

Spiritual Support

Culturally inclusive spiritual support assists consumers to express their unique spirituality in an open and non-judgemental environment by helping them to maintain practices, beliefs and networks that are important to them.

Identifying current and desired practices and beliefs will assist you to meet the needs of your consumers from culturally diverse backgrounds, however simply asking to which religion a person belongs does not adequately determine spiritual needs. People's spiritual needs may or may not be linked to a structured religion or spiritual system. Similarly it is important not to assume that people from a similar cultural background practice the same religion, or that all people following the same religion practice the same rituals or share the same beliefs.

Religious beliefs of some consumers may require strict adherence to rituals and influence all aspects of their daily life, including food consumption and preparation.

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The needs of consumers may also change over time; some people may become more aware of and interested in spiritual matters, perhaps for the first time in their lives. It is therefore imperative to conduct regular reviews of consumers' spiritual needs - this will ensure the support you provide is relevant to their changing needs.

Key Considerations

- Identify and support the spiritual needs of your consumers, including current and desired practices and beliefs, and schedule regular reviews.
- Conduct assessments and reviews of spiritual needs in the preferred language of your care recipients.
- Provide facilities for a variety of religious and spiritual observances.
- Assist consumers to maintain existing religious practices and networks including outings to places of worship.
- Ensure consumers have access to appropriate religious representation.
- Establish contact with representatives of local religious organisations who share the religion and language of consumers.
- Acknowledge and observe days of religious/cultural significance to consumers in day to day service provision
- Ensure that resources are available in the preferred language of consumers to support their spiritual needs – e.g. DVDs, CDs and books.
- Ensure that staff responsible for spiritual support have been trained in culturally inclusive practices and appropriate communication.

Spiritual Support (cont.)

Useful Resources and Links

Best Practice Food and Nutrition Manual for Aged Care Edition 2.1

NSW Government

This comprehensive manual includes a chapter on Religious, Spiritual, Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds of Residents

Bridging Cultures – A Guide to the Diverse Cultures in Australia for Aged Care Service Providers

PICAC NSW

Islamic

Muslim Aged Care: A practical guide for service providers

M. Ahmad; Adelaide, South Australia 2017

Designing Aged Care for Muslims in South Australia: An Exploratory Study

M. Ahmad, ACH Group and Dr David Radford, University of South Australia, 2017

Multicultural/Multifaith Calendars

Events Calendar of Cultural and Religious Dates

Department of Home Affairs

Diversicare

Download the yearly multicultural calendar

Multifaith Calendar

Faith Communities Council of Victoria

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