

Spiritual Support

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

People's spiritual needs may or may not be linked to an organised religion or particular spiritual 'system'. Spirituality is larger than religion. So identifying their current (and desired) beliefs and practices will allow you to meet the needs of your consumers from culturally diverse backgrounds. Keep in mind too that people from a similar cultural background won't necessarily practice the same religion, or that all people following the same religion will practice the same rituals or share the same beliefs.

Some religious beliefs influence all aspects of daily life, including food consumption and preparation, when individuals may be required to adhere strictly to certain practices.

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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 so that you can ensure the support you provide is always relevant to their 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 consumer's preferred language.
- Provide facilities for a range of religious and spiritual observances.
- Assist consumers to maintain existing religious practices and networks, including outings to special 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. 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

National Guidelines for Spiritual Care in Aged Care
Meaningful Ageing Australia, 2016

See me. Know me.

A project developed by Meaningful Ageing Australia in partnership with FECCA, are also available in Greek, Italian, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, Khmer and Spanish.

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

Multifaith Resources

Multifaith practices: A Guideline for Community and Residential Care

Meaningful Ageing Australia, 2021

Multifaith resources

Faith Communities Council of Victoria

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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