

Spiritual Wellbeing and Care Support for PLWH

CHANTAL MUKANDOLI (mukchanty@yahoo.fr)

1. *PWA (Toronto People AIDS Foundation), Toronto, Ontario, Canada*
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Background

Looking after our health and wellbeing often requires thinking beyond just our physical health. For many people living with HIV, Spiritual wellbeing is an important dimension of being healthy. In fact, physical health and spiritual wellbeing may be more connected than we think. Nurses and other care providers may have a unique role to play in supporting the spiritual wellbeing of their patients or clients.

Methods & Results

This qualitative study comprised of in-depth, open-ended, one-on-one interviews with 6 Toronto-based nurses involved in the care of clients living with HIV *and* a focus group interview with 10, African and Caribbean women living with HIV.

The interviews were transcribed and data was coded into corresponding themes and analyzed.

Major Themes:

- ▶ When spiritual wellbeing is considered in the nursing care provided to PLWH, it can help build trust and strengthen the therapeutic relationship between care provider and client.
- ▶ Improved spiritual wellbeing can help improve physical health, particularly mental health by providing solace, encouragement, and hope.
- ▶ Creating a safe space for clients to be able to communicate their needs around spiritual wellbeing can also help improve clients' comfort around discussing stigma and other psychosocial issues impacting their health.

Conclusions

Spiritual wellbeing support is an important dimension of human health.

Recognizing the spiritual experiences and needs of clients living with HIV may help improve health outcomes, including retention in care for PLWH.

Training for nurses and other care providers around how they can identify and support clients' spiritual needs and experiences may help build providers competency around the issue.