

# Adaptation and implementation of the European matrix for teaching spiritual care to nursing students



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## BACKGROUND

The World Health Organization's concept of health currently comprises eight dimensions: emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, occupational, and social. Including the spiritual dimension(1) represents an essential milestone in recognizing its positive impact on health, well-being, and quality of life. In this sense, nursing students' acquisition and development of **spiritual care competencies are required**, particularly in undergraduate nursing degrees.

A positive relationship exists between spiritual education and spiritual competencies, emphasizing the need for spiritual education as an integral and regular part of the undergraduate nursing curriculum. Regardless of this evidence, the educational strategies for improving and developing undergraduate nursing students' skills and competencies are **scarce** and should be urgently considered as nurses and midwives still report feeling unprepared for providing spiritual care.

Recently, the **EPICC project** (Nurses' and Midwives' Competence in Providing Spiritual Care through Innovative Education and Compassionate Care)(2) has been implemented as a turning point in nursing education for spiritual care and spirituality, through a systematic, consensual, and effective response, by involving multiple partners and experts from different European countries. Portugal has been a participant in that Erasmus-funded project.

## METHODS

Translation (3)

Cultural Adaptation (3)

Implementation  
(Pilot project)



COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE (COGNITIVE)	SKILLS (FUNCTIONAL)	ATTITUDE (BEHAVIOURAL)
1 <b>INTRAPERSONAL SPIRITUALITY</b> Is aware of the importance of spirituality on health and well-being.	- Understands the concept of spirituality. - Can explain the impact of spirituality on a person's health and well-being across the lifespan for oneself and others. - Understands the impact of one's own values and beliefs in providing spiritual care.	- Reflects meaningfully upon one's own values and beliefs and recognises that these may be different from other persons'. - Takes care of oneself.	- Willing to explore one's own and individuals' personal, religious and spiritual beliefs. - Is open and respectful to persons' diverse expressions of spirituality.
2 <b>INTERPERSONAL SPIRITUALITY</b> Engages with persons' spirituality, acknowledging their unique spiritual and cultural worldviews, beliefs and practices.	- Understands the ways that persons' express their spirituality. - Is aware of the different world/religious views and how these may impact upon persons' responses to key life events.	- Recognises the uniqueness of persons' spirituality. - Interacts with, and responds sensitively to the person's spirituality.	- Is trustworthy, approachable and respectful of persons' expressions of spirituality and different world/religious views.
3 <b>SPIRITUAL CARE: ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING</b> Assesses spiritual needs and resources using appropriate formal or informal approaches, and plans spiritual care, maintaining confidentiality and obtaining informed consent.	- Understands the concept of spiritual care. - Is aware of different approaches to spiritual assessment. - Understands other professionals' roles in providing spiritual care.	- Conducts and documents a spiritual assessment to identify spiritual needs and resources. - Collaborates with other professionals. - Be able to appropriately contain and deal with emotions.	- Is open, approachable and non-judgemental. - Has a willingness to deal with emotions.
4 <b>SPIRITUAL CARE: INTERVENTION AND EVALUATION</b> Responds to spiritual needs and resources within a caring, compassionate relationship.	- Understands the concept of compassion and presence and its importance in spiritual care. - Knows how to respond appropriately to identified spiritual needs and resources. - Knows how to evaluate whether spiritual needs have been met.	- Recognises personal limitations in spiritual care giving and refers to others as appropriate. - Evaluates and documents personal, professional and organisational aspects of spiritual care giving, and reassess appropriately.	- Shows compassion and presence. - Shows willingness to collaborate with and refer to others (professional/non-professional). - Is welcoming and accepting and shows empathy, openness, professional humility and trustworthiness in seeking additional spiritual support.

## RESULTS

Stage I

• Translation with written reports of each – T1 and T2

Stage II

• Synthesis of the translations to version T12

Stage III

• Back translation of the synthesized written version - BT1 and BT2

<https://blogs.staffs.ac.uk/epicc/epicc-project/epicc-strategic-partners/staffs-2/>

## CONCLUSION

This innovative project could help improve Portuguese schools' nursing curricula from an evidence-based perspective in implementing spiritual care and preparing nursing students to address spiritual human responses in an individual or multidisciplinary approach.

## REFERENCES

1. World Health Organization. The Spiritual Dimension: Resolution of the Executive Board of the WHO. 1984.
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3. Beaton DE, Bombardier C, Guillemin F, Ferraz MB. Guidelines for the Process of Cross-Cultural Adaptation of Self-Report Measures. Spine (Phila Pa 1976). 2000;25(24):3186–91.