

Spiritual Care Practitioner

Classification:	Admin Officer Grade 3
Business unit/department:	Medical and Cancer Division
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☐ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☐ (please specify)
Agreement:	Victorian Public Health Sector (Health and Allied Services, Managers and Administrative Officers) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement 2025-2027
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.
Employment type:	Part-Time
Hours per week:	19.4
Reports to:	Divisional Manager, Cancer Services Operations Manager, Wellness and Supportive Care
Direct reports:	n/a
Financial management:	Budget nil
Date:	July 2026

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Austin Health operates, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Position purpose

The Spiritual Care Practitioner is responsible for the delivery of best practice, person-centred spiritual care at Austin Health. The Spiritual Care Practitioner's role targets the three key principles of spiritual care, meaning, purpose and connection, whilst enabling patients and carers to explore, assert and integrate their spirituality, thus working towards an increased sense of wellbeing.

Spiritual Care focuses on the spiritual needs of patients. Spirituality is a general term, which encompasses the meaningful aspects of a person's life. For most people, their spirituality will include significant relationships and may be expressed in family, community, the sacred, religion, nature, art and music.

Spiritual care is the provision of assessment, counselling, support and ritual in matters of a person's beliefs, traditions, values and practices enabling the person to access their own spiritual resources.

About the Directorate

Medical and Cancer Services

Austin Health is one of the largest cancer service providers in Victoria. A complete range of services are delivered to patients and their families, including Medical oncology, Clinical haematology, Radiation oncology (Austin Health and BHS), Cancer genetics, Palliative care, Wellness and Supportive Care programs, an active volunteer program and specialist cancer surgery (managed via separate CSU). These are all provided in an environment that integrates research, teaching, and training.

All Austin Health metropolitan-based Cancer Services are now delivered within the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness (ONJ Centre) at the Austin Hospital. This state-of-the-art facility provides a new model of individualised cancer care for patients and their families.

Clinical Services are provided in a range of inpatient and ambulatory settings. Inpatient services include an acute oncology/clinical haematology ward, an oncology/surgical oncology ward and a palliative care ward. Ambulatory services include Radiation Oncology, Day Oncology, Apheresis, and multidisciplinary cancer clinics.

Wellness and Supportive Care, Cancer Services

The integrated model of multidisciplinary care within Cancer Services relies on a dynamic, appropriately qualified, and skilled team to support patients undergoing care in both inpatient and ambulatory settings, with a key focus on Integrating Wellness and Supportive Care into standard care.

Position responsibilities

The Spiritual Care Practitioner will practice clinically with patients referred, according to the Spiritual Intervention Codes (Australian Classifications of Health Interventions ICD-10-AM/ACHI/ACS Tenth Edition):

1. Spiritual Assessment

The Spiritual Care Practitioner is able to assess the spiritual needs of the patient, including wellbeing, needs and resources. Through supportive conversation, reflective practice and in conjunction with the holistic assessment made by the multidisciplinary team the Spiritual Care Practitioner makes a Spiritual Assessment which includes:

- discerning what beliefs the person holds which give meaning and purpose to their life and identify in that which is sacred for them.
- using a validated spiritual assessment tool, identifies needs, hopes and resources and possible outcomes.
- consulting with family members and/or carers and recording a spiritual care plan as required.
- exploring the capacity of the person to face life with courage and explore new life expressions.
- understanding the rituals and practices associated with the person's beliefs and meaning in life.
- ascertaining whether the person is part of one or more communities of shared belief.
- clarifying where the person would seek guidance and authority when faced with doubt and confusion.
- working with the multidisciplinary team to ensure appropriate assessments are made.
- ascertains/determines with the individual patient/family what level of involvement and ongoing support is required/requested. This may change during hospitalization.

2. Spiritual Counselling, Guidance and Education

The Spiritual Care Practitioner is able to:



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- provide emotional support in times of crisis which includes ethics counselling, anticipatory grief and bereavement counselling, support during withdrawal of treatment and support with relationships
- offer spiritual care and grief counselling at the time of immediate death
- provide education for patients, family and about spiritual care.

3. Spiritual Support

On the basis of the above spiritual assessment, the Spiritual Care Practitioner provides spiritual care through:

- offering person-centred care with a focus on the individual's spirituality emerging from their experience, journey and story.
- working with complex spiritual, religious and ethical issues.
- providing complex spiritual and emotional care in situations of trauma and unexpected death.
- providing care for diverse cultural, spiritual and religious needs.
- engaging empathically with the individual and/or family to promote wellbeing and continuity of care.
- acting as an advocate to those who are disempowered.
- wherever possible and as appropriate, involving the individual, family and other care providers in formulating desired outcomes and personalised care plans.
- promptly responding to referrals.
- sharing workloads and referrals amongst the team.
- communicating verbally and non-verbally in an inclusive manner making use of interpreters as required.
- maintaining a thorough knowledge of the services provided by the organization.
- making referrals and initiating collaborative relationships with external spiritual care providers including chaplains and faith community representatives.
- engaging the patient in a process of review and remembering in order that they may perceive and affirm a meaning for their life.

4. Spiritual Ritual

The Spiritual Care Practitioner can:

- facilitate connection with spiritual resources.
- facilitate opportunities for prayer, reflection and ritual in response to the individual's tradition and affiliations.
- collaborate with faith community representatives, including referral and follow up.

Other Responsibilities

- Attend professional supervision and ongoing professional development
- Participate in department quality assurance activities including Accreditation activities.
- Participate in review and development of policy, goals/objectives and strategic direction of the department
- Participate in continuous quality Improvement projects undertaken in the department and assist other staff in identifying areas for potential projects
- Participate in performance appraisal process.



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Selection criteria

Essential skills and experience:

- Minimum of Bachelor degree level studies in Theology, Pastoral Counselling, Social Sciences or equivalent
- Minimum of two (2) units of Clinical Pastoral Education, one unit at Advanced Level or equivalent program of supervised work experience
- At least 5 years' experience in Spiritual Care in a healthcare setting
- Eligibility for certified membership of Spiritual Care Australia
- Ability to work autonomously and as part of a multidisciplinary team.
- Demonstrate strong communication skills (written and verbal)
- Strong organisational and time management skills.
- A commitment to Austin Health values:
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- A sound understanding of information technology including clinical systems, applications relevant to the management of rostering and risk management reporting or as required for the role and/or department.
- Current driver's license.

Desirable but not essential:

- Experience in providing Spiritual care in a major tertiary hospital
- Post Graduate qualifications in Theology, Spiritual Care or Spiritual Counselling
- Well-developed leadership, interpersonal, communication and negotiation skills

Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality and risk policies and guidelines.
- Escalate concerns regarding safety, quality and risk to the appropriate staff member, if unable to rectify yourself.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.
- Comply with the principles of person-centered care.
- Comply with requirements of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Other conditions – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Adhere to Austin Health's core values: *our actions show we care, we bring our best, together we achieve, and we shape the future.*



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- Comply with the Austin Health's Code of Conduct policy, as well as all other policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).
- Comply with all Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Provide proof of immunity to nominated vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with Austin Health's immunisation screening policy.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.

General information

Cultural safety

Austin Health is committed to cultural safety and health equity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise cultural safety as the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It empowers people and enables them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

Equal Opportunity Employer

We celebrate, value, and include people of all backgrounds, genders, identities, cultures, bodies, and abilities. We welcome and support applications from talented people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, people with disability, neurodiverse people, LGBTQIA+ and people of all ages and cultures.

Austin Health is a child safe environment

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. Austin Health has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and commits to protect children. We take allegations of abuse and neglect seriously and will make every effort to mitigate and respond to risk in line with hospital policy and procedures.



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