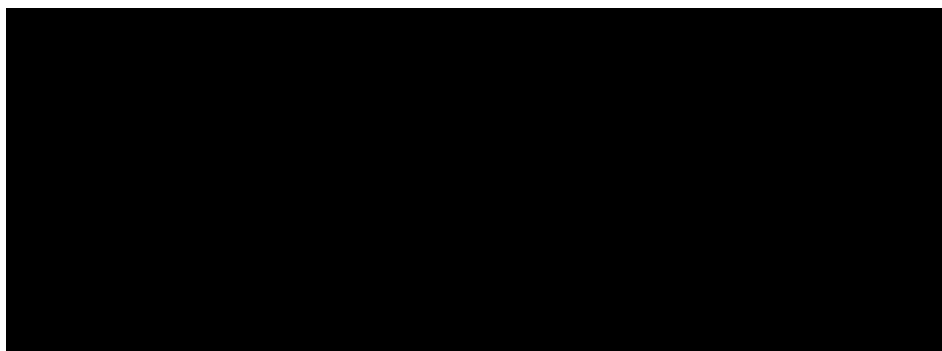


26 July 2022



Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your email of 22 July 2022, pursuant to the Official Information Act (OIA) 1982. You have requested the following information:

- **A copy of your organisation's current Spiritual Care policy**

Please find enclosed with this response a copy of Te Whatu Ora - Waikato District (formerly known as Waikato District Health Board) Spiritual Care policy.

If you have any questions, you can contact us at uia_contact@waikatodhb.health.nz

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Health NZ has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on Health NZ's website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available here.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Lowry'.

Christine Lowry (she/her)

**Interim District Co-Director | Tumu Whakahaere ā Takiwā
Waikato**

Spiritual Care Guideline

Guideline Responsibilities and Authorisation

Department Responsible for Policy	Business Support
Document Facilitator Name	Donna Craig-Brown
Document Facilitator Title	Manager Hospitality Support Services
Document Owner Name	Chris Cardwell
Document Owner Title	Executive Director of Business and Support
Target Audience	All staff
Committee Approved	Policies and Guidelines Committee
Date Approved	15 May 2019
Committee Endorsed	Executive Leadership Team
Date Endorsed	28 June 2019
<p>Disclaimer: This document has been developed by Waikato District Health Board specifically for its own use. Use of this document and any reliance on the information contained therein by any third party is at their own risk and Waikato District Health Board assumes no responsibility whatsoever.</p>	

Spiritual Care Guideline

Guideline Review History

Version	Updated by	Date Updated	Summary of Changes
05	Renee Sharp	05/08/2015	Old policy into new template.
	Chris Atkinson	12/08/2015	Change Nurse Manager Operations to Director Business Support.
	Chaplains	20/08/2015	Minor technicality changes.
	Melinda Ch'ng	26/08/2015	Addition of policies. Definition of ICHC. Finalisation.
	Renee Sharp	11/09/2015	Changes accepted from consultation feedback.
	Renee Sharp	02/10/2015	Minor changes post presentation to Policy Committee.
06	Donna Craig-Brown	02/10/18	Renamed policy from Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care to Spiritual Care to fit in better with the term used in the purpose of the document and to capture both pastoral and religious care.
	Donna Craig-Brown	17/01/19	Some changes accepted from the consultation feedback and other minor changes made to reflect current practice and terminology. Added new definition re External Kaumātua visitors
	Donna Craig-Brown	1/02/2019	Change document from policy to guideline

Spiritual Care Guideline

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Spiritual Care Guideline

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Waikato District Health Board (DHB) recognises that the provision of access to spiritual care is a vital component of hospital and health services.

1.2 Scope

This guideline covers Chaplains, Volunteer Chaplaincy Assistants, Pastoral visitors, Lay visitors, Clergy visitors and external Kaumātua visitors while on Waikato DHB sites.

This guideline applies to all employees of Waikato DHB, contractors, patients, visitors.

1.3 Definitions

Clergy Visitor	Minister, priest or spiritual leader who has a pastoral relationship with a patient outside of the health or hospital environment, and who may visit them while they are inpatients. They visit under Visiting Patients at Waikato DHB Facilities Guideline
External Kaumātua visitors	Kaumātua as a visitor or observer, whom wish to carry out Tikanga process i.e. blessing of bed space of deceased karakia to ensure the mana is maintained should be respected.
Hospital Chaplain	A person who has been endorsed by the governing body of their denomination, appointed by the Interchurch Council of Hospital Chaplains (ICHC), and is accepted by the management of the hospital to provide Chaplaincy services. For Māori Chaplains, endorsement requires approval and support from their Kaunihera Kaumātua. Hospital Chaplains operate at Waikato and Taumarunui hospitals only.
Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy (ICHC)	An organisation contracted by the Ministry of Health to provide spiritual support to patients, families, and friends, and who also provide spiritual support to hospital staff at times of trauma and grief. The ICHC oversee and administer the work of the Hospital Chaplains and their VCAs
Kaitiaki	Kaitiaki can advise and perform wairua / spiritual protocols for Blessings, Deceased, Return of Body tissue, Powhiri, Whakatau, Waikato DHB Orientation, Graduations and Taonga to In-patient Services and Out-patient Services.
Lay Visitor	A person who is not ordained and who visits the hospital to see patients of their own church and are under the supervision of the local parish minister. They visit under the Visiting Patients at Waikato DHB Facilities Guideline
Pastoral Visitor	A person who has been nominated and approved by their religious leader and Waikato Hospital management, and who visits patients of their own denomination only. They have access to the patient lists for their religion only. Pastoral visitors are available at Waikato hospital.

Spiritual Care Guideline

Volunteer Chaplaincy Assistant (VCA)

Volunteers, who are nominated by their own church, authorised by ICHC and accepted by the management of the hospital to provide pastoral support. They are part of the Chaplaincy team under the direction and supervision of the hospital Chaplains and must comply with the requirements of the Waikato DHB and ICHC policies and processes.

VCAs undergo a 10 week training programme and are considered probationary until they have completed a year in their role.

2. Guideline

2.1 Principles

- All patients and whānau/relatives within Waikato DHB have access to spiritual care for personal visiting, spiritual and sacramental ministration.
- Spiritual care may be provided by the patient's Kaitiaki, clergy visitors or by Hospital Chaplains, VCAs, Pastoral visitors, Lay visitors or external Kaumātua visitors where available.
- Hospital Chaplains are available at Waikato and Taumarunui Hospitals
- VCAs are available at Waikato and Thames Hospitals and Rhoda Read Continuing Care Facility.
- Pastoral visitors are available at Waikato Hospital for the following religious denominations. Latter Day Saints, Jehovah Witness, Buddhist, and Baptist.
- Clergy visitors, Lay visitors and external Kaumātua visitors may visit rural hospitals as required from time to time under the Visiting Patients at Waikato DHB Facilities Guidelines.
- Hospital Chaplains may refer staff to the staff member's local church for routine spiritual care but may provide spiritual care to individual staff.
- Community based patients need to access spiritual care services within their own community as Hospital Chaplains do not visit community based patients.
- Waikato DHB recognises that health is a holistic concept that includes the following key elements (physical) tinana, (spiritual) wairau, (family) whānau and (emotional) hinengaro dimensions.
- Access to spiritual services must be supported for all patients and relatives irrespective of their faith or culture and, where possible, be delivered by a minister of the religion of their choice.
- Hospital Chaplains can participate in clinical discussions where appropriate.
- Any person providing Hospital Chaplaincy and spiritual services is responsible for the safe and proper handling of information they receive from or about patients. Hospital Chaplains, VCAs and authorised Pastoral visitors must observe all the requirements of confidentiality expected by Waikato DHB.

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- Where it is known that spiritual care has been provided to a patient, a health professional may record this in the patient’s clinical record.
- The provision of spiritual care must not impact adversely on the care, wellbeing and safety of others. Where religious or spiritual rites cannot be practiced without impacting detrimentally on others, assistance will be given to provide, where possible, an alternative environment conducive for this to happen. Where other impacted patients agree/consent, spiritual care may take place where the patient is located.
- The manager of Hospitality Support Services at Waikato Hospital will ensure that, where Pastoral visitors are used, there are specific protocols in place for them to access basic information on the whereabouts of patients of their denomination. These protocols must conform to the Waikato DHB requirements.
- Within Waikato DHB campuses a quiet area for prayer, meditation and worship will be provided. It must be able to be used by all denominations and religions, and will be easily accessible to all patients and visitors.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

Waikato DHB staff dealing with patients have the responsibility to refer to the services above for access to spiritual care and religious ceremonies and practices and cultural rites for patients, carers and visitors, when requested in accordance with the principles above and where practicable to ensure this access is uninterrupted

Employees

All employees must respect the spiritual and religious beliefs of all patients, visitors and other employees.

2.3 Professional Standing

- Hospital Chaplains must comply with the Waikato DHB and ICHC policies and processes.
- VCAs have service contracts with ICHC and must comply with the Waikato DHB and ICHC policies and processes.
- Pastoral visitors are authorised by their church/religious leaders and must comply with the Waikato DHB policies and processes.
- Clergy visitors, Lay visitors and external Kaumātua visitors may visit patients as per the Waikato DHB Visitors Patients at Waikato DHB Facilities Guideline.
- The Waikato DHB may deny access to any Hospital Chaplain or VCA after giving notice to ICHC.
- The Waikato DHB may deny access to any, Pastoral visitor, Lay visitor, Clergy visitor or external Kaumātua visitor giving notice individually and/or to their church.

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Facilitator Title:	Manager Hospitality Support			Department:	Business Support		
IF THIS DOCUMENT IS PRINTED, IT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE DAY OF PRINTING							Page 6 of 8

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2.4 Waikato Hospital Campus

- The process for authorising Pastoral visitors is available from the Waikato DHB's Manager Hospitality Support Services, Waikato Hospital. Any concerns with, or from, Pastoral visitors can be referred to the Director, Business Support for resolution or the Manager Hospitality Support Services or Te Puna Oranga
- Spiritual care support can be contacted anytime through the Customer Contact Centre.
- The Director, Business Support is responsible for:
 - the management and use of the Waikato Hospital Chapel
 - keeping up to date with the ICHC and its Local Chaplaincy Committee maintaining a register of Pastoral visitors at Waikato Hospital. The above may be delegated to the Manager Hospitality Support Services
- Where Hospital Chaplains have been requested by a patient or their advocate to provide spiritual support in the return of body tissue, the Chaplains will comply with the requirements of the Waikato DHB Return or Disposal of Body Parts, /Tissue/Prosthetic Devices policy.
- Room blessings can be conducted during normal operating hours by Hospital Chaplains or Te Puna Oranga. When these services are not available blessing boxes are available from the Attendant service.

2.5 Other Waikato DHB Hospitals

- A list of local Clergy / Lay visitors / external Kaumātua visitors able to provide spiritual services will be provided. The patient's preferred option of local clergy can be contacted directly by the member of staff or through the Customer Contact Centre.

3. Audit

3.1 Indicators

- Staff are aware of the Spiritual care guideline and their responsibilities.
- A quiet room in an accessible area is available to patients and visitors at all times.

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4. Legislative Requirements

4.1 Legislation

Waikato DHB must comply with the following legislation (this list is not exclusive):

- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Privacy Act 1993
- Employee Relations Act 2000
- Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014

4.2 Policies

All Hospital Chaplains, VCAs, Pastoral visitors, Lay visitors, Clergy visitors and external Kaumātua visitors working or having access to Waikato DHB sites are bound by all Waikato DHB policies and processes.

More specifically, they will be required to comply with the following:

- Waikato DHB [Health and Safety](#) policy (Ref. 0044)
- Waikato DHB [Health Information Privacy](#) policy (Ref. 1976)
- Waikato DHB [Vaccinations for Health Care Workers](#) policy (Ref. 1750)
- Waikato DHB [Volunteers](#) policy (Ref. 1852)

5. Associated Documents

5.1 Associated Waikato DHB Documents

- Waikato DHB [Return or Disposal of Body Parts/Tissue/ Prosthetic Devices](#) policy (Ref. 0131)
- Waikato DHB [Care of the Deceased /Tūpāpaku](#) policy (Ref. 0133)
- Waikato DHB [Māori Health](#) policy (Ref. 0108)
- Waikato DHB [Employee Assistance Programme](#) policy (Ref. 0286)

5.2 References

- Health Information Privacy Code 1994