



SPIRITUAL CARE ASSOCIATION

Westberg Institute

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY HANDBOOK

CERTIFIED SPIRITUAL CARE NURSE (CSCN)

Credentialing Pathway, Eligibility Requirements, Policies, and Professional Standards
2026 Edition

Version 2026.1 • Effective January 2026 • Review Date: January 2027
Approved by the Spiritual Care Association Nursing Division



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 — Welcome.....	3
Section 2 — The Spiritual Care Nursing Specialty and Credentialing Pathway.....	5
Section 3 — The CSCN Credentialing Pathway.....	7
Section 4 — Eligibility Requirements.....	10
Section 5 — Application Process.....	12
Section 6 — Credentialing Policies.....	15
Section 7 — Code of Ethics for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN).....	18
Appendix A — Glossary of Key Terms.....	21
Appendix B — Frequently Asked Questions.....	22
Appendix C — Candidate Agreement.....	25
Appendix D — CSCN Credential Renewal Requirements.....	26
Appendix E — Recommended Readings and Professional Resources.....	28

Page numbers are approximate and reflect this edition's typeset layout.



The Candidate Eligibility Handbook for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) Credential provides information regarding eligibility requirements, credentialing policies, application procedures, renewal expectations, and professional standards established by the Spiritual Care Association. Applicants are responsible for complying with the policies and requirements in effect at the time of application.

SECTION 1 WELCOME

The CSCN Credentialing Pathway

The professional Certified Spiritual Care Nurse credential is awarded by the Spiritual Care Association. The educational preparation for the credential is administered through the Westberg Institute, a division of the Spiritual Care Association. Together, these complementary functions create a credentialing pathway that recognizes both educational competency and advanced specialty nursing practice.

Educational Credential	Professional Credential
Administered through the Westberg Institute and Capstone University	Administered through the Spiritual Care Association
Spiritual Care Nursing Curriculum	CSCN Eligibility Review
Curriculum Competency Examination	Professional Standards
Certificate of Curriculum Competence	CSCN Professional Credential

This handbook provides information for registered nurses who are interested in pursuing the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential. It explains the purpose of the credential, eligibility requirements, the application process, and the professional responsibilities associated with certification. Candidates are encouraged to read this handbook carefully before beginning the certification process.

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential is awarded to registered nurses who have successfully completed the educational pathway and demonstrated the knowledge, clinical competence, and professional commitment required for advanced specialty practice in evidence-based spiritual nursing care.

Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to:

- Describe the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credentialing pathway.
- Explain the educational and professional requirements for obtaining the CSCN credential.
- Describe the complementary roles of the Westberg Institute and the Spiritual Care Association in the credentialing process.
- Provide guidance for completing the application and eligibility review process.
- Describe the responsibilities and expectations associated with maintaining the CSCN professional credential.
- Promote consistency, transparency, fairness, and excellence throughout the credentialing process.

This handbook should be used in conjunction with all current policies, procedures, and eligibility requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association.



Purpose of the CSCN Credential

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential recognizes registered nurses who have demonstrated advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing. The credential signifies that a nurse has successfully completed the required educational preparation and fulfilled the professional eligibility requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association for specialty practice.

The CSCN credential provides public recognition of advanced knowledge, clinical competence, and professional commitment to evidence-based spiritual nursing care. It supports excellence in whole-person, patient-centered care, encourages lifelong professional development, and advances the recognition of Spiritual Care Nursing as a nursing specialty.

The CSCN credential is voluntary and complements, but does not replace, professional nursing licensure. Licensure grants the legal authority to practice as a Registered Nurse, while the CSCN credential recognizes advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing.

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential is a professional certification awarded by the Spiritual Care Association. It is distinct from nursing board certification offered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or other nursing specialty board-certification organizations. The CSCN credential recognizes nurses who have met the education, competency, practice, and professional requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association for certification in Spiritual Care Nursing.

Educational Credential and Professional Credential

The Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing and the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential represent two complementary components of the Spiritual Care Nursing credentialing pathway.

The Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing is an educational credential awarded upon successful completion of the prescribed curriculum and the Curriculum Competency Examination. It verifies that the participant has achieved the educational knowledge, skills, and competencies established for the Spiritual Care Nursing curriculum.

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential is a professional credential awarded by the Spiritual Care Association to registered nurses who have successfully completed the educational pathway and fulfilled all published eligibility requirements. These requirements may include licensure, academic preparation, specialty practice experience, continuing professional development, professional conduct, and other standards established by the Spiritual Care Association.

Completion of the educational curriculum and award of the Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing do not, by themselves, confer the CSCN credential or authorize use of the CSCN designation.

Vision for Spiritual Care Nursing

Spiritual Care Nursing is an emerging nursing specialty dedicated to integrating evidence-based spiritual nursing care into professional nursing practice through the nursing process. Grounded in whole-person, patient-centered care, the specialty prepares registered nurses to recognize, assess, and respond to the spiritual dimension of health while honoring the dignity, values, beliefs, culture, and lived experiences of every person.

Spiritual Care Nurses collaborate with patients, families, professional chaplains, faith leaders, and the interdisciplinary healthcare team to promote healing, meaning, hope, resilience, and human flourishing across diverse healthcare settings. Through ongoing



education, reflective practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration, Spiritual Care Nurses contribute to compassionate, evidence-informed care that supports the whole person.

As the specialty continues to evolve, the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential provides a pathway for recognizing advanced specialty competency, promoting consistent standards of practice, and supporting the continued integration of Spiritual Care Nursing across healthcare organizations.

A Message to Candidates

Thank you for your interest in advancing the specialty of Spiritual Care Nursing.

Pursuing the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential reflects a commitment to lifelong learning, professional growth, and excellence in whole-person nursing care. Through this credentialing pathway, registered nurses demonstrate their dedication to developing the knowledge, competencies, and professional standards that support evidence-based spiritual nursing practice.

This handbook has been developed to guide you through the educational and professional requirements of the CSCN credentialing pathway. We encourage you to review it carefully and retain it as a reference throughout your application and professional development.

We congratulate you on taking this important step and wish you continued success as you contribute to the advancement of Spiritual Care Nursing and the delivery of compassionate, whole-person care.

SECTION 2 THE SPIRITUAL CARE NURSING SPECIALTY AND CREDENTIALING PATHWAY

Introduction

Spiritual Care Nursing is an emerging nursing specialty that integrates evidence-based spiritual nursing care into professional nursing practice through the nursing process. Recognizing spirituality as an essential dimension of whole-person, patient-centered care, the specialty prepares registered nurses with advanced knowledge, clinical skills, and professional competencies to recognize, assess, and respond to the spiritual strengths, concerns, needs, and resources of individuals, families, and communities experiencing health, illness, suffering, healing, and life transitions.

Grounded in the nursing process, Spiritual Care Nursing intentionally integrates the spiritual dimension of health through comprehensive nursing assessment, individualized Spiritual Nursing Plans of Care, evidence-based spiritual nursing interventions, evaluation of outcomes, clinical documentation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and referral when appropriate. The specialty seeks to promote healing, meaning, hope, resilience, connectedness, and human flourishing while honoring each person's beliefs, values, culture, worldview, and lived experience.

Philosophy of Spiritual Care Nursing

Spiritual Care Nursing is founded on the belief that every person possesses an inherent spiritual dimension that influences health, healing, coping, relationships, meaning, and quality of life. Spirituality is understood as a universal human experience that may be expressed through religious traditions, personal beliefs, relationships, culture, nature, creativity, values, purpose, or other sources of meaning.



Spiritual Care Nurses provide evidence-based, patient-directed nursing care that respects the diversity of religious, spiritual, humanistic, and nonreligious worldviews. Care is delivered through compassionate presence, therapeutic relationships, skilled communication, ethical nursing practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration while maintaining professional boundaries and honoring patient autonomy.

Philosophical Foundations

Spiritual Care Nursing is grounded in four complementary philosophical foundations that guide education, clinical practice, scholarship, and professional development.

Pluralism Recognizes and respects the diversity of spiritual, religious, cultural, humanistic, and nonreligious worldviews. Care is individualized according to each person's beliefs, values, traditions, and sources of meaning.

Humanism Affirms the inherent dignity, worth, and value of every person. Spiritual Care Nurses provide compassionate, whole-person nursing care without discrimination.

Phenomenology Recognizes that illness, suffering, healing, and life transitions are uniquely experienced by each individual. Spiritual Care Nurses seek to understand each person's lived experience through authentic presence, deep listening, reflection, and respectful inquiry.

Ethics of Care Professional relationships are grounded in compassion, trust, integrity, accountability, and respect for patient autonomy. Spiritual Care Nurses provide evidence-based care that is ethically sound, professionally accountable, and responsive to each patient's goals and preferences.

The Spiritual Care Nursing Model

The Spiritual Care Nursing Model (Ziebarth, 2026) provides the conceptual framework for the specialty and serves as the foundation for education, clinical practice, research, quality improvement, and organizational implementation.

The model:

- Defines Spiritual Care Nursing as a nursing specialty.
- Describes the role and responsibilities of the Spiritual Care Nurse.
- Establishes the philosophical foundations of the specialty.
- Identifies the antecedents, attributes, and consequences of Spiritual Care Nursing.
- Defines the competencies expected of Spiritual Care Nurses.
- Provides guidance for implementing Spiritual Care Nursing within healthcare organizations.

Together, these components provide a consistent framework for advancing Spiritual Care Nursing as a recognized specialty of professional nursing practice.

The Role of the Spiritual Care Nurse

A Spiritual Care Nurse is a registered nurse who has completed specialized education in Spiritual Care Nursing and applies evidence-based spiritual nursing care within the nursing scope of practice.

The Spiritual Care Nurse:

- Conducts a Whole-Person Nursing Assessment that intentionally includes the spiritual dimension of health.
- Develops individualized Spiritual Nursing Plans of Care.



- Implements evidence-based spiritual nursing interventions.
- Evaluates patient outcomes.
- Documents spiritual nursing care within the nursing record.
- Collaborates with patients, families, professional chaplains, faith leaders, and members of the interdisciplinary healthcare team.
- Initiates consultation or referral when patient needs extend beyond the nursing scope of practice.

Spiritual Care Nurses practice across the continuum of care, including acute care hospitals, ambulatory settings, rehabilitation facilities, long-term care, hospice, home health, community health, and other healthcare environments.

Relationship to Professional Chaplaincy

Spiritual Care Nursing and professional chaplaincy are complementary professions that collaborate to provide coordinated whole-person care.

Spiritual Care Nurses contribute expertise in spiritual nursing assessment, nursing care planning, evidence-based spiritual nursing interventions, clinical documentation, and continuity of care through the nursing process. Professional chaplains contribute specialized expertise in comprehensive spiritual care, religious and sacramental ministry, existential support, staff support, and organizational spiritual care through the chaplaincy process.

Each profession practices within its own scope, standards, and competencies while working collaboratively to address the spiritual needs of patients, families, caregivers, and healthcare organizations. Spiritual Care Nurses recognize when consultation or referral to professional chaplains or other spiritual care resources is appropriate and actively participate in interdisciplinary care planning.

The CSCN Credentialing Pathway

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential recognizes advanced specialty competency in Spiritual Care Nursing. The credentialing pathway consists of two complementary components:

Educational Credential — Administered through the Westberg Institute: completion of the Spiritual Care Nursing curriculum, successful completion of the Curriculum Competency Examination, and award of the Certificate of Curriculum Competence.

Professional Credential — Administered through the Spiritual Care Association: verification of published eligibility requirements, review of licensure, academic preparation, specialty practice experience, and other required documentation, and award of the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential.

Together, the educational and professional components of the credentialing pathway recognize nurses who have demonstrated advanced preparation and competency in Spiritual Care Nursing while supporting consistent standards of specialty practice and advancing whole-person, patient-centered care.

SECTION 3 THE CSCN CREDENTIALING PATHWAY

Purpose

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credentialing pathway recognizes registered nurses who have demonstrated advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing. The pathway combines educational preparation with professional eligibility



standards to promote excellence in evidence-based spiritual nursing care and to support consistent standards of specialty practice.

The credentialing pathway is voluntary and complements, but does not replace, professional nursing licensure. Licensure grants the legal authority to practice as a Registered Nurse, while the CSCN credential recognizes advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing.

Overview of the Credentialing Pathway

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential is awarded through a two-tier credentialing pathway that includes both educational preparation and professional recognition.

Tier One — Educational Credential (Westberg Institute)

Candidates complete the Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing educational program and demonstrate curriculum competency through successful completion of the Curriculum Competency Examination.

Successful completion includes:

- Completion of all required educational modules.
- Achievement of the established passing standard on the Curriculum Competency Examination.
- Completion of required program evaluations.
- Award of the Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing.

The Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing is an educational credential that verifies successful completion of the curriculum. It serves as the educational prerequisite for application to the CSCN professional credential but does not, by itself, authorize use of the CSCN designation.

Tier Two — Professional Credential (Spiritual Care Association)

After completing the educational pathway, registered nurses may apply for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential by demonstrating that they satisfy all published eligibility requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association.

Eligibility requirements include:

- Current, unrestricted Registered Nurse licensure.
- Required academic preparation.
- Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing.
- Required specialty practice experience.
- Continuing professional development.
- Agreement to abide by the applicable Code of Ethics.
- Submission of all required documentation.
- Payment of applicable credentialing fees.
- Successful completion of the credential review process.



What the CSCN Credential Represents

The CSCN credential recognizes registered nurses who have demonstrated advanced competency in Spiritual Care Nursing beyond the preparation expected of the generalist registered nurse. Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) professionals demonstrate competency in:

- Whole-Person Nursing Assessment that intentionally includes the spiritual dimension of health.
- Development of individualized Spiritual Nursing Plans of Care.
- Evidence-based spiritual nursing interventions.
- Therapeutic communication and compassionate presence.
- Clinical judgment related to spiritual strengths, concerns, and needs.
- Ethical nursing practice.
- Documentation of spiritual nursing care.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Appropriate consultation and referral.

The CSCN credential signifies advanced preparation, professional accountability, and a commitment to evidence-based, whole-person nursing care.

Benefits of the Credentialing Pathway

The CSCN credentialing pathway benefits patients, nurses, healthcare organizations, and the nursing profession.

Patients

- Increased access to evidence-based spiritual nursing care.
- Recognition of the spiritual dimension of health as part of whole-person care.
- Improved continuity of spiritual nursing care throughout the healthcare experience.

Nurses

- Recognition of advanced specialty competency.
- Professional growth and lifelong learning.
- Leadership opportunities within healthcare organizations.
- Advancement of professional identity in Spiritual Care Nursing.

Healthcare Organizations

- Strengthened whole-person, patient-centered care.
- Enhanced interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Greater integration of evidence-based spiritual nursing care.
- Support for quality improvement and organizational excellence.

The Nursing Profession

- Advancement of Spiritual Care Nursing as a recognized nursing specialty.
- Consistent educational and professional standards.
- Promotion of scholarship, research, innovation, and leadership.



Maintaining the CSCN Credential

The CSCN credential is awarded for a defined credentialing period established by the Spiritual Care Association. To maintain the credential, nurses must continue to satisfy published renewal requirements, including maintaining an unrestricted Registered Nurse license, demonstrating continued specialty practice, participating in continuing professional development, and complying with all applicable ethical and professional standards.

Current renewal requirements are described in the CSCN Credential Renewal Handbook.

Professional Responsibility

Recipients of the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional nursing practice, maintain specialty competency, practice within the legal scope of nursing, collaborate effectively with patients and the interdisciplinary healthcare team, and contribute to the continued advancement of Spiritual Care Nursing through ethical practice, scholarship, leadership, and lifelong learning.

SECTION 4 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to describe the eligibility requirements for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) professional credential. Candidates must satisfy all published eligibility requirements before submitting an application for credential review.

The Spiritual Care Association reviews each application to determine eligibility based on the requirements in effect at the time the application is received. Meeting the eligibility requirements permits a candidate to enter the credential review process but does not, by itself, guarantee award of the CSCN credential.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential must meet all of the following requirements.

1 Current Registered Nurse Licensure

Applicants must possess a current, unrestricted license to practice as a Registered Nurse (RN).

Applicants are responsible for reporting any disciplinary action, restriction, suspension, probation, or revocation of licensure that occurs before or after submission of an application.

International applicants must demonstrate eligibility to practice as a registered nurse through an approved credential evaluation process or other requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association.

Documentation: For U.S.-licensed applicants, licensure is verified through the Nursys Nurse License Verification system online; no license upload is required.



2 Educational Preparation

Applicants must hold a Diploma in Nursing, an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN), or a higher nursing degree from an accredited college or university recognized by the appropriate accrediting authority.

This academic preparation provides the foundational nursing knowledge and clinical skills expected for specialty nursing practice, including evidence-based practice, therapeutic communication, and professional nursing judgment.

Documentation: Official or unofficial nursing transcript showing degree awarded. Documentation is generally not submitted with the application but must be retained and produced if selected for audit.

3 Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing

Applicants must have successfully completed the approved Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing curriculum, including completing all required educational modules, successfully passing the Curriculum Competency Examination, completing required course evaluations, and receiving the Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing.

The educational program must be completed within the time period established by the Spiritual Care Association.

Required Documentation: Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing.

4 Professional Nursing Practice

Applicants must demonstrate recent professional nursing practice by completing either one year of full-time nursing practice, or a minimum of 1,000 hours of part-time nursing practice during the previous five years.

Professional practice experience provides opportunities to integrate whole-person nursing care, develop therapeutic relationships, collaborate with interdisciplinary teams, and apply the principles of Spiritual Care Nursing in clinical practice.

Documentation is generally not submitted with the application but must be retained and produced if selected for audit.

5 Continuing Professional Development

Applicants must complete a minimum of 70 contact hours of continuing nursing education related to Spiritual Care Nursing or closely related content during the designated eligibility period.

Approved coursework completed through the Spiritual Care Nursing curriculum may be applied toward this requirement when completed within the approved time frame.

Documentation should be retained and provided if requested during the audit process.

6 Professional and Ethical Conduct

Applicants must agree to practice in accordance with the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses, the Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics, applicable laws and regulations governing nursing practice, and policies established by the Spiritual Care Association.

Applicants must disclose any disciplinary action involving nursing licensure or professional misconduct. Failure to disclose required information may result in denial or revocation of the CSCN credential.



7 Application Submission

Applicants must submit a completed application, all required supporting documentation, a signed Candidate Agreement, and payment of applicable fees.

Applications will not be reviewed until all required materials have been received.

Eligibility Summary

Requirement	Minimum Standard	Documentation
RN Licensure	Current unrestricted RN license	Verified through Nursys
Education	Diploma, ADN, or higher nursing degree	Retained for audit
Educational Credential	Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing	Certificate
Professional Practice	One year full-time or 1,000 hours part-time	Retained for audit
Continuing Professional Development	70 contact hours	Retained for audit
Professional Conduct	Agreement to ethical standards	Signed application
Application	Complete application and fees	Online application

Audit Process

To maintain the integrity of the credentialing program, the Spiritual Care Association reserves the right to audit any application.

Applicants selected for audit must submit the requested documentation within the specified time frame. Failure to respond to an audit request may result in denial of eligibility or withdrawal of the application.

Eligibility Determination

Meeting the published eligibility requirements qualifies an applicant for credential review. Eligibility alone does not confer the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential.

The CSCN credential is awarded only after the applicant has successfully completed all requirements of the credentialing pathway and has been formally approved by the Spiritual Care Association.

SECTION 5 APPLICATION PROCESS

Introduction

Candidates who meet the eligibility requirements for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential may submit an application for certification. The Spiritual Care Association reviews each application to determine whether the candidate has satisfied all eligibility requirements established at the time of application.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring that all application materials are complete, accurate, and submitted by published deadlines.



Before You Apply

Before beginning the online application, candidates should verify that they meet all eligibility requirements.

Applicants should have the following documents readily available:

- Current unrestricted Registered Nurse license.
- Official or unofficial nursing transcript showing degree awarded (retained for audit; not submitted with the application).
- Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing (Certificate of Curriculum Competence).
- Continuing education documentation, if applicable.
- Employment information documenting nursing practice.
- Payment method for application fees.

Having all documentation available before beginning the application will help ensure a smooth application process.

Online Application

Applications for the CSCN credential are submitted electronically through the Spiritual Care Association Certification Portal.

Candidates should carefully complete all required sections of the application. Incomplete applications may delay processing.

An application fee is required. The fee is non-refundable and is collected at the end of the online application.

Applicants will be asked to:

- Enter personal contact information.
- Verify nursing licensure.
- Document educational preparation.
- Verify completion of the Spiritual Care Nursing curriculum.
- Provide employment history.
- Attest that all information submitted is accurate.
- Agree to comply with the Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics and Spiritual Care Association policies.
- Submit payment of required fees.

Required Supporting Documents

Applicants must upload all required documentation in an approved electronic format.

Acceptable file formats include PDF, JPG, and PNG.

Required documents include:

- Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing

Additional documentation may be requested during the eligibility review process.



Application Review

After submission, applications undergo an eligibility review conducted by the Spiritual Care Association.

During the review process, the Spiritual Care Association verifies that:

- Eligibility requirements have been met.
- Required documentation has been received.
- Professional qualifications have been verified.
- No additional information is required.

Applicants will be notified by email regarding the status of their application.

Audit Process

To maintain the integrity of the certification program, the Spiritual Care Association reserves the right to audit any application.

Applicants selected for audit may be asked to provide documentation supporting:

- Employment history
- Continuing education
- Licensure
- Educational preparation
- Other eligibility requirements

Requested documentation must be submitted within the time frame specified by the Spiritual Care Association. Failure to respond to an audit request may delay or prevent certification.

Application Decisions

Following review, one of the following decisions will be made:

Approved The applicant has met all eligibility requirements and may proceed with the next step of the certification process.

Pending Additional documentation or clarification is required before eligibility can be determined. Applicants will receive written instructions describing the additional information needed.

Denied The applicant has not met one or more eligibility requirements. Written notification will include the reason(s) for the decision and information regarding the appeals process.

Candidate Responsibilities

Applicants are responsible for:

- Providing complete and accurate information.
- Reporting changes in licensure status.
- Maintaining current contact information.
- Responding promptly to Spiritual Care Association requests.
- Reviewing all Spiritual Care Association communications.

Submission of an application does not guarantee approval for certification.



Confidentiality

All application materials submitted to the Spiritual Care Association are treated as confidential and are used solely for purposes related to certification.

Information is maintained in accordance with applicable privacy policies and Spiritual Care Association procedures.

Appeals

Candidates who believe an eligibility decision was made in error may submit a written appeal.

Appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing.
- Be received within the time period established by the Spiritual Care Association.
- Include supporting documentation relevant to the appeal.

Appeals are reviewed according to Spiritual Care Association policy. The Association's decision following the appeals process is final.

Application Checklist

Before selecting Submit, verify that you have:

- Reviewed all eligibility requirements.
- Completed every section of the application.
- Uploaded all required documentation.
- Verified that all information is accurate.
- Agreed to the Candidate Agreement.
- Agreed to abide by the Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics.
- Paid all required fees.
- Saved copies of all submitted documents for your personal records.

SECTION 6 CREDENTIALING POLICIES

Purpose

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential reflects advanced specialty competency in Spiritual Care Nursing. To promote fairness, consistency, transparency, and public confidence, the Spiritual Care Association has established policies governing the administration, award, maintenance, renewal, and appropriate use of the CSCN credential.

All applicants and credential holders are expected to comply with these policies throughout the credentialing process.

Nondiscrimination

The Spiritual Care Association is committed to providing equitable access to CSCN credentials.

Eligibility is determined solely on the basis of published credentialing requirements. No applicant shall be denied consideration on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, military status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.



Applicant and Credential Holder Responsibilities

Applicants and credential holders are responsible for:

- Providing complete, accurate, and truthful information.
- Maintaining a current, unrestricted Registered Nurse license.
- Reporting changes that may affect eligibility or credential status.
- Responding promptly to requests from the Spiritual Care Association.
- Practicing in accordance with applicable professional and ethical standards.
- Protecting the integrity of the CSCN credential.

Failure to fulfill these responsibilities may result in delays, denial of an application, suspension, revocation, or nonrenewal of the credential.

Accuracy of Information

All information submitted during the credentialing process must be accurate, complete, and truthful.

Submission of false, misleading, altered, or fraudulent information may result in:

- Denial of an application.
- Revocation of the CSCN credential.
- Loss of future eligibility.
- Notification of licensing or regulatory authorities when appropriate.

Confidentiality

The Spiritual Care Association maintains the confidentiality of applicant and credential holder information.

Personal information and supporting documentation are used solely for purposes related to administration of the CSCN credential unless disclosure is required by law or authorized by the applicant.

De-identified information may be used for quality improvement, program evaluation, accreditation, or scholarly research.

Appropriate Use of the CSCN Credential

The designation Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) may be used only by individuals whose credential is current and in good standing.

The credential may appear on:

- Professional correspondence
- Business cards
- Curriculum vitae
- Résumés
- Professional biographies
- Publications
- Educational presentations
- Professional identification



Individuals whose credentials have expired, lapsed, been suspended, or been revoked may not represent themselves as CSCN or use the credential designation.

Credential Renewal

The CSCN credential is awarded for a defined credentialing period established by the Spiritual Care Association.

Credential holders are responsible for completing all published renewal requirements before the expiration date to maintain the credential in active status.

Failure to renew the credential before its expiration will result in a lapse of credential status.

Current renewal requirements are described in the CSCN Credential Renewal Handbook.

Suspension or Revocation of the Credential

The Spiritual Care Association reserves the right to suspend or revoke the CSCN credential for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Falsification of application materials.
- Fraud or intentional misrepresentation.
- Loss or restriction of Registered Nurse licensure.
- Violation of the Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics.
- Professional misconduct.
- Misrepresentation or misuse of the CSCN credential.
- Failure to comply with published credentialing policies.

Whenever practicable, credential holders will receive written notification of the concerns and an opportunity to respond before a final decision is made.

Appeals

Applicants and credential holders may appeal certain credentialing decisions in accordance with published Spiritual Care Association policies.

Appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing.
- Be received within the published appeal period.
- Include supporting documentation relevant to the appeal.

Appeals are reviewed according to established procedures. Decisions rendered through the appeals process are final.

Record Retention

Applicants and credential holders are encouraged to retain copies of all documents related to the CSCN credential, including:

- Applications
- Certificates
- Continuing professional development records
- Employment verification
- Renewal documentation
- Correspondence with the Spiritual Care Association



These records may be requested during audits or renewal reviews.

Policy Revisions

The Spiritual Care Association periodically reviews credentialing policies to ensure continued alignment with current nursing standards, evidence, regulatory requirements, and best practices.

Policy revisions become effective on the date specified by the Spiritual Care Association and apply to all applicants and credential holders unless otherwise indicated.

The most current policies are available through official Spiritual Care Association communications.

Contact Information

Questions regarding the CSCN credentialing program, eligibility requirements, renewal, or credentialing policies should be directed to the Spiritual Care Association using the contact information provided on the official website or in the appendix of this handbook.

SECTION 7 CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE CERTIFIED SPIRITUAL CARE NURSE (CSCN)

Preamble

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) is committed to providing evidence-based spiritual nursing care as an integral component of whole-person, patient-centered nursing practice. Grounded in the values of the nursing profession, Spiritual Care Nurses recognize that every person possesses inherent dignity and a spiritual dimension that may influence health, illness, healing, suffering, hope, resilience, relationships, and quality of life.

This Code of Ethics complements the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses by providing ethical guidance specific to the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing. It affirms the professional responsibilities of Spiritual Care Nurses and supports ethical decision-making, accountability, compassionate practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the continued advancement of the specialty.

Ethical Principles

1 Respect for Human Dignity

Every person possesses inherent dignity, worth, and value. The Spiritual Care Nurse honors the intrinsic dignity of every individual, respects each person's beliefs, values, culture, identity, and worldview, provides compassionate, equitable care without discrimination, and protects patient autonomy, self-determination, and informed decision-making.

2 Respect for Spiritual Diversity

Spiritual care is always patient-directed. The Spiritual Care Nurse honors religious, spiritual, cultural, humanistic, and nonreligious perspectives, avoids imposing personal beliefs or values, supports individuals in identifying their own sources of meaning, hope, purpose, connection, and strength, and demonstrates cultural humility and openness to diverse expressions of spirituality.



3 Commitment to Whole-Person Nursing Care

Spirituality is recognized as an essential dimension of whole-person health. The Spiritual Care Nurse integrates the spiritual dimension into the nursing process, conducts Whole-Person Nursing Assessments that intentionally include spiritual health, develops individualized Spiritual Nursing Plans of Care, implements evidence-based spiritual nursing interventions, and evaluates outcomes and documents care consistent with professional nursing standards.

4 Compassionate Presence and Therapeutic Relationship

Healing is often fostered through authentic presence and therapeutic relationship. The Spiritual Care Nurse cultivates relationships characterized by compassion, empathy, trust, and respect, practices deep listening and skilled therapeutic communication, creates emotionally and spiritually safe environments, and recognizes compassionate presence as a therapeutic nursing intervention.

5 Professional Integrity and Accountability

Professional integrity is fundamental to specialty nursing practice. The Spiritual Care Nurse practices within the legal scope of nursing practice, maintains professional competence through lifelong learning, accepts accountability for clinical decisions, protects confidentiality and privacy, and exercises sound ethical and professional judgment.

6 Interprofessional Collaboration

Whole-person care is strengthened through collaborative practice. The Spiritual Care Nurse collaborates with patients, families, nurses, physicians, professional chaplains, faith leaders, social workers, therapists, and other members of the healthcare team, recognizes when consultation or referral is appropriate, values the unique contributions of every discipline, and promotes coordinated, patient-centered care.

7 Advocacy

The Spiritual Care Nurse advocates for the integration of spiritual care into professional nursing practice by promoting equitable access to evidence-based spiritual nursing care, supporting environments that respect spiritual diversity, advocating for recognition of the spiritual dimension within whole-person healthcare, and giving voice to patients whose spiritual concerns might otherwise remain unrecognized.

8 Reflective Practice and Professional Well-Being

Professional growth begins with self-awareness and reflective practice. The Spiritual Care Nurse engages in ongoing self-reflection, maintains healthy professional boundaries, promotes personal resilience and well-being, seeks mentorship, consultation, and continuing professional development, and recognizes that caregiver well-being contributes to quality patient care.

9 Scholarship, Leadership, and Stewardship

Spiritual Care Nurses share responsibility for advancing the specialty. The Spiritual Care Nurse supports evidence-based practice, participates in quality improvement, contributes to education, research, and scholarly inquiry, mentors future Spiritual Care Nurses, demonstrates leadership that advances whole-person nursing care, and serves as a steward of the integrity, credibility, and future development of the specialty.



10 Commitment to Human Flourishing

The ultimate purpose of Spiritual Care Nursing is to support persons, families, and communities in pursuing healing, meaning, hope, resilience, connectedness, and human flourishing throughout the continuum of health, illness, suffering, dying, grief, and bereavement. The Spiritual Care Nurse embraces this responsibility with humility, compassion, professional excellence, and unwavering respect for the uniqueness of every human life.

Professional Commitment

As a Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN), I commit myself to practicing with compassion, integrity, humility, and professional excellence. I will honor the dignity, spiritual diversity, and autonomy of every person entrusted to my care. I will integrate evidence-based spiritual nursing care into the nursing process, collaborate respectfully with colleagues across disciplines, pursue lifelong learning, and uphold the ethical standards of the nursing profession.

Through my practice, leadership, scholarship, and service, I will contribute to advancing Spiritual Care Nursing as a nursing specialty and promote healing, meaning, hope, resilience, connectedness, and human flourishing for all those I serve.



APPENDIX A GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Evidence-Based Spiritual Nursing Interventions

Nursing interventions supported by the best available evidence, clinical expertise, and patient preferences that address the spiritual dimension of health. These interventions are implemented within the nursing scope of practice and may include compassionate presence, therapeutic communication, spiritual inquiry, life review, meaning-making, hope promotion, facilitation of patient-directed spiritual practices, referral, and other evidence-informed nursing strategies.

Human Flourishing

A dynamic state in which individuals, families, and communities experience meaning, purpose, hope, connection, resilience, and well-being despite the presence or absence of illness. Human flourishing recognizes that health extends beyond physical functioning and includes psychological, social, spiritual, and existential dimensions of life.

Spiritual Care Nursing

A nursing specialty that integrates evidence-based spiritual nursing care into professional nursing practice through the nursing process. Spiritual Care Nursing recognizes spirituality as an essential dimension of whole-person, patient-centered care and prepares registered nurses to assess, plan, implement, evaluate, and document nursing care that addresses patients' spiritual strengths, concerns, needs, and resources.

Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN)

A registered nurse who has successfully completed the educational and professional requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association and has demonstrated advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing. The CSCN credential recognizes expertise in integrating evidence-based spiritual nursing care into clinical practice while practicing within the professional scope of nursing.

Spiritual Distress

A disruption in a person's ability to experience meaning, purpose, hope, peace, connectedness, or spiritual well-being that may occur during illness, suffering, loss, or significant life transitions. Spiritual distress may be expressed through questions of meaning, hopelessness, guilt, isolation, anger, despair, loss of faith, or conflict with deeply held beliefs or values.

Spiritual Nursing Plan of Care

An individualized nursing plan developed through the nursing process that identifies spiritual nursing priorities, establishes patient-centered goals, guides evidence-based spiritual nursing interventions, and provides criteria for evaluating outcomes related to the spiritual dimension of health.

Spiritual Strengths

Internal or external resources that promote resilience, hope, meaning, coping, connectedness, healing, or well-being. Spiritual strengths may include personal beliefs, relationships, religious practices, values, life experiences, cultural traditions, community support, nature, creativity, or other sources of meaning identified by the individual.



Therapeutic Presence

The intentional use of oneself in a focused, compassionate, and authentic manner to establish a healing relationship with another person. Therapeutic presence is characterized by attentive listening, emotional availability, respect, empathy, and nonjudgmental engagement and is recognized as a foundational intervention in Spiritual Care Nursing.

Whole-Person Nursing Assessment

A comprehensive nursing assessment that intentionally evaluates the physical, psychological, social, cultural, functional, environmental, and spiritual dimensions of health. Within Spiritual Care Nursing, the Whole-Person Nursing Assessment includes systematic evaluation of the patient's spiritual strengths, concerns, needs, beliefs, values, practices, relationships, and sources of meaning to inform the development of an individualized Spiritual Nursing Plan of Care.

APPENDIX B FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1 What is the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential?

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential recognizes registered nurses who have demonstrated advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing. The credential is awarded through the Spiritual Care Association after successful completion of the educational pathway and all published eligibility requirements.

2 Is Spiritual Care Nursing a nursing specialty?

Yes. Spiritual Care Nursing is an emerging nursing specialty that integrates evidence-based spiritual nursing care into professional nursing practice through the nursing process. The specialty recognizes spirituality as an essential dimension of whole-person, patient-centered care.

3 What is the difference between the Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing and the CSCN credential?

The Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing is an educational credential awarded after successful completion of the approved curriculum and demonstration of curriculum competency. The CSCN credential is a professional credential awarded by the Spiritual Care Association after applicants have completed the educational pathway and satisfied all published eligibility requirements. Completion of the educational curriculum alone does not authorize use of the CSCN credential.

4 Is the CSCN credential the same as my nursing license?

No. A Registered Nurse (RN) license grants the legal authority to practice nursing. The CSCN credential recognizes advanced competency within the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing and is voluntary.

5 Do I have to be religious to become a Spiritual Care Nurse?

No. Spiritual Care Nursing is patient-directed and respects religious, spiritual, humanistic, and nonreligious worldviews. Spiritual Care Nurses do not promote or impose personal beliefs. Care is centered on each patient's own values, beliefs, sources of meaning, and preferences.



6 Does Spiritual Care Nursing replace professional chaplaincy?

No. Spiritual Care Nursing and professional chaplaincy are complementary professions. Spiritual Care Nurses provide evidence-based spiritual nursing care within the nursing scope of practice through the nursing process. Professional chaplains provide specialized chaplaincy care through the chaplaincy process. Both professions collaborate to provide coordinated whole-person care.

7 What does a Spiritual Care Nurse do?

A Spiritual Care Nurse conducts a Whole-Person Nursing Assessment that intentionally includes the spiritual dimension of health, develops an individualized Spiritual Nursing Plan of Care, implements evidence-based spiritual nursing interventions, evaluates patient outcomes, documents nursing care, collaborates with the interdisciplinary healthcare team, and initiates consultation or referral when patient needs exceed the nursing scope of practice.

8 Where do Spiritual Care Nurses practice?

Spiritual Care Nurses practice wherever professional nursing is provided, including acute care hospitals, critical care, emergency departments, hospice and palliative care, home health, rehabilitation, long-term care, ambulatory care, community health, faith community settings, behavioral health, correctional health, military and veterans' healthcare, and other healthcare settings.

9 What educational preparation is required?

Applicants must successfully complete the approved Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing curriculum and meet all published eligibility requirements described in this handbook.

10 How long is the CSCN credential valid?

The credential is awarded for the credentialing period established by the Spiritual Care Association. Credential holders must complete all published renewal requirements to maintain the credential in active status.

11 May I use "CSCN" after my name immediately after completing the course and passing the exam?

No. The CSCN designation may be used only after the Spiritual Care Association has approved the application and officially awarded the credential. Graduates who have completed the curriculum may indicate that they have earned the Certificate in Spiritual Care Nursing, but they may not use CSCN until the professional credential has been awarded.

12 How does Spiritual Care Nursing improve patient care?

Evidence supports the integration of spiritual care into nursing practice as a component of whole-person care. Spiritual Care Nursing promotes assessment and intervention related to patients' spiritual strengths, concerns, and resources while supporting hope, meaning, resilience, coping, healing, and quality of life.



13 What professional standards guide Spiritual Care Nurses?

Spiritual Care Nurses practice in accordance with State Nurse Practice Acts, the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses, the Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics, applicable nursing standards of practice, and policies established by the Spiritual Care Association.

14 What happens if I do not meet the eligibility requirements?

Applicants who do not meet the published eligibility requirements will receive written notification explaining the reason for the determination and information regarding the appeals process, if applicable.

15 Where can I obtain additional information?

Additional information regarding the CSCN credential, educational programs, eligibility requirements, renewal, and current policies is available through the Spiritual Care Association and the Westberg Institute.

16 Can organizations implement Spiritual Care Nursing if they do not have professional chaplaincy services?

Yes. The Spiritual Care Nursing Model includes implementation pathways for healthcare organizations both with and without professional chaplaincy services.

When professional chaplains are available, Spiritual Care Nurses work in partnership with chaplain leadership to provide coordinated whole-person care. In organizations where professional chaplaincy services are not available, Spiritual Care Nurses continue to provide evidence-based spiritual nursing care within the nursing scope of practice and collaborate with available community faith leaders and other appropriate resources.

The Spiritual Care Nursing Model is intended to strengthen — not replace — professional chaplaincy.

17 Is Spiritual Care Nursing the same as Faith Community Nursing?

No. Although both specialties recognize the importance of spirituality and whole-person care, they serve different populations and practice in different settings. Faith Community Nursing focuses primarily on health ministry within faith communities and congregational settings. Spiritual Care Nursing is a clinical nursing specialty that integrates evidence-based spiritual nursing care into healthcare settings across the continuum of care. While the specialties share common values, each has distinct competencies and a distinct credentialing pathway.

18 Is the CSCN credential a nursing board certification?

No. The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential is a professional certification awarded by the Spiritual Care Association. It is not an ANCC nursing board certification. CSCN recognizes registered nurses who have met the education, competency, practice, and professional eligibility requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association for certification in Spiritual Care Nursing.



APPENDIX C CANDIDATE AGREEMENT

Applicants for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential must review and agree to the following statements before submitting an application. By submitting an application, the applicant affirms that:

Eligibility

The applicant has reviewed the published eligibility requirements for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential and believes they meet all requirements in effect at the time of application.

Accuracy of Information

The applicant certifies that all information provided in the application and supporting documentation is complete, accurate, and truthful to the best of their knowledge.

The applicant understands that submission of false, misleading, altered, or fraudulent information may result in denial of the application, revocation of the CSCN credential, or other actions permitted under Spiritual Care Association policies.

Professional Licensure

The applicant holds a current, unrestricted license to practice as a Registered Nurse (RN), or has provided documentation meeting the requirements for international applicants.

The applicant agrees to notify the Spiritual Care Association promptly of any disciplinary action, restriction, suspension, probation, or revocation affecting their nursing license during the application process or while holding the CSCN credential.

Professional Conduct

The applicant agrees to practice in accordance with the applicable Nurse Practice Act(s); the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses; the Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics; applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations; and policies governing the CSCN credentialing program.

Scope of Practice

The applicant understands that the CSCN credential recognizes advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing and does not expand or replace their legal scope of nursing practice.

The applicant understands that Spiritual Care Nursing complements, but does not replace, the specialized role of professional chaplaincy, and will practice within the nursing scope of practice and seek consultation or referral when patient needs extend beyond the nursing role.

Appropriate Use of the Credential

The applicant understands that they may use the designation Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) only after the credential has been officially awarded by the Spiritual Care Association and only while the credential remains active and in good standing.

The applicant agrees to discontinue use of the CSCN designation if the credential expires, lapses, is suspended, or is revoked.

Confidentiality and Audits

The applicant understands that the application may be selected for audit and agrees to provide requested documentation within the required time frame.



The applicant authorizes the Spiritual Care Association to verify information submitted in support of the application when necessary to determine eligibility.

Continuing Responsibility

The applicant understands that maintaining the CSCN credential requires ongoing compliance with published renewal requirements and continued adherence to professional and ethical standards.

Professional Commitment

The applicant recognizes that the CSCN credential signifies a commitment to evidence-based, whole-person nursing care, and will strive to promote compassionate practice, respect for spiritual diversity, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the ethical integration of spiritual nursing care into professional practice for the benefit of patients, families, communities, and the nursing profession.

Agreement

By signing below, the applicant certifies that they have carefully reviewed this Candidate Agreement and understand the responsibilities associated with applying for and maintaining the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential, and agrees to comply with all policies governing the credentialing program, understanding that failure to do so may affect their eligibility or credential status.

Applicant Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D CSCN CREDENTIAL RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

Purpose

The Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) credential recognizes advanced competency in the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing. Credential renewal demonstrates a continued commitment to professional excellence, lifelong learning, ethical practice, and the delivery of evidence-based spiritual nursing care.

To maintain the CSCN credential in active status, credential holders must successfully complete the renewal requirements established by the Spiritual Care Association during each renewal cycle.

Renewal Cycle

The CSCN credential is valid for a five-year credentialing period.

Credential holders are responsible for maintaining awareness of renewal requirements and submitting all required documentation before the credential expiration date.

Failure to complete the renewal requirements before the expiration date may result in the credential becoming inactive or lapsing in accordance with Spiritual Care Association policies.



General Renewal Requirements

To renew the CSCN credential, credential holders are generally expected to:

- Maintain a current, unrestricted Registered Nurse (RN) license.
- Demonstrate continued professional practice in nursing.
- Complete required continuing professional development activities.
- Maintain compliance with the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses, the Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics, and all applicable professional standards.
- Submit a completed renewal application and applicable fees by the published deadline.

Continuing Nursing Education

Credential holders must complete a minimum of 70 contact hours of continuing nursing education (CNE) during each five-year renewal cycle.

Continuing education should support ongoing competency in Spiritual Care Nursing and may include educational activities related to:

- Spiritual Care Nursing
- Whole-person care
- Evidence-based nursing practice
- Communication and therapeutic relationships
- Ethics
- Leadership
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Quality improvement
- Other topics approved by the Spiritual Care Association

Specific requirements regarding acceptable continuing education activities are described in the CSCN Credential Renewal Handbook.

Documentation

Credential holders are responsible for maintaining documentation supporting renewal requirements, including continuing nursing education and other required records.

Documentation may be subject to audit as part of the renewal process.

Audit Process

The Spiritual Care Association reserves the right to audit any renewal application.

Credential holders selected for audit must provide the requested documentation within the specified time frame.

Failure to provide requested documentation may result in denial of renewal.

Renewal Handbook

Detailed renewal procedures, documentation requirements, approved continuing education activities, audit procedures, fees, deadlines, and renewal forms are published separately in the CSCN Credential Renewal Handbook.

Applicants should refer to the most current edition of the Renewal Handbook for complete renewal requirements.



APPENDIX E RECOMMENDED READINGS AND PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources are recommended for nurses seeking to deepen their knowledge and competency in Spiritual Care Nursing. Inclusion in this list does not imply endorsement of a particular philosophy or organization but reflects resources that support evidence-based, whole-person nursing care and professional development.

I. Foundational Spiritual Care Nursing Resources

Spiritual Care Association — Current standards, educational programs, professional development opportunities, and credentialing information related to Spiritual Care Nursing.

Westberg Institute — Educational resources, certificate programs, and publications supporting Faith Community Nursing and Spiritual Care Nursing.

Ziebarth, D. J. (2026). *Spiritual Care Nursing: A White Paper*. Foundational document describing the philosophy, conceptual framework, competencies, implementation strategies, and future direction of Spiritual Care Nursing.

Ziebarth, D. J. (2026). *Spiritual Care Nursing Position Statement*. Professional position statement defining Spiritual Care Nursing as an emerging nursing specialty.

II. Professional Nursing Standards

American Nurses Association. (2025). *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements*. The ethical foundation for professional nursing practice.

American Nurses Association. (2021). *Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice (4th ed.)*. Defines the professional responsibilities and standards applicable to all registered nurses.

III. Spiritual Care and Whole-Person Care

Burkhart, L., & Hogan, N. — Selected publications on spiritual care within nursing practice.

Ferrell, B., & Coyle, N. — Publications addressing spiritual care in serious illness and palliative care.

Puchalski, C. M., et al. — Interprofessional approaches to spirituality in health care.

Taylor, E. J. — Foundational nursing scholarship addressing spirituality and nursing care.

O'Brien, M. E. — Classic texts exploring spirituality within nursing practice.

Ziebarth, D. J. — Selected publications on Faith Community Nursing.

IV. Nursing Theory

Watson, J. — Theory of Human Caring.

Newman, M. — Health as Expanding Consciousness.

Parse, R. R. — Human Becoming Theory.

Eriksson, K. — Theory of Caring Science.

Leininger, M., & McFarland, M. — Culture Care Theory.

Mayeroff, M. — On Caring.



Ziebarth, D. — Faith Community Nursing.

Ziebarth, D. — Wholistic Health.

V. Evidence-Based Practice

Recommended resources include Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt's Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing & Healthcare, and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), which supports quality improvement and patient-centered care.

VI. Professional Journals

Recommended journals include:

- Journal of Holistic Nursing
- Journal of Christian Nursing
- Journal of Religion and Health
- Journal of Hospice & Palliative Nursing
- Journal of Palliative Medicine
- Journal of Nursing Scholarship
- Nursing Outlook
- Nursing Administration Quarterly

VII. Professional Organizations

- American Nurses Association (ANA)
- Spiritual Care Association (SCA)
- Westberg Institute (WI)
- Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA)
- American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)
- Sigma Nursing (SN)
- International Network for the Study of Spirituality (INSS)

VIII. Continuing Professional Development

Credential holders are encouraged to engage in lifelong learning through:

- Continuing nursing education
- Professional conferences
- Scholarly publications
- Evidence-based practice initiatives
- Research and quality improvement projects
- Interprofessional education
- Leadership development
- Mentoring and professional service



IX. Core Spiritual Care Nursing Documents

The following documents are considered foundational resources for the specialty practice of Spiritual Care Nursing and are recommended for all CSCN credential holders:

- Spiritual Care Nursing White Paper
 - Spiritual Care Nursing Position Statement
 - Spiritual Care Nursing Model (Ziebarth, 2026)
 - Whole-Person Spiritual Nursing Assessment™
 - Spiritual Care Nursing Code of Ethics
 - CSCN Candidate Eligibility Handbook
 - CSCN Credential Renewal Handbook (current edition)
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Source: Candidate Eligibility Handbook for the Certified Spiritual Care Nurse (CSCN) Credential, 2026 Edition, and Appendices A-E, Spiritual Care Association / Westberg Institute.

