The Role of Professional Chaplains in Whole Person Care

Interdisciplinary Team Member

Practice guidelines especially in palliative care call for a board certified chaplain to be a member of the health care team.

Interventions by an interdisciplinary health care team that includes chaplains can lead to fewer hospital transfers for geriatric skilled nursing facility residents.

Medicare's hospice benefit covers chaplain services.

Critical Conversations

Chaplains help patients

- **Cope with their illness**
- **Align care plans with values**, promoting a culture of respect and dignity
- **Tap into inner strengths and resources**

Of 1,140 chaplain interventions, visits centered on:

- "Ultimate concerns" (life review, family concerns) 30%
- "Practical matters" (emotions, existential matters, religious/spiritual matters, physical symptoms) 70%

#1 Reason Participants Use Spiritual Care Call Center

Participants use spiritual care call center staffed by professional chaplains

- 43% "They have no one else"
- 28% "They wanted to talk to someone"

Professional chaplains facilitate end-of-life care discussions for advanced cancer patients that can influence patient satisfaction, hospice enrollment, and better quality of life near death.

Medicare's hospice benefit covers chaplain services.

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