

## Impacts of Interprofessional Spiritual Care Education Within a Healthcare Team: a Qualitative Analysis

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**Background:** Spirituality is frequently utilized by patients experiencing cancer and blood disorders to maintain their well-being and cope with their diagnosis. The provision of spiritual care is a critical aspect of whole person care and is associated with increased quality of life and positive coping with pain. Generalist aspects of spiritual care may be provided by any team member trained to do so. The Interprofessional Spiritual Care Education Curriculum (ISPEC©) is an online program which provides this training.

**Methods:** We utilized ISPEC© for the training of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology team members. From 21 team members who were trained, a convenience sample of 8 participants were interviewed regarding their experience. Using a phenomenological approach for interview and analysis, we explored the experience of interprofessional spiritual care training. Through iterative review of interview transcripts, themes representing the essence of the lived experience were identified. Theme saturation was reached through the interviews of the 8 participants.

**Results:** Three major themes emerged. These themes were (1) Knowledge gained, (2) Barriers to Providing Spiritual Care, and (3) Impact on the Healthcare Team. While the experience of interprofessional spiritual care training mitigated one barrier (lack of training), it also revealed barriers within the standard workflow, which participants became interested in changing. Through education on generalist spiritual care, there were both benefits to patients whose spiritual needs could be better addressed, and an increased understanding of the team member's own spiritual needs.

**Conclusion:** Interprofessional spiritual care education, utilizing ISPEC©, has a strong potential to develop pediatric hematology-oncology team members' capabilities to attend to the spiritual aspect of whole-person care. In addition to contributing to the well-being of patients, the experience of training in spiritual care also holds benefits to the team members as they are learning to recognize their own spiritual needs and resources.