

Children's Health Queensland

Spiritual Care and Multi-faith Action Plan 2026-2029

SAFE | INCLUDED | RESPECTED

Queensland Government

Spiritual care and multi-faith statement of need and purpose

Children and families come to us from diverse cultural, religious and spiritual backgrounds. Illness, trauma and hospitalization often prompt deep emotional and existential questions for children, families and staff. Spiritual care acknowledges and supports the beliefs, values and hopes that sustain people during times of crisis and vulnerability.

Research shows that spiritual care improves patient and family experience, emotional wellbeing, and satisfaction with care, while also supporting staff morale and reducing burnout.

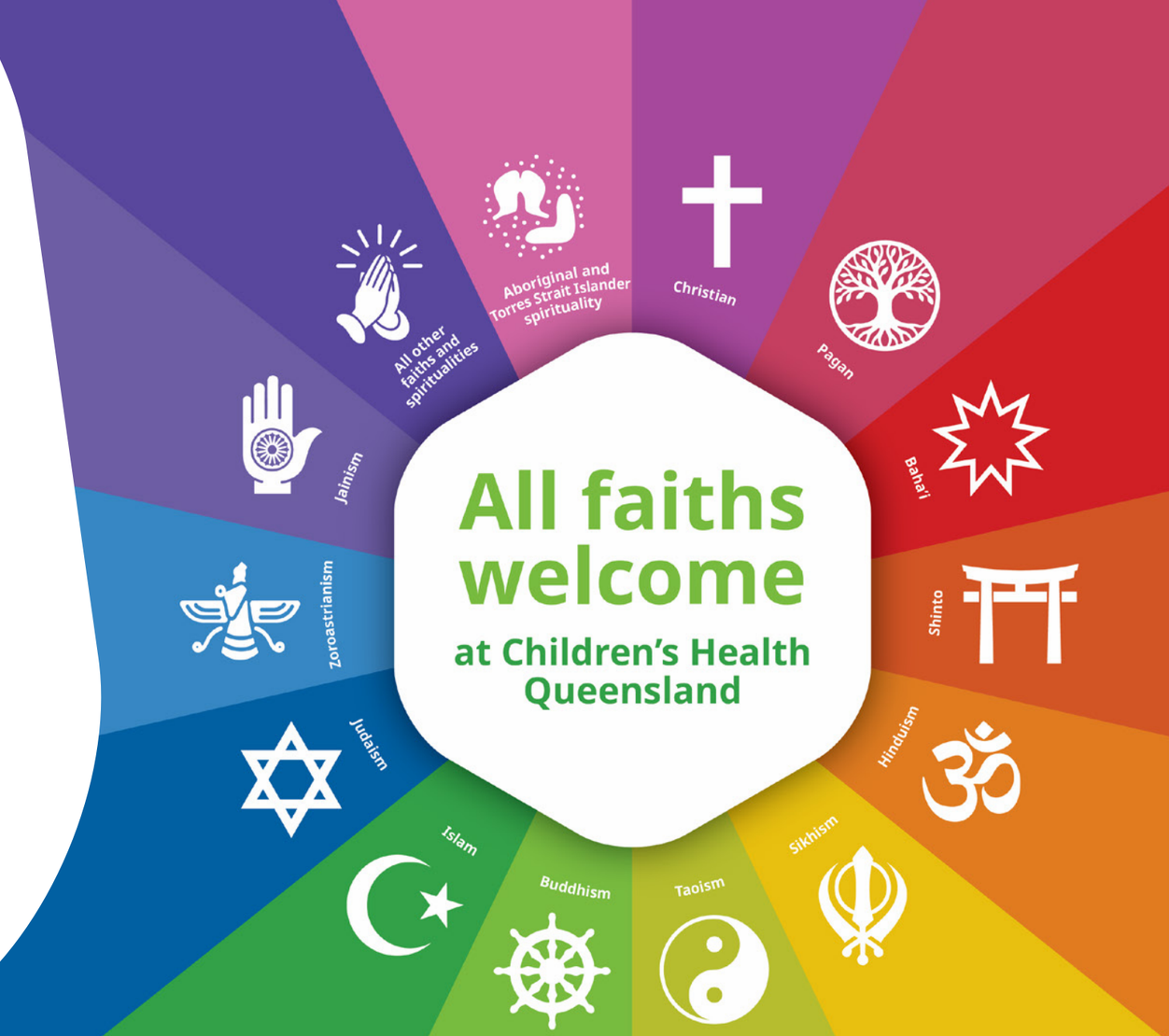
The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights and National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHS) Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers both advocate for culturally responsive and person-centred care, including spiritual and emotional support.

Purpose

The Children's Health Queensland (CHQ) multi-faith spiritual care service will:

- support children and families to draw on their spiritual and cultural strengths during care
- ensure compassionate, inclusive care aligned with CHQ values
- foster healing, meaning and connection
- provide resources and presence for staff wellbeing, resilience and reflective practice
- strengthen community partnerships through culturally appropriate engagement.

Aligned with Planetree person-centred care principles, as well as palliative care standards, this service honours the whole person—body, mind and spirit—and contributes to safe, inclusive and emotionally supportive paediatric healthcare.



Core foundations

The Spiritual Care Action plan aligns with the following United Nations (UN) frameworks:

- Article 14 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child—**freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.** Article 14 outlines that governments must respect a child's right to freedom of thought, belief, and religion. It also recognises that parents have the right and responsibility to guide their child in a way that suits the child's age and maturity.
- Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—**freedom of thought, conscience and religion.** Article 18 states everyone has the right to freedom of thought, belief, and religion. This right includes the freedom to:
  - change their religion, freedom or beliefs
  - express their belief through teaching, practice, worship, observance, either individually or with others, whether in public or in private.

Children's Health Queensland pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we walk, live and learn. We acknowledge and pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging.

Our spiritual care plan:
safe, included, respected

Our vision

CHQ are committed to environments where every child, family and staff member feels that their spiritual, cultural and religious needs are recognised, respected, included and supported as an essential part of healing and wellbeing.

Guiding principles

The *CHQ Spiritual Care and Multifaith Action Plan 2026-2029* (the *Spiritual Care Plan*) is aligned with:

- person centred care practices and Planetree aligned care
- national consensus statement: essential elements for safe and high quality paediatric end-of-life care
- CHQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy 2025-2028
- Queensland Multicultural Health Policy and Action Plan 2024-2029
- NSQHS Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers
- NSQHS Standard 5: Comprehensive Care
- Framework for Integration of Spiritual Care in Queensland Health Facilities.



Spiritual care acknowledges and supports the beliefs, values and hopes that sustain people during times of crisis and vulnerability

Patients and families

- Clear access pathways and service options for multi-faith care.
- Explore further opportunity for spiritual screening.
- Review access and faith appropriate responses to spiritual care.
- Improving spiritual care welcome information.

Staff spiritual wellbeing

- Enhance and expand staff faith service options at the Queensland Children's Hospital (QCH).
- Establish a consultative process with staff—called Rainbow of Faith—to support engagement and discussion about spiritual care and wellbeing.
- Promote and lead Spiritual Care Week activities.

Our spiritual care plan: *safe, included, respected*

Community and partnerships

- Maintain oversight, review and improvements of existing formal agreements with faith services and churches.
- Explore, identify and develop opportunity for new agreements to expand faith connections and options for consumers.
- Progress a co-design Rainbow of Faith process inviting community faith representatives.

Quality and inclusion

- Promote inclusion principles in staff orientation.
- Quality changes to the Chaplaincy Service - Pastoral Care procedure*.
- Develop a multi-faith cultural calendar for the QCH.
- Work collaboratively with clinical services to strengthen care where faith is important.

* To access the procedure via QHEPS, CHQ staff can search 'Chaplaincy Service – Pastoral Care' under clinical documents on the Governance eCatalogue page.

	What we want to achieve	What we will do
Patients and families	Clear access pathways and service options for multi-faith care	• Update the Chaplaincy Service – Pastoral Care procedure and Model of Care to expand options for referral pathways and service access points. • Identify referral options to ensure timely response to requests for spiritual care. • Identify new faith service options and choices, including live service links, prayer spaces and bedside prayer. • Review of website to promote access and referral.
	Explore further opportunity for spiritual screening	Introduce gentle questions to support families considering or seeking access to a spiritual care practitioner, such as: • do you have any spiritual or religious practices we should know about? • would you like to speak to a spiritual care practitioner?
	Review access and faith appropriate responses to spiritual care	• Review 24-hour roster model for access to multi-faith care, to ensure timely access for families. • Prioritisation for End-of-life spiritual care, updated in Chaplaincy Service – Pastoral Care procedure. • Enable faith appropriate rites and ritual at End-of-life and after death.
	Improving spiritual care welcome information	• Revise brochure and include in patient welcome packs. • Review web profile to include multi-faith service offerings.
Community and partnerships	Maintain oversight, review and improvements of existing formal agreements with faith services and churches	Review the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements with CHQ Procurement and Contract Management (PACM) and faith service signatories, including: • Anglican Church • Baptist Church • Catholic Church. This involves talking to the groups and providing advice to the CHQ PACM team to ensure the agreements are assessed and implemented.
	Explore, identify and develop opportunity for new agreements to expand faith connections and options for consumers	Promote and expand the new agreements with faith communities, including: • Brisbane Synagogue • Hindu Council of Australia (Queensland Chapter) • Islamic Council of Queensland • Queensland Buddhist Council.
	Progress a co-design Rainbow of Faith* process inviting community faith representatives	Organise sessions to foster a shared understanding of hospital and health service spiritual care needs and enhance partnerships. Aim of the sessions are to : • bring together consumers, staff and the communtiy to collaborate • develop an annual Rainbow of Faith Open Day to families, staff and multi-faith services.

*The Rainbow of Faith will be a consultative process to support engagement and discussion about spiritual care and wellbeing

	What we want to achieve	What we will do
Staff spiritual wellbeing	Enhance and expand staff faith service options at the QCH	• Muslim Jumu'ah prayers weekly each Friday from 12.30–1.00pm in the Multi-faith Centre • Catholic Mass chapel service, Thursday, 10am. • Further service options will be considered.
	Establish a consultative process with staff—called Rainbow of Faith—to support engagement and discussion about spiritual care and wellbeing	Facilitate discussions with staff and consumers to explore ways to highlight the importance of spiritual care for those who need it. Concept ideas include: • Mindful Monday drop-ins • use of the Multi-faith Reflection Space.
	Promote and lead Spiritual Care Week activities	Celebrate an annual event (each October) to raise awareness about multi-faith and spiritual care. Seek support from the wider organisation to promote activities.
Quality and inclusion	Promote inclusion principles in staff orientation	Create staff orientation materials to support inclusive, safe and respectful multi-faith practices for consumers and colleagues of all faith positions.
	Quality changes to the Chaplaincy service – pastoral care procedure	Introduce reporting measures to the Chaplaincy Service – Pastoral Care procedure.
	Develop a multi-faith cultural calendar for the QCH	Publication of a multi-faith and cultural calendar promoting CHQ commitment and respect for diversity and inclusion.
	Work collaboratively with clinical services to strengthen care where faith is important	Collaborate with clinical services to enhance care by recognising and supporting the faith practices that matter to families and staff. This includes celebrating: • Ramadan • Diwali • Easter • Hanukkah.



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The best care for *every* Queensland child.