

### **Reader Response: What does spiritual support mean to you?**

Last year NCPC ran a feature on the personal side of spiritual support (Inside Palliative Care Volume 14, December 2010), and in response hospice chaplain Dawn Tierney got in touch and shared her views. In the first of a new series we hear Dawn's thoughts on the idea, and how she has used the tool in her own practice.

### **Testimonial of research tool, 'What does Spiritual Support mean to you?'**

As a hospice chaplain, having read 'What does spiritual support mean to you?' in *Inside Palliative Care*, I was curious to find out more. I was particularly interested in the comments collated by the 'reporters' who asked their friends, contacts, and family to respond to the question about what spiritual support might mean to them. I requested more information and as website editor of the national Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains website, I was very keen to post a link to the article so other chaplains and anyone interested in spiritual support might see the comments.

I was thrilled when Jo Black (Involving People Manager, NCPC) emailed me a PDF of all the comments. I printed these off in colour, laminated top and back pages and ring bound the whole document, and it is proving to be a very useful teaching tool which informs chaplaincy colleagues, student chaplains, staff and volunteers in Eden Valley Hospice, Carlisle, where I work as well as local clergy.

The best thing about the information from the quotes and comments people have made is that they sometimes surprise readers, and sometimes people find themselves agreeing with the comments! This is great because spiritual support is personal and unique to everyone as an individual and yet there is a commonality in what many people believe it is and hope it might be.

This document has also helped me to explain something metaphysical, when I've given the document to someone to read and they've discovered that spiritual support is not what they often assume it might be!

I am very grateful to NCPC for its willingness to share the information. I have ensured that everyone knows about the document, having been given permission to have a link on the AHPCC website, it is now available to a wider national and international audience.

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