# Spiritual Care Matters – Episode 3 - Transcript

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| Speaker 1: | So far we've concentrated on what spiritual care means and some practical listening skills that are at the heart of building meaningful relationships with residents. Now today, we want to think about how spiritual care is built into the woodwork. By this, we mean the culture and the practises that shape the way that the care home works. For example, there might be a public statement about core values like respect and dignity. Each resident will have a care plan which asks about their spiritual needs. Each care home will have its own way of doing this, but there will be an expectation for staff to work within these values. An important question here is, "What does this mean for staff?" Now the following interviews explore spiritual care from different perspectives. We'll start with Chris Levison talking about the guidelines for spiritual care and what this means for care homes. |
| Speaker 2: | Okay, so I'd like to welcome Chris to join us now and we were quite interested in the bigger picture. We're interested in how spiritual care is seen more broadly by national governments and how is this relevant to care homes today, Chris? |
| Chris Levison: | It's nice to be here. I began my interest in this as a healthcare chaplain and there was a time when both the Ecumenical Churches Committee and the Chaplain's Association asked the health service is they could have a trainer for chaplains to develop the idea of spiritual care. We were very pleased when they said yes. I was appointed to do this work with chaplains, but also very soon to work with health boards to help them develop spiritual care policies, which would philtre down through every aspect of the health service. So the NHS produced, with help, this document asking all health boards to be more sensitive with regard to spiritual care and make sure every health board had an implementation plan as well. |
|  | With the development of social and healthcare being more closely combined, it was clear that this is not just relevant to hospitals, but to healthcare in GP practises and at care homes. Whenever people are being looked after and they're perhaps in a vulnerable situation, that the people doing the looking after understood the importance of what they're doing and that it wasn't just in provision of food and warmth and bedding, but the relationships that they had with people was a very important part of the lives of the people they're looking after. That spiritual care was sometimes religious, but not necessarily, was a very important point and so everybody could be involved. Very few of us are experts in this, but everybody can contribute towards better relationships and that can be both satisfying not only for the carers, people doing the caring, but for the residents as well. It works as a win-win situation, that it's a more satisfying job to do and it's much more effective for those who are needing the care. |
| Speaker 2: | That's great. Thanks Chris. |
| Speaker 1: | Chris was talking about how spirituality has become important in all health and care settings and it's recognised through government guidelines. He also talked about how spirituality's sometimes religious, but not necessarily. That everyone has a role to play in supporting the spiritual needs of people, especially when they're in vulnerable situations, such as being in a care home. He says it's about building relationships. Now, in this next interview, care home manager Hester builds on these points and explains how core principles and values are conveyed to staff, especially new staff. |
| Speaker 2: | So this is Hester now talking. She's the care home manager. She's going to talk about some of the structures, some of the guidance, that was in place for staff who are expected to work in the care home. |
| Hester: | So we have got an induction pack for staff that come and work for the Salvation Army, and part of the induction is our mission statements and it's about values, about love, respect, and dignity. That's what we promote within this care home that's run by the Salvation Army. We're a Christian home, therefore we believe in Christian values and that's about love and respect for others and dignity. |
| Speaker 2: | So a member of staff coming to work for you, how would you introduce them to the way you expect them to work within, in terms of supporting spiritual care? |
| Hester: | So within the first week of them starting they would do an induction programme and it's the standards of care. So there's 15 standards of care that we follow and they follow all these standards and facilitated by either myself, the head of care, or the chaplain. It's hard to explain because I believe it's more from the heart of how we feel, of who we are, that we ... It's not about a policy or a procedure that's in place, but it's more about how we present that to other members of staff. We role model our beliefs and I think I'm more a believer in that than showing them a policy or a procedure because policy or procedure I can come back to, whereas if I role model something I believe this home should be run, how we should love others, have empathy for others, respect others, I think that's ... |
| Speaker 2: | So staff learn about the principles and values of the home by- |
| Hester: | Yes, by facilitating the training and not just putting them in front of a workbook or in front of a DVD, but actually being there as a management team in the first week and then showing them what we believe and what we think is right, what we think is the right way to work, if you like. |
| Speaker 1: | So, for Hester, the best way for staff to learn about values of love, respect, and dignity is through seeing it and experiencing it firsthand. Staff are role models showing new staff what supporting spiritual care means through day to day activities, through their conversations and their relationships with residents. For Hester, the principles of love, respect, and dignity are the foundations for spiritual care. Mission statements and policy make these values explicit and they're there for everybody to see, staff, residents, and their families. These core principles are now taken up by Chaplain Allison who explains how religious care is supported and what happens when residents or staff are not religious. |
| Speaker 2: | We've heard about other perspectives, now let's hear about a chaplain's perspective. I'd like to welcome Allison who's going to talk to us about her role and about the religious aspect of spiritual care. |
| Allison: | Hello, my name's Allison. My rather grand title from the Salvation Army is a Spiritual Leader for the care home and also as someone who will offer pastoral care to all people, regardless of if they have faith or no faith whatsoever. But religiously, religion does play a big part for someone people's spirituality. The church has played traditionally a big part in their lives, so you have the religion of believing that when they die they will go to heaven, and these are all feelings that they want to nurture and be reminded of, hope, faith, love. All these things become very important, their belief in a God of love, their belief in Jesus Christ and how he lived his life. So religiously, as part of the spiritual care, we will concentrate on services, on songs, on hymns that mean so much they stir emotions. Even if the words are forgotten, the emotions and the memories that they embed in their personalities, so church becomes important and what that respects in them. |
| Speaker 2: | So what is the role of staff, other staff, a care staff in the home? |
| Allison: | That's very interesting because, obviously, many of them don't believe in God, you know? But our policies state that we will run a home based on the love of God. But even if you don't believe in a supreme person, majority of the staff will believe in love and dignity, and so they would express that love and dignity in their manners, in their conversations, in the way they even take someone to the toilet. Love and respect and dignity all the way through. And there is a respect in this home for if there is a church service going on, there's a respect of that solemn side of their personality. They would perhaps learn to do the [inaudible 00:09:52] to someone. They would learn that and they would see that as just as important as any other part of their spirituality. |
| Speaker 1: | So to summarise, from these common traits we can take a number of points. First of all, spiritual care is recognised as essential within the care sector. Next, spiritual care is sometimes about religion, but not necessarily. Then, values of love, dignity, and respect are the foundations for good spiritual care. And finally, everyone has a role to play in supporting the spiritual needs of residents. |
|  | Today's task asks you to do a bit of detective work to find out about the values, the policy, and the practises that shape the culture of the care home where you work. This involves talking to the people who you think will know the answer, such as care home managers or your supervisor. This task is also about using your active listening skills, but this time with another member of staff. Enjoy. |