



**Attention: Aged care, Religion & Seniors**

**9 August 2016**

## **Spiritual guidelines balance art and science of spirituality in aged care**

*National Guidelines for Spiritual Care in Aged Care* are being launched at SummitCare's St Marys Facility in Sydney on Tuesday 9 August at 2.00 pm, by Nick Ryan, CEO of the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency, in front of staff and residents who were involved in developing the guidelines.

Every older person in residential and community aged care can now be offered spiritual care that is desired by and meaningful to them thanks to internationally ground-breaking guidelines developed in Australia for all Australians whatever their background, culture, beliefs or faith, says **Ilsa Hampton**, CEO of Meaningful Ageing Australia, formerly known as PASCOP, project partners along with Spiritual Health Victoria.

The Guidelines recognise the humanistic essence of spirituality while being rigorous enough to describe, measure and evaluate how aged care organisations offer spiritual care, says **Elizabeth Pringle**, who managed the Australian Government Department of Health funded project with the National Ageing Research Institute.

Spirituality is integral to quality of life and well-being but until now older people's spiritual needs may not have been known or met because all care-givers coming into contact with older people in community based and residential aged care did not know how to ask them about their spiritual needs and then help meet their needs.

The Guidelines provide specific and practical understanding and assistance to all care givers working in residential aged care and also those providing care and support in the community and at home.

They are flexible and relevant to large and small services in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote, whatever type of care is provided. The Guidelines are free to services and carers along with additional implementation resources and assistance including two videos on the Meaningful Ageing website.

"The sector welcomes the National Guidelines as a significant benchmark for the integration of spiritual care, giving organisations a clear pathway to embrace whole-of-person care," says **Nick Ryan**, CEO of the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency.

**Cynthia Payne**, CEO of SummitCare, a leading for – profit aged care provider in NSW and member of says that "These guidelines are a first in the world. To have consulted and been involved in the pilot means that we can introduce a new dimension to aged care"

"Spirituality is an integral part of each of us. It affects every aspect of life including one's health. Caring for the whole person includes nurturing the spirit," says **Sue Smith** SummitCare's Group Manager for Care and Services.

**Media: are welcome to attend, speak to those listed in the release and to a resident about the importance of spirituality and obtain an advance copy of the Guidelines by contacting Megan Stoyles on 0408147829. Guidelines will be available after 9 August at**

**<http://meaningfulageing.org.au/national-guidelines-for-spiritual-care-in-aged-care/>**