

PASTORAL SERVICES

Mission Statement:

Spiritual Care. The Department of Pastoral Services provides spiritual care and support for patients hospitalized at Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital.

Value Statement:

Care of the Soul. We give care, teach skills, and model values directed at our patients' spiritual life—their inner belief system. These beliefs include a patient's worldview about themselves, their illness, their life experience, and the people around them. We affirm the goodness and sacredness of their life and the immutable dignity of their humanity.



When a patient's spirituality includes concepts of a God, Divine, or Higher Power taken from one of the world's religious systems, every effort is made to respect the patient's beliefs, while helping them negotiate a faith practice with which they can live.

Vision:

Spirituality for Recovery. We believe spirituality encompasses meaning, purpose, relationship, and hope, and is thus essential to recovery.

JCAHO & POLICY COMPLIANCE

The Joint Commission standards and elements of performance require the hospital to include spiritual assessment as part of the overall assessment of a patient. This is to determine how a patient's spiritual worldview might effect their care and treatment.¹ JCAHO standards also address pastoral and spiritual services as part of Patient Rights,² particularly during care for emotional disorders,³ substance abuse, and care at end of life.⁴



¹ PC2.20.EP4; CL-TX-0206; CL-TX-0224; CL-TX-0244

² RI.2.10.EP2; 4; CL-RI-011

³ PC3.130.EP2;

⁴ PC 8.70.EP1; CL-RI-0005

Examples of spiritual issues:

- ✦ A patient has just been informed of her mother's death by suicide. She shouts to the nursing staff and her peers, "See, she left me again! She has it easy now. I can't stand this anymore. If she can do it, I can too!"
- ✦ A 28 year old, man suddenly became violent on the admissions unit and had to be placed in four point restraints. Upon being informed, his family immediately appears at the hospital, very angry, demanding to know, "Why are you treating our son like this, there is no reason to tie him down like a dog! We are *people*, just like you." Staff explanations are to no avail.
- ✦ A 50 year old patient has received a diagnosis of advanced, metastatic breast cancer. She insists she "understands the medical part," but wants to talk about her children, and how she took care of her grandmother when she was sick.
- ✦ A patient believes he is sinking deeper into psychosis. He is having "visions, or dreams, or something" about a buddy who was killed while they were in a firefight during the Vietnam War. "He keeps coming back, trying to tell me something, and it scares the shit out of me."
- ✦ "Give me one good reason why I should live."
- ✦ "Why should I listen to my treatment team, they don't care anything about me. Nobody cares. Nobody even knows I'm here."
- ✦ "When I think about everything that has happened in the last few years, I just want to cry. But every time I start crying or try to talk about it with someone, they give me a PRN."
- ✦ "I have a demon inside of me."
- ✦ "I think am an alien."
- ✦ "You know, I used to work in the Dormitory Building. I never dreamed I'd be a patient."
- ✦ The psychosocial history reflects that a patient was repeatedly sexually abused as a teenager. Because the patient frequently became aroused during these events, the patient reports, "He told me that's what I was made for; I guess I'm just bad, just like he said I was. I deserve to be like this."
- ✦ A patient had a baby during her admission at GPPH. Everyone was excited and gave her a lot of support during her pregnancy and delivery. When she has to surrender the baby for adoption, "No one will even talk to me about it now... everybody just turns away."

Spirituality vs. Religion— More than Just Semantics¹

"While many people use the words **Spirituality** and **Religion** interchangeably, they are in fact very different.

Spirituality can be defined as a complex and multidimensional part of the human experience — our inner belief system. It helps individuals to search for the meaning and purpose of life, and it helps them experience hope, love, inner peace, comfort, and support.

Religion refers to a belief system to which an individual adheres. Religion involves particular rituals and practices —the externals of our belief system...

Not everyone is religious, nor is religion a requirement for spirituality. Within a spiritual assessment, it is important to determine if a patient has a religious affiliation; however, that is not the sole purpose of the assessment. A person may not practice religion, but may still have spiritual needs that should be met. Any assessment process should identify these spiritual needs, in whatever form they take."

Taken from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations: *The Source*, February 2005, Volume 3, Issue 2, page 7.

"SO, PASTORAL SERVICES DOESN'T DEAL WITH RELIGION ANYMORE?"

Of course, that's not true. Our patients deal with the God of their understanding everyday. All of our chaplains are ordained clergy. These chaplains will undoubtedly deal with many patients using the tools of a patient's religious practice—if indeed they have one. But there are some points to remember:

- ✦ In our environment, there are several dozen distinct religious expressions represented.⁶ Religious programming for all traditions is not possible; nor can we discriminate by providing for some traditions, and not for others.⁷
- ✦ Hospital Policy and Department of Human Services Directive prohibit staff from "evangelizing, proselytizing, or promoting a religious system."⁸
- ✦ GPPH is a state hospital, not a "faith based" or private institution.⁹
- ✦ Religious activity must be met with care and caution.¹⁰
- ✦ Ultimately, Pastoral Services operates as a clinical discipline, rather than a religious activity

⁶ "Protestant," "Catholic," "Muslim," and "Jewish" are no longer generic labels with which to sort religious practice. Each of these divisions has subsets that may be so separated by time, geography, race, and theology, that they are hardly recognizable by each other. We also have Sikh, Buddhist, Bahai, Rastafarian, Scientology, Native American, Romany, Jehovah's Witness, Christian Scientist, Mormon—the list seems endless—traditions represented in the hospital population. This does not even account for solo practitioners and religious practices that are self-created and self-taught.

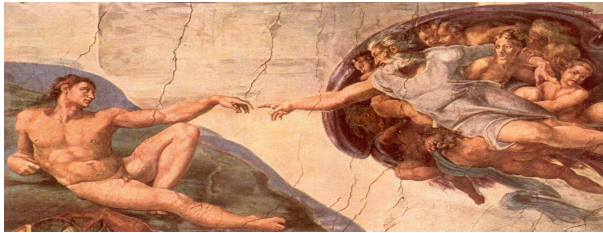
⁷ New Jersey "Patient's Rights" statute (30:4-24.2) guarantees a patient the right "To practice the religion of his choice or abstain from religious practices. Provisions for such worship shall be made available to each person on a nondiscriminatory basis." The department attempts to passively respond to specific requests, e.g., Qur'ans, bibles, rosaries, communion, etc. But we cannot actively program.

⁸ AD-HR-0906; AO4-08.C5, AO4-08 Supplement 1 specifies disciplinary action, including removal.

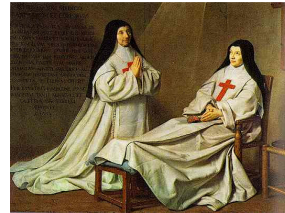
⁹ As agents of the New Jersey Department of Human Resources, chaplains of the Department of Pastoral Services must remain sensitive to the "Establishment Clause" in the 1st Amendment of the United States Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." Religious activity is not a function of government. We are government agents.

¹⁰ It has been suggested by deputies in the NJ Attorney General's Office that one reasonable course might be to follow the federal guidelines in the workplace by not engaging in expression that might create the "reasonable impression that the government is sponsoring, endorsing, or inhibiting religion generally, or favoring or disfavoring a particular religion." If such constitutional protections apply in a public workplace, how much more should they be defended in an arena where extremely vulnerable persons are confined against their will and have little protection against their social environment.

Spirituality



Religion:



Pastoral Services: Self Study Questions

- ❶ Hospital Policy and Department of Human Services Directive *prohibit* staff from “evangelizing, proselytizing, or promoting a religious system. [T] [F]
- ❷ “Spirituality” and “religion” refer to the same thing. [T] [F]
- ❸ At GPPH, Pastoral Services is a clinical, rather than a religious discipline. [T] [F]
- ❹ JACHO requires GPPH to:
 - (a) Have representatives from a patient’s faith tradition on staff.

- (b) Perform baptisms, wedding, bar/bat mitzvahs, and other rites and rituals.
 - (c) Assess a patient’s spiritual beliefs for any impact on patient care.
- ❺ Pastoral Service Chaplains:
- (a) Act in place of a patient’s faith community while they are hospitalized.
 - (b) Perform life stage rituals such as weddings, bar/bat mitzvah, baptisms, etc.
 - (c) Assist patients with spiritual issues.
 - (d) Celebrate all religious holidays.
 - (e) Evangelize and promote the religious practice of the chaplain.
 - (f) None of the above.
 - (g) All of the above.