

## PFE/SDCG4-24 - Award in Spiritual Dimension in Elderly Care for Healthcare Workers

EQF/MQF Level: 5

ECTS Value: 4 ECTS

Duration: 11 Sessions

Contact Hours: 20

Self-Study Hours: 75

Assessment Hours: 5

Accreditation Category: Further Education Programme

### Programme Description

Recognising that spirituality plays a vital role in the overall well-being of older adults, this programme integrates spiritual care within the broader context of holistic caregiving. Designed for healthcare support workers and personal caregivers, it equips participants with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to address the spiritual needs of those they care for.

### Entry Requirements

**Qualifications:** Possess a minimum of an MQF/EQF Level 3 or higher qualification.

**Language:** Applicants must have a basic understanding of Maltese and be proficient in English.

**Digital:** Applicants must know how to access and use the internet.



## Overall Objectives

At the end of the module/unit, the learner will be able to:

- Define spirituality, spiritual care, and religiosity.
- Recognize the importance of spirituality, spiritual care, and religiosity for elderly patients.
- Identify principles of therapeutic relationships such as empathy and providing a non-judgmental presence to support spiritual care, as well as respecting patients' dignity and individuality.
- Demonstrate specific communication skills to support spiritual care competency in providing spiritual care/service for patients.
- Demonstrate confidence in implementing spiritual care in everyday elderly care practice.
- Apply specific resources available to support the patient's religious / spiritual needs.

## Programme Structure and Mode of Delivery

The course will be delivered through 10 face-to-face lectures as follows:

### **Session 1: Defining Spirituality and Spiritual Care in Healthcare – Competencies in Spiritual Care**

Spirituality and spiritual care in health relate to how patients and health professionals seek and express meaning, purpose, connection, value, or transcendence in the context of illness and well-being. A growing body of evidence indicates that spirituality is linked to better health outcomes, patient satisfaction, medical decision-making, and quality of life.

This session will introduce various definitions of spirituality and spiritual care, along with the multidimensional nature of the spiritual field.

### **Session 2: Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Spirituality**

Intrapersonal Spirituality focuses on personal spirituality, as providing spiritual care requires healthcare workers to be spiritually grounded themselves. Students will be encouraged to recognise the importance of self-reflection and self-awareness in enhancing their personal growth and effectiveness as providers of spiritual care.

Interpersonal Spirituality involves building relationships with others through effective communication skills. It acknowledges an individual's unique spiritual and cultural worldviews, fostering feelings of companionship and compassionate care.



**Session 3: Spiritual Assessment and Evaluation of Care**

In this session, learners are introduced to both formal and informal approaches for assessing patients' spiritual needs, planning appropriate interventions based on available resources, and evaluating whether these needs have been met.

**Session 4: Loss, Grief, and Compassion in the Elderly**

Learners will explore the inevitable experiences of grief and loss, as well as feelings of isolation in the elderly. Gaining an understanding of the grief process, as described by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, will help healthcare workers prevent spiritual distress and provide compassionate care for older adults.

**Session 5: Spiritual Care in Elderly Rehabilitation**

This session will explore the specific spiritual needs of elderly individuals in rehabilitation. It will focus on how healthcare workers can create opportunities for them to engage in creative activities and better confront their feelings of suffering and solitude.

**Session 6: Spiritual Care and Mental Health**

This session will introduce learners to the various mental health issues that elderly individuals may face and equip healthcare workers with the skills needed to manage and care for them effectively.

**Session 7: Spiritual Care in Dementia**

This session will introduce learners to dementia in the elderly, providing guidance on managing their care and equipping family members with essential skills to better understand and support their loved ones.

**Session 8: The Role of Religion in Spiritual Care for the Elderly**

This session will focus on the role of religiosity as an integral aspect of spiritual care.

**Session 9: The Sacraments in Different Religions and Spirituality**

Learners will explore religious practices across various denominations within society.

**Session 10: Case Scenarios in the Spiritual Dimension of Elderly Care**

This session will present various case scenarios to assess and evaluate learners' knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired throughout the programme, enabling them to apply these effectively when caring for the elderly.



## Assessment

There will be a short multiple-choice examination at the end of the course.

## Certification

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be awarded an accredited certification.

