

Spiritual Care in Practice

Case Studies in Healthcare Chaplaincy

Edited by George Fitchett
and Steve Nolan

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These diverse case studies make a compelling case for the importance of effective spiritual care in healthcare and provide unprecedented insight into the essential role of the chaplain within the healthcare team. Presented alongside critical reflections and responses from professionals within chaplaincy, psychology, psychiatry and nursing, they provide an honest and detailed look into how healthcare chaplains actually work with the people in their care and reveal the vital role of narrative and imagination in effective transformative practice.


From a 16-year-old with a belief that God would enable a miraculous recovery from paralysis, to an African man with a history of psychosis and depression whose cultural belief in witches complicated his treatment, to a dying Jewish man, aggressive and isolated due to his traumatic life experiences, each case includes insight into the patient's needs and chaplain's perspectives, discussion of spiritual assessments and spiritual care interventions, and accounts of significant encounters and dialogues.

The nine paediatric, psychiatric and palliative case studies and reflections in this ground-breaking book will enable chaplains to critically reflect on the spiritual care they provide and communicate their work more effectively, help healthcare professionals develop a clearer understanding of the care chaplains deliver, and provide an informed perspective for those who develop policy around spiritual care and need to make the case for chaplaincy services.

'Fitchett and Nolan, along with the writers of these cases, have provided us with a long-missing resource essential to the further integration of spiritual care and professional chaplaincy into healthcare. These cases should become fundamental to every chaplain's training and every interdisciplinary team's discussion about spiritual care. Swinton's Afterword sets the context brilliantly and probably should be read first. Kudos all around!'

- The Rev. George Handzo, BCC, Director of Health Services Research & Quality, HealthCare Chaplaincy Network

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