

# Spiritual needs assessment

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## A Spiritual Assessment Intervention (School or College) A Spiritual Assessment Intervention

### Introduction

This paper aims to create a spiritual assessment instrument, apply it and discuss findings. Spiritual assessment is a tool for assessing the spiritual needs of patients for holistic body-mind-spirit healing through hospital treatment. Broadening of health care to include the spiritual dimension of the patient is the laudable vision of the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Pastoral Services or JCAS (Vision, 2000).

### The assessment tool and application

In creating the spiritual assessment tool, other instruments were useful such as the FICA and HOPE approaches (Spiritual Competency, 2011). The need for an easy yet effective tool, however, guided the creation of a 10 friendly question- format: (1) How are you, and what do you do by way of work or profession? (2) How is your family? (3) What church or religion do you belong to? (2) Is your family religious by way of worship or prayer? (3) What ideas of God do you find in your community? (4) What idea of God is best for you? (5) Has this idea been a source of personal guidance? (6) Do you believe in the practice of personal prayer? (7) Do you think personal prayer gives strength and confidence in life, as the saying goes “ Prayer can move mountains?” ? (8) Do you have a sense of calm, strength and confidence now? (9) Any plan after full recovery? (10) Will you appreciate a visit from spiritual counselor or chaplain of your choice? We think the 10-questions can establish spiritual background and values helpful to determine appropriate spiritual intervention during hospital care and treatment.

The 10- question instrument was applied to a 70 year old hospital patient  
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with a spinal problem, who was waiting for surgeon's decision for a surgery. The man gave information that he is a retired journalist with children who are successful professionals. He is a Protestant and has attended services with wife and children, but his ailment prevents regular churchgoing. He is aware of religious differences but there is one God for all whom we can pray to. He believes in the power of prayer, although he is not pious or prayerful. At the moment he finds his family as a source of calmness and strength. Of course, God is unseen and in most times not felt. Visit from a Protestant chaplain will be acceptable.

#### Research findings

The tool worked well, allowing free flow of information and questions. Care was taken to make the interview friendly and casual, and information gathered can serve appropriate spiritual intervention during treatment. As a recommendation, the instrument should preferably be administered by a nurse, opening way for visits by a minister of choice. We understand JCAS wants the instrument administered by chaplains, but religious affiliation can create hindrance in case a patient, in our study a Protestant, is interviewed by a Catholic chaplain.

#### References

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