

Abstract

Transforming Clinical Practice into Meaningful Care: Spiritual Awareness Among Palliative Care Professionals

Pierpaolo Servi^{1,2}, Giovanna Artioli³, Andreina Saba^{1,4}, Maria Chiara Gandini⁵, Laura Bertarini⁶, Orejeta Diamanti⁷, Federica Dellafiore³

¹ Department of Biomedicine and Prevention, University of Rome Tor Vergata, Rome, Italy

² Division of Neonatology, IRCCS San Matteo Hospital Foundation, Pavia, Italy

³ Department of Life, Health Sciences and Health Professions, Link Campus University, Rome, Italy

⁴ Department of Primary Care, Azienda USL-IRCCS di Reggio Emilia, Reggio Emilia, Italy

⁵ Associazione VIDAS, Milan, Italy

⁶ Department of General and Post-Acute Internal Medicine, Modena, Italy

⁷ Scientific Directorate, Veneto Institute of Oncology IOV-IRCCS, Padua, Italy

(Corresponding Author: pierpaoloservi@gmail.com)

Citation: Servi P, Artioli G, Saba A, Gandini MC, Bertarini L, Diamanti O, Dellafiore F. “Transforming Clinical Practice into Meaningful Care: Spiritual Awareness Among Palliative Care Professionals” (2026) *International Journal of Health Supplements* 1(Suppl. 1):73. Supp. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.82051/ijhs-2026-1>

Introduction. Spirituality is widely recognised as a fundamental dimension of palliative care alongside physical, psychological, and social aspects. Yet little is known about how healthcare professionals develop spiritual awareness in everyday clinical practice. Professionals working in palliative care are constantly exposed to profound suffering and existential questions related to illness and the end of life, experiences that go beyond the technical dimension of care. This study explored how spiritual awareness evolves among healthcare professionals involved in palliative care.

Methods. A Constructivist Grounded Theory approach (Charmaz) guided the study. Semi-structured narrative interviews were conducted with healthcare professionals working in hospice, oncology, and palliative care settings in Northern Italy. Data were analysed through iterative coding until theoretical saturation.

Results. Fifteen professionals participated. The core category, Transforming the everyday into something meaningful, emerged through six interconnected dimensions: patient-centred relationships, emotional proximity, team reflection, professional and personal transformation, increased sensitivity to spirituality, and spirituality as a resource in everyday care.

Discussion. Findings highlight a transformative process in which exposure to suffering deepens spiritual awareness and reshapes professional practice, supporting the integration of spiritual care in palliative settings.

Keywords: Palliative Care, Spirituality, Grounded Theory

© The Author(s) 2026. This abstract is published by iEditore and distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).

Funding: This research received no external funding. **Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.