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LECTURES

Nurturing Spirituality in Healthcare Chaplaincy



Qualitative research in healthcare chaplaincy

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Qualitative research methods are perhaps the most accessible for chaplains because they involve deep listening and probing to another person's story. Listening carefully and asking questions is what we do! This talk will suggest the importance of developing qualitative research for chaplains, and ways in which it can inform our clinical practice. Qualitative methods typically require fewer participants than a robust quantitative study. They can be more feasible for a chaplain or a chaplaincy department to undertake on a limited budget. There is still a need to understand what it is that chaplains actually do which can affect patient outcomes, and qualitative methods are best suited to that. They can also inform subsequent, quantitative studies. Data gained from qualitative study of how parents of children with cystic fibrosis view the Divine and use prayer have changed my clinical care as well, and may be used to develop specific interventions for chaplains.