Palliative Care Chaplaincy

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NCP Palliative Care Guidelines
Domain 5: spiritual, religious & existential dimensions of care

• Spirituality defined as “The aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to the moment, to self, to other, to nature, and/or to the significant or sacred.” Puchalski et al., 2009/2013, p. 26

• Spirituality is “the dynamic dimension of human life that relates to the way persons (individual & community) experience, express and/or seek meaning, purpose and transcendence, and the way they connect to the moment, to self, to others, to nature, to the significant and/or the sacred.” European Association of Palliative Care (EAPC) Nolan et al., 2011, p. 88
The emphasis is on IDT...

- IDT members are called on to recognize spiritual distress & addresses within their scope of practice
- IDT includes board certified chaplain trained in spiritual assessment & care
- IDT communications are respectful of spiritual needs & do not impose their spiritual/religious beliefs on patients/families
The look of palliative care

Figure 1. Adapted from Frank D. Ferris, 2000.

Figure 2. Adapted from Frank D. Ferris, 2000.
Spiritual assessment process...

• Starts with the team member who first meets patient/family thru exploration & standardized instrument
• Covers but not limited to: life review, hopes, values, fears, meaning, purpose, beliefs, practices, cultural norms, coping, guilt, forgiveness & completion of life tasks
• Developing a language for spiritual assessment & communication of spiritual needs
Spiritual assessment cont’d…

- Document assessment, interventions & plan including those spiritual preferences & resources that will support patient/family in decision-making
- Reevaluate periodically impact of interventions & spiritual needs