <li>Participate in and supervise client feedback processes regarding spiritual care service provision and experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate integrated spiritual care strategies.</li> <li>Promote a workplace culture in which clients are empowered as primary contributors to their own care and develop and evaluate policy accordingly.</li> <li>Advocate for workplace values affirming shared responsibility in the provision of holistic care.</li> </ul>



Participates in the planning, delivery and management of evidence-based patient or client care				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
1.3 Perform and deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform an effective assessment to identify client spiritual needs.</li> <li>• Provide care in response to identified spiritual needs of client for routine cases.</li> <li>• Develop an appropriate spiritual care plan for routine cases.</li> <li>• Identify and facilitate provision of relevant spiritual care resources and services for client as appropriate.</li> <li>• Identify personal and professional limitations and make referrals to senior practitioners or other health professionals as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform spiritual assessment for a client with complex needs.</li> <li>• Make informed and evidence-based decisions regarding interventions for complex cases.</li> <li>• Implement agreed interventions in response to identified spiritual need, ensuring service procedures are followed.</li> <li>• Identify complex cases requiring input from senior practitioners, and seek advice accordingly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulate, implement interventions for complex cases.</li> <li>• Supervise and provide professional guidance to practitioners and other health professionals regarding spiritual assessment, care plans and related interventions.</li> <li>• Contribute to ethical decision-making for complex cases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure spiritual care services align with organisational vision, values and strategic direction.</li> <li>• Ensure continuity of care throughout service and organisational change.</li> <li>• Provide high-level advice regarding priority allocation of organisational resources for service delivery.</li> <li>• Administer relevant guidelines and procedures to spiritual care service delivery.</li> </ul>



Participates in the planning, delivery and management of evidence-based patient or client care				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
1.4 Monitor and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor client wellbeing in response to implementation of care plan for routine cases.</li> <li>• Provide spiritual care in accordance with revised spiritual need.</li> <li>• Update care plan in medical records.</li> <li>• Identify personal and professional limitations and seek relevant advice accordingly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor client wellbeing in response to implementation of care plan for complex cases.</li> <li>• Review spiritual care plan with client and adjust accordingly.</li> <li>• Demonstrate self awareness regarding professional limitations and seek advice for cases requiring specialist input.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and evaluate quality of client care and care plans.</li> <li>• Provide advice to practitioners and other health care professionals regarding interventions for complex cases.</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate spiritual care outcomes and make recommendations for guidelines and procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure formal processes are in place for evaluation of spiritual care practice and service delivery.</li> <li>• Initiate and implement continuous improvement processes toward person-centred, safe and effective service delivery.</li> <li>• Manage complexity in service delivery</li> </ul>





Participates in the planning, delivery and management of evidence-based patient or client care				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
1.5 Evidence-based practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide person-centred care in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Participate in research programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and become familiar with current evidence, theory and knowledge for spiritual care and apply to practice.</li> <li>• Contribute to research projects and continuous improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of current research for application to practice and ensure practitioners are informed accordingly.</li> <li>• Conduct internal review projects to inform service development.</li> <li>• Support research activities in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders and engage practitioners in relevant projects.</li> <li>• Collaborate across healthcare disciplines in supporting evidence-based projects and processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include spiritual care projects in organisational research agenda.</li> <li>• Promote and represent spiritual care evidence-based practice at executive level.</li> <li>• Develop relevant research questions and identify funding sources and collaborating stakeholders to conduct research projects.</li> <li>• Facilitate the integration of research findings into practice.</li> </ul>



Participates in the planning, delivery and management of evidence-based patient or client care				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
1.6 Quality care and risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document client consent regarding spiritual care provision.</li> <li>• Comply with organisational and regulatory requirements regarding privacy and confidentiality.</li> <li>• Comply with OHS and Worker Wellbeing policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Identify and respond to risk factors that may affect client safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support OHS and Worker Wellbeing policy and procedures awareness and compliance</li> <li>• Participate in safety and quality programs that reduce operational hazards and minimise risk.</li> <li>• Support and model implementation of quality improvement strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture a service culture of quality, safety and excellence.</li> <li>• Integrate quality and risk principles into spiritual care team practice.</li> <li>• Integrate safety and quality guidelines into clinical practice and ensure compliance with OHS and Worker Wellbeing policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage and respond to identified risks to client safety.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance regarding quality, safety, best practice and OHS and Worker Wellbeing policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Ensure spiritual care team is orientated and supported to comply with OHS and Worker Wellbeing policy and procedures.</li> </ul>



Participates in the planning, delivery and management of evidence-based patient or client care				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
1.7 Information management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain accurate, timely and concise records in accordance with organisational guidelines for data collection and documentation in client medical records.</li> <li>• Adhere to organisational policy regarding security and storage of confidential information.</li> <li>• Identify and report to spiritual care management any anomalies in client medical records or data collection.</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of professional limitations and seek appropriate advice accordingly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with organisational policy and legislative requirements regarding information sharing.</li> <li>• Identify and correct inaccurate or incomplete client information and service data according to policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support compliance with information management policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Monitor information management processes and identify system improvements.</li> <li>• Involve practitioners and other health professionals in spiritual care information system improvements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to development and implementation of effective information management systems.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with information management policy and procedures within spiritual care department.</li> </ul>



## DOMAIN 2: COLLABORATIVE CARE

Builds and maintains effective working relationships and works in partnership with others				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
2.1 Role clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be fully acquainted with own role description and scope of practice, and work within these parameters.</li><li>• Be fully acquainted with own role in context of spiritual care service and relevant lines of accountability and reporting.</li><li>• Work with spiritual care team according to service priorities as guided by team leader.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify and clarify role discrepancies with spiritual care team and other health professionals as they arise.</li><li>• Contribute to review of role descriptions and team roles as required.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set clear expectations regarding the duties and related outcomes for each team member as per position description.</li><li>• Monitor, seek feedback and clarify roles, responsibilities and scope of practice of spiritual care team as required.</li><li>• Orientate all spiritual care practitioners to the organisation.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nurture a culture of team collaboration for the provision of quality spiritual care.</li><li>• Develop and maintain clear roles and working relationships within context of spiritual care department.</li><li>• Support practitioners to use established communication processes for the clarification of roles, responsibilities and working relationships.</li></ul>



Builds and maintains effective working relationships and works in partnership with others				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
2.2 Workplace communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate clearly and respectfully with all people.</li> <li>Practice attentive listening in all communication processes.</li> <li>Ensure accurate and timely information sharing according to organisation policy and procedures.</li> <li>Be fully acquainted with anti-discrimination and workplace harassment legislation and practice appropriate communication accordingly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use feedback and disclosure appropriately to enhance mutual understanding.</li> <li>Identify and acknowledge differences in practice across professional disciplines.</li> <li>Demonstrate self-awareness in identifying barriers to effective communication.</li> <li>Utilise accepted terminology and recognised glossary for official communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote a workplace culture of respectful communication that values whole of team participation.</li> <li>Establish processes for effective communication within spiritual care team toward enhanced service delivery.</li> <li>Identify and address inappropriate communication practices.</li> <li>Practice high-level interpersonal skills for communicating complex case related information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop effective communication processes for representation of spiritual care department across organisation.</li> <li>Develop systems to support team members to practice effective communication at all levels.</li> </ul>



Builds and maintains effective working relationships and works in partnership with others				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
2.3 Integrated care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in team meetings and work collaboratively for the effective provision of client care in routine cases.</li> <li>Maintain effective working relationships and communication with all health professionals involved in client care.</li> <li>Participate in multidisciplinary team meetings to facilitate person-centred care in all cases.</li> <li>Contribute to clinical handover regarding client spiritual care.</li> <li>Identify personal and professional limitations within collaborative contexts and seek advice from spiritual care management accordingly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with other health professionals regarding client care to establish clear and measurable goals.</li> <li>Collaborate across health and community organisations to develop spiritual care plans and resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align spiritual care service with organisational vision and objectives.</li> <li>Promote values of cooperation, teamwork, openness, collaboration, honesty and respect for others.</li> <li>Develop and maintain collaborative systems and processes for continuity of client care.</li> <li>Initiate and lead team meetings toward consistent integrated care strategies.</li> <li>Provide advice and input at multidisciplinary case conferences requiring high level specialist input.</li> <li>Contribute to organisational handover policy and procedures.</li> <li>Build sustainable partnerships with relevant partners for best practice integrated care.</li> <li>Develop systems for organisational and staff support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead and motivate staff toward departmental goals in accordance with organisational vision, strategy and policy.</li> <li>Promote a work culture of interprofessional collaborative practice and shared responsibility for the efficient provision of client care.</li> <li>Establish and maintain collaborative working relationships across organisational services.</li> <li>Contribute to the development of an integrated healthcare system that focuses on community and person-centred care.</li> </ul>



Builds and maintains effective working relationships and works in partnership with others				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
2.4 Conflict management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and address issues of potential conflict in consultation with team leader.</li> <li>Be acquainted with grievance processes and seek advice in order to resolve conflict respectfully.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect and respond openly to alternative perspectives in order to resolve workplace differences.</li> <li>Demonstrate negotiation skills in finding mutually beneficial solutions to conflict.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify, address and document team conflict and facilitate appropriate resolutions.</li> <li>Identify and respond to complex issues of conflict and mediate appropriate resolutions.</li> <li>Ensure all team members are orientated to and familiar with grievance and conflict management policy and procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercise professional judgment and provide advice in responding to grievances and matters of team conflict.</li> <li>Report to executive all matters of conflict impacting upon service delivery and organisational integrity.</li> <li>Manage disagreements that arise involving team members.</li> </ul>
2.5 Reflective practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain intentional reflective practice.</li> <li>Engage in team reviews and reflective processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and present cases studies for team reflection.</li> <li>Practice and model collective ownership of service knowledge acquired through team reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate team reflective practice for continuous improvement.</li> <li>Identify and support use of models and resources for reflective practice and team review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurture a culture of reflective practice and team support for continual improvement.</li> </ul>



### DOMAIN 3: HEALTH VALUES

Recognises the complexity of health and healthcare systems and engages in processes and activities that promote safe, quality, effective services for all				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
3.1 Equity and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate respect for inherent worth, dignity and self-determination of every person.</li> <li>• Recognise and respect cultural identity, diversity, interdependency and collective relationships of particular communities.</li> <li>• Demonstrate self-awareness in response to diverse values, beliefs, traditions and practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to equity and diversity initiatives in the context of spiritual care.</li> <li>• Demonstrate a working knowledge of cultural competence and anti-discrimination legislation and procedures.</li> <li>• Identify and address discriminatory practice in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate cultural competence and equity and diversity awareness programs in the context of spiritual care service ensuring all team members complete the mandatory Equity and Diversity module.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement organisational policy and procedures regarding equity and diversity.</li> <li>• Maintain a thorough knowledge of organisational and legislative requirements regarding inclusion, equity and diversity.</li> <li>• Ensure staff are fully supported to comply with anti-discrimination legislation towards inclusive and equitable practice.</li> </ul>





**Recognises the complexity of health and healthcare systems and engages in processes and activities that promote safe, quality, effective services for all**

ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
3.2 Wellbeing and holistic care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of spiritual care within context of client wellbeing and holistic care.</li> <li>• Identify and practice spiritual care approaches as a component of client wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate and contribute to awareness of spiritual care as a component of holistic and integrated care.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to advocate spiritual care as component of contemporary holistic health care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and facilitate education programs to promote and embed spiritual care as component of preventative and holistic care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement communication strategies that support role of spiritual care in client wellbeing and holistic care.</li> <li>• Identify and disseminate spiritual care resources to support organisational culture of and holistic care.</li> <li>• Initiate strategies that contribute to client care and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
3.3 Responsible use of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure compliance with all policy and procedures for accountable use of organisational resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to initiatives supporting responsible and effectient use of organisational resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate, monitor and review service resources and ensure compliance with service operations and procedures.</li> <li>• Identify and substantiate resourcing needs for service efficiencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure responsible and accountable use of departmental resources in accordance with operational budget.</li> <li>• Represent departmental resourcing needs at executive level consistent with organisational vision, values and objectives.</li> </ul>



## DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

Acts in accordance with professional, ethical and legal standards				
ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
4.1 Ethical and legal practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice in accordance with ethical and legal requirements of the role.</li> <li>Identify and seek supervision regarding ethical dilemmas and decisions.</li> <li>Report illegal or unethical conduct in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate ethical decision making in accordance with scope of practice.</li> <li>Provide ethical guidance to Level 1 and student / volunteer practitioners on routine matters.</li> <li>Identify and seek supervision for complex ethical issues in accordance with service guidelines and protocols.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure compliance with service protocols in place for identifying and reporting unethical or illegal conduct.</li> <li>Provide or facilitate guidance for Level 1 and 2 practitioners regarding ethical dilemmas and decisions.</li> <li>Identify and make accessible resources to assist resolve ethical dilemmas within practice. Participate on human research ethics committees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide high level advice regarding complex ethical issues to line management.</li> <li>Ensure integration of ethical and legal conduct into service practice.</li> <li>Contribute to organisational vision, values and objectives.</li> </ul>
4.2 Self-regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain intentional self-care and professional supervision practices as provided by accredited supervisors.</li> <li>Exercise effective time-management and prioritisation of work demands.</li> <li>Identify and report personal conflicts of interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to development of self-care resources and support for Level 1 and student / volunteer practitioners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop self-care resources for practitioners and health professional.</li> <li>Respond to conflicts of interest within spiritual care team in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.</li> <li>Demonstrate highly attuned self-awareness at all times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and advocate for professional self-care strategies across all service areas within organisation.</li> <li>Prioritise competing service demands in accordance with organisational goals.</li> <li>Clearly communicate service priorities to practitioner within spiritual care department.</li> </ul>

Acts in accordance with professional, ethical and legal standards

ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
4.3 Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice is in line with the Spiritual Care Australia Code of Conduct.</li> <li>Be fully acquainted with accountability and reporting protocols within scope of practice.</li> <li>Maintain a working knowledge of personal scope of practice and provide spiritual care accordingly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a working knowledge of organisational accountability and reporting protocols and advise Level 1 and student / volunteer practitioners as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure spiritual care team is acquainted with service and organisational accountability and reporting protocols.</li> <li>Exercise professional judgment in delegation of tasks and reporting of matters to management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement departmental accountability and reporting protocols.</li> <li>Ensure spiritual care department operates in accordance with organisational governance.</li> <li>Contribute and provide high level advice to line management regarding accountability and reporting protocols.</li> <li>Maintain appropriate processes to address breaches of accountability and reporting protocols.</li> </ul>



## DOMAIN 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Maintains and extends professional competence and contributes to the learning and development of others

ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
5.1 Individual development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine professional development (PD) goals and prepare plan in consultation with spiritual care management.</li> <li>Monitor progress of PD plan and adapt where necessary in consultation with spiritual care management.</li> <li>Maintain personal spirituality as dimension of spiritual care practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify resources and learning opportunities for inclusion in PD plan.</li> <li>Contribute to PD initiatives for use within spiritual care service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support practitioners in development of PD plans and achievement of goals.</li> <li>Identify and maintain database of PD resources and learning opportunities and advise practitioners regarding career pathways and progression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure PD pathways align with human resource management and organisational objectives, policy and procedures.</li> <li>Prepare and advocate for PD resourcing for spiritual care department in accordance organisational budgetary processes.</li> <li>Contribute to organisational strategies and provide high level advice regarding inclusion of spiritual care in organisational PD initiatives.</li> </ul>
5.2 Self-reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercise individual reflective practice as guided by a recognised model under guidance of senior practitioner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become acquainted with recognised models of reflective practice and advise Level 1 and student practitioners where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain awareness of contemporary reflective practice models and support practitioners in their use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure adequate resources are available to practitioners to support reflective practice.</li> <li>Advocate for and support a culture of reflective practice across all organisational service areas.</li> </ul>



Maintains and extends professional competence and contributes to the learning and development of others

ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
5.3 Professional networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in professional networks and identify developmental opportunities to inform practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to development of team resources.</li> <li>Contribute to spiritual care PD and education programs within organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, facilitate and deliver PD and education programs regarding spiritual care within organisation.</li> <li>Support practitioners in participation of professional networks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and maintain professional relationships across service areas at executive level to inform organisational PD strategies.</li> <li>Advocate for and represent service at executive level for PD resourcing.</li> <li>Develop and maintain professional relationships with relevant organisations and peak bodies.</li> </ul>

Maintains and extends professional competence and contributes to the learning and development of others

ACTIVITY ELEMENT	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
5.4 Performance review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constructively participate in own performance review processes.</li> <li>• Positively contribute to performance review process of peers as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and participate in performance review processes for Level 1 and student/volunteer practitioners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure performance review processes are conducted in accordance with agreed intervals.</li> <li>• Monitor outcomes of performance reviews and initiate appropriate developmental responses as required.</li> <li>• Liaise with service management regarding improvements in performance review processes and outcomes.</li> <li>• Initiate processes seeking feedback from spiritual care team regarding own performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure performance review processes are conducted with integrity and in accordance with human resource management policy and procedures and workforce planning.</li> <li>• Monitor and utilise feedback from performance reviews to inform service improvement, recruitment and human resource strategies.</li> </ul>



# Glossary

**Capabilities:** Capabilities are underpinning behavioural skills that characterise work being performed well (Health Workforce Australia 2013) (6). Capabilities specify the expected behaviours and attributes of clinicians as they progress through grading structures. They reflect the expanding sphere of influence and control expected of individuals of a higher grading. They are non-clinical attributes (7).

**Credentialling:** Credentialling 'refers to the formal process used to verify qualifications, experience, professional standing and other professional attributes for the purpose of forming a view about ... competence, performance and professional suitability to provide safe, high-quality healthcare services within specific organisational environments' (7, 8).

**Qualified and Credentialed Spiritual Care Practitioners:** Spiritual Care Australia sets the industry standards for spiritual care practitioners in health care: <https://www.spiritualcareaustralia.org.au/about-us/standards-and-policies>. Spiritual care practitioners are appointed and credentialed by the health service. They can be from a diverse range of beliefs, traditions, values and practices.

**Scope of Practice:** A profession's scope of practice is the full spectrum of roles, functions, responsibilities and decision-making capacities that individuals within that profession are educated, competent and authorised to perform. Some functions within the scope of practice of any profession may be shared with other professions or other individuals or groups. The scope of practice of all health professions is influenced by the wider environment, the specific setting, legislation, policy, education, standards and the health needs of the population' (Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council 2007, p. 1).

'The scope of practice of an individual is that which the individual is educated, authorised and competent to perform. The scope of practice of an individual clinician may be more specifically defined than the scope of practice of their profession. To practise within the full scope of practice of the profession may require individuals to update or increase their knowledge, skills or competence' (Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council 2007, p. 2) (7).

**Spiritual Care (Clinical Definition):** Spiritual care is the provision of assessment, counselling, support and ritual in matters of a person's beliefs, traditions, values and practices enabling the person to access their own spiritual resources (9, 10).

**Spiritual Care (Non-clinical Definition):** Spiritual care can help you feel more connected with yourself, other people or to something beyond. It is about the beliefs, traditions, values and practices that are important to you. Spiritual care supports what gives meaning and purpose to your life (10, 11).

**Spiritual Care Management:** Spiritual care is managed by different roles and at different levels depending on the complexity and size of the health service. Management can be at a director, manager or coordinator level.

**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, and practices (10).

Spirituality is subjective and can be expressed in different ways by individuals and communities. Some people choose to express their spirituality through religion or religious practice, while others may not. Spirituality can also be described as the search for answers to existential questions, such as: Why is this happening to me? To whom do I belong? Does my life have meaning? What happens after we die?





# References

1. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. 2nd Edition. ACSQHC: 2017.
2. Palliative Care Australia. National Palliative Care Standards 5th Edition. Canberra: Palliative Care Australia: 2018.
3. Spiritual Care Australia. Standards of Practice.  
<https://www.spiritualcareaustralia.org.au/about-us/standards-and-policies/>
4. World Health Organisation. People at the Centre of Health Care: Harmonizing mind and body, people and systems. South-East Asia Region, Western Pacific Region: WHO: 2007.
5. Health Professionals and Support Services Award 2020.  
[https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/documents/modern\\_awards/pdf/ma000027.pdf](https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/documents/modern_awards/pdf/ma000027.pdf)
6. Health Workforce Australia (HWA). National common health capability resource: shared activities and behaviours in the Australian health workforce – provisional edition, Health Workforce Australia, Adelaide: 2013.
7. State of Victoria. Allied health: credentialling, competency and capability framework 2nd Edition. State of Victoria: Melbourne: 2016.  
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/allied-health-workforce/allied-health-ccc-framework>
8. Australian Council for Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC). Standard for credentialling and defining the scope of clinical practice, ACSQHC: Sydney: 2004
9. The Independent Hospital Pricing Authority. Reference to Changes for ICD-10AM/ACHI/ACS Eleventh Edition. Darlinghurst: The Independent Hospital Pricing Authority: 2019.
10. Puchalski et al. Spiritual Dimension of Whole Patient/client Care: Reaching National and International Consensus\*. Journal of Palliative Medicine\*; 17(6): 642-656. 2014.
11. Meaningful Ageing Australia. ConnecTo. Melbourne, Australia: Meaningful Ageing Australia: 2017.



Spiritual  
Health  
Association

**Spiritual Health Association Limited**

3 Albert Coates Lane  
Melbourne VIC 3000

**P** (+61) 3 8610 6327

**E** [office@spiritualhealth.org.au](mailto:office@spiritualhealth.org.au)

**W** [www.spiritualhealth.org.au](http://www.spiritualhealth.org.au)