
PSYCHIATRIC CHAPLAINS' OBSERVATION OF PSYCHIATRIC STAFF'S ATTITUDES TOWARD RELIGIOSITY/SPIRITUALITY IN THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS: BASED ON THE PILOT STUDY IN GERMANY

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Introduction: In a previous survey, German psychiatric staff indicated that they are open to religiosity/spirituality (ReS) in the therapeutic setting. According to staff's self-reported attitudes, they are ready to listen and discuss ReS with their patients and cooperate with chaplains.

Methods: We aimed to find out how chaplains perceive the attitudes of other psychiatric staff (e.g. medical and nursing staff) toward ReS in the psychiatric process. In the context of a pilot study, Protestant and Catholic psychiatric chaplains in Baden-Württemberg (Germany) were surveyed from mid-November 2012 to mid-February 2013. The main instrument used was a revised version of the Curlin et al. questionnaire on 'Religion and Spirituality in Medicine: Physicians' Perspectives'.

Results: The response rate was 59.38 % (38 of 64 questionnaires). Chaplains responded that psychiatric staff is open to ReS discussions with patients; however, psychiatric staff rated themselves more positively in this regard than chaplains. Nurses were considered to have the most positive approach toward ReS and were reported to often encourage patients to practice ReS or share their own ReS with patients.

From chaplains' perspective, psychiatric staff seems reluctant to regularly integrate ReS into their therapies, as they believe it is not their responsibility. Nevertheless, chaplains indicated that the personal attitude of psychiatric staff toward ReS is an influencing factor for integrating ReS into the clinical setting.

Conclusions: From chaplains' point of view, psychiatric staff is less comfortable with ReS in psychiatric practice than reported by the staff members themselves. For a representative picture further research is planned.