

Spiritual Well-Being in Long-Term Care:

**Understanding and Addressing Barriers to
Religious Access**

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Overview

- Our Practicum Agency Roles
- Introduction to Our Resource Guide
- Isolation in Long-Term Care
- Impact of Covid-19
- Religious Affiliation of Long-Term Care Communities
- Religion and Spirituality as Aspects of Health
- What is Included in Our Resource Guides
- How to Access the Guides

Our Practicum Agency Roles

Grace

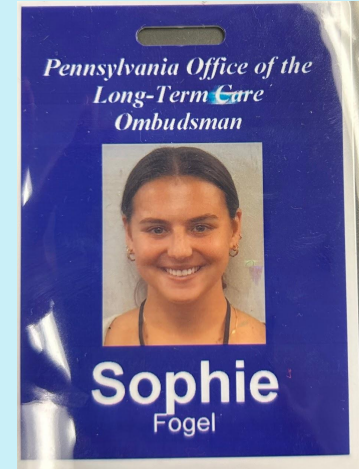
- Passavant
- Hospital stays
- Discharge planning including transitions to long-term care

Claire

- Canterbury Place
- Care transitions
- Onsite support for long-term care residents

Sophie

- AAA
- Ombudsman services
- Advocate for long-term care residents



Introduction to Our Resource Guides

Flyer for Basics, pdf Document for Direct Links

- Know Your Rights
 - Introduce residents to the rights they're entitled to while living in a facility
- Direct Links to Resources
 - Provide resident's an alternative to in-person religious practice
- Accessibility
 - Make religious practice more accessible to older adults



Isolation in Long-Term Care

Social Isolation and Loneliness

- Severe loneliness reported by:
 - 10% of older adults living in the community
 - 22-42% of older adult care home residents
- “Research suggests that ... social isolation (and loneliness) may directly or indirectly lead to institutionalization in many cases, and vice versa.”
 - (Boamah et. al.)
- Social isolation and loneliness may increase risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, and all-cause mortality
- Experiences of discrimination and exclusion are significant risk factors for social isolation
 - Past experiences with discrimination and exclusion increase feelings of loneliness and fear of social interaction

Impact of Covid-19

- Many residents could not visit with loved ones, participate in group activities, or eat in shared spaces for many months
- Isolation resulted in higher rates of depression and anxiety, cognitive symptoms
- Many care environments have not recovered the access to transportation and community events they had prior to pandemic
- More online services available



Religious Affiliations

of Long-Term Care Communities

- Many long-term care environments are religiously affiliated, but more coordinate religious services through a chaplain
 - Over 74.1% of professional healthcare chaplains identify with the Christian faith
- Members of religious minorities are less likely to report good or very good health than members of religious majorities
 - In the US, 36% of Jewish adults and 62% of Muslim adults report feeling hostility from others on the basis of religion
- In many long-term care environments, members of religious minorities must be willing to seek support from a Christian chaplain for services
 - This is unlikely to be effective as a sole resource for many residents, given the impact of past experiences with discrimination and exclusion

Religion and Spirituality

as Aspects of Health

- As we age, finding meaningful ways to reflect on experiences and sustain our values is important
 - Religion can support positive coping
- Religion is a comfort for many in grief and major life transitions
- Religious beliefs and practices remain in the long-term memory of many people living with advanced dementia
- Studies have shown online mindfulness programs and religious services were effective interventions for isolation and loneliness in older adults



What is Included in Our Resource Guides

Know Your Rights

- Why our project is important
- Summary of the intentions and goals of our project, as well as what motivated this area of research and advocacy
- Copy of PA Resident Rights to ensure residents are properly informed on their rights while residing in a facility
- Transportation resources
- Resources for virtual religious services



What is Included in Our Resource Guides

Direct Links to Resources

- Each major religion listed, including those predominant in Pittsburgh area, listed alphabetically
- Various options for both national and local groups practicing each religion
- Variety of ways to participate in religious practice virtually, including:
 - Zoom calls, some recurring, some special for holidays
 - YouTube channels, to watch recordings of services at anytime
 - Phone numbers to participate in Zoom calls without a smart device

What is Included in Our Resource Guides

Accessibility

- Online focus
 - Internet access more universal than established access to in-person services
 - Online access can allow for more privacy and autonomy in seeking services
- Addressing barriers to online access
 - Internet/device literacy, device access, and disability accommodations needed
 - Interdisciplinary support is helpful (activities, chaplain, social work, CNAs and other staff that engage a resident's daily support needs)
- Recommendations for helping residents utilize the resources
 - Equipping devices with screen reader software, low vision settings
 - Ensuring settings like Zoom live captioning are offered
 - Regularly ensuring residents know their rights, as interest in services can change

How to Access the Guide

AAA

- Ombudsman will offer to provide copies of guides after visiting facilities in Allegheny county

Physical flyer access

- Paper copies of the guide will be available at each facility, for residents and staff to utilize

Digital access

- For those that can't access physical copy of the guide, a URL can be typed directly into browser to access PDF of virtual services

**SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IN LONG-TERM CARE:
UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING BARRIERS
TO RELIGIOUS ACCESS**

Religious Practice Opportunities

ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL NEEDS BEING MET?



Older adults in long-term care often face isolation from religious services. Our online resource hub empowers residents to know their rights and continue practicing their faith in care settings.

<https://bit.ly/3DWJ6zy>



Any Questions?

References

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