

NURSES' SPIRITUAL CARE PRACTICES: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Keywords: Spiritual care practices, nurses, and research

Purpose: The purpose of this presentation is to review empirical research on spiritual care practices of nurses and their implications for practice and research.

Method: A review of research literature from multiple sources - CINAHL, PubMed, Web of Knowledge, citation searching, hand searches of journals and discussion with experts was used to identify potentially eligible articles. Studies were limited to those that measure the nurses' practice of spiritual care. Due to the small number of studies found, all areas of nursing and types of patient base were included. The studies were categorized first according to chronology, and then type (qualitative or quantitative), theoretical frameworks used, and outcomes.

Findings: This review of 23 studies conducted in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Finland found that nurses' own spirituality was the strongest predictor of participation in use of spiritual care practices with their patients. Findings also showed patients report that it is important for their spiritual needs to be addressed by nursing. A specific barrier identified by nurses to participate in spiritual care was a lack of knowledge and education on how to deliver spiritual care.

Discussion: More research needs to be implemented on developing spiritual care practices that are effective with patients.