In The Medical Setting
Chaplains are there for patients, families and staff
“Medicine is very demanding and it doesn’t make a difference what your job is....Everyone feels the intensity in a hospital”  
Chaplain Cheryl Palmer
A Mini Relaxation Exercise

On your in breath say “I am”
On your out breath say “at peace”

Thich Nhat Hanh
Spiritual Care – A Key Component of Palliative Care

• Symptom management/comfort care
• Communication
• Patient/family centered decision making
• Emotional & practical support
• Spiritual support for patient/families
• Continuity of care
• Emotional & organizational support for staff
Growing Awareness of the link between spirituality and health

- He took her old Christian hands into his much younger Jewish hands, closed his eyes and began to pray.
Spiritual Issues

• “Patients are suffering, truly suffering, as a result of illness. They are torn from their everyday looking at the world....

• they’re lonely; they’re scared; they’re terrified.”

Bruce Feldstein, MD Stanford Medical Center
Spiritual Issues

• These are existential issues
• These are spiritual issues”

Bruce Feldstein, MD
Courses in Spirituality

• In 1994 only 17 of the 126 accredited US medical schools offered courses on Spirituality in Medicine. By 1998 this number increased to 39 by 2004 to 84* schools.

Medical School Curricula in Spirituality and Medicine
Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven CT
Jama, 2004;291:2883.
• Training compassionate and altruistic Physicians has become a top priority

• The courses in spirituality help meet that goal by assisting medical students to communicate with patients about their hopes, fears and beliefs. The courses teach students about suffering and how to address it as well as how to understand and incorporate spirituality into the clinical setting. (C. Pulchulski, M.D. A Time For Listening and Caring, pg.23)
• The Joint Commission states that hospitals should provide spiritual care.

• In 2001, JCAHO revised its accreditation standards to require the administration of a spiritual assessment in a number of settings, including hospitals.

A template for spiritual assessment: a review of the JCAHO requirements and guidelines for implementation  
Publication Date: 01-OCT-06 goliath.ecnext.com
Patient Interest

Why Is Spirituality Important in Healthcare?

Did you know that:

- 77% of outpatients surveyed stated that physicians should address the patient’s spiritual needs as part of routine medical care (King, D., 1994).
- Nearly 80% of American adults believe that religion helps patients and families cope with illness (Dujardin, R., 1996).
- Nearly 75% believe that praying for someone else can help them recover from illness or injury (McNichol, T., 1996).

Given the high prevalence of these beliefs, it is likely that many of your patients will see spirituality as central to their health and healing.

77% of outpatients surveyed stated that physicians should address the patient’s spiritual needs.
There is a growing body of evidence that indicates a strong link between health outcomes and spirituality.

Studies have shown that spirituality and religion can play a role in how an individual adult or child copes with being sick, may influence medical decisions that are made, and may have an impact on the medical outcome.

National Center for Cultural Competence’s Web Site “Spirituality, Religion and Holistic Health”
Interest in Spirituality & Medicine

• In 2007 Duke University’s Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health issued a request for research proposals which seek to understand the association between spirituality and health more deeply.
Growing Interest

• 232 letters of intent were received
• From 27 countries

• From hospitals, mental health facilities, colleges, medical schools, nursing schools, seminaries, and research organizations

Harold Koenig, MD & Keith Meador, MD
WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

• “Because it is who I am at my deepest core.”

Marilyn

Touching the Spirit: The Essence of Healing
by Christina M. Puchalski, M.D
Spirituality is the source of life’s meaning.

It is the individual’s continuous search for meaning and transcendence in life, especially during times of illness and pain.

“Creating Healing Environments” by Christine Pulchalski, M.D., MS & Sylvia McSkimming, PHD, RN
• Spirituality is the lifeline that sustains people through stress and challenging times, an essential aspect of one’s humanness
SPIRITUALITY

• For some people, spirituality includes religious practices;

• For others, it may include
  – nature,
  – art,
  – music,
  – family,
  – or community
"Spirituality is 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 others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred."

Human Spirituality

• Arises in response to the awe inspiring and terrifying mystery of life and the universe

• We reflexively seek to make meaning of our experience in the world

• And make or strengthen our connection to others

• Ira, Byock, MD American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Medicine/Vol. 23, No. 6, Dec/Jan 2007
The Human Person
Seeks Meaning
Transcendence
Connection
Why Spirituality in the Clinical Setting?

• Taking a spiritual history allows clinicians to understand patients more fully.

Spiritual Assessment Tool

• Faith and belief
• Importance
• Community
• Address in Care

Christina Pulchalski, 1996
Overcoming Barriers

“I don’t have time”

• Asking patients about their spirituality takes little time
  2 minutes or less

• Spiritual beliefs/practices often may have an impact on how patients make decisions & comply with treatment programs. Your awareness of a person's spirituality may save time in the long run
Comprehensive Care Leads to better treatment

• A 1998 study found that the impact of spiritual and religious beliefs on how patients cope with illness can be both positive and negative. (Pargament, 1998)
Spiritual Risk

• Negative religious coping (i.e. understanding an illness as God’s punishment or feeling abandoned by God) appears to be associated with poor adjustment or recovery from illness.

Multi-Faith Approach

• Chaplains do not proselytize

• Clinically trained chaplains offer patients and families emotional and spiritual support that is centered in their beliefs and values
Spiritual Care Part of the Healing Process

• A hospital chaplain uses the insights and principles of psychology, religion, spirituality and theology in working with individuals, couples, families, and groups to achieve wholeness and health.

• Mayo Clinic
The Role of The Chaplain

- Listening Presence
- Ethical Discernment
- Prayers & Rituals
Chaplains may be called when a patient or family member experiences:

- Apprehension about surgery
- Overwhelming illness or prognosis
- Loneliness and isolation
- Discouragement and despair
- Struggling with the meaning of life
- Feeling cut off from God
- Dealing with ethical dilemmas
• Fear and anxiety
• Conflict with others
• needing support deciding changes in code status / family meetings
• Working through the loss of a loved one
• Needing the comfort of prayer/ritual
Education & Training of a Healthcare Chaplain

- **Masters Level in Theology**
- Often Master of Divinity (80+ credits)
- **CPE - Clinical Pastoral Education**
  - Interfaith professional education in a clinical setting
- **Board Certification**
Chaplains are Part of the Medical Team
IT TAKES A VILLAGE
physicians, nurses, therapists, social workers, chaplains & vital support staff
Working together to bring compassionate care to our patients & families.
'To cure sometimes, to relieve often, to comfort always'

15th Century French Proverb