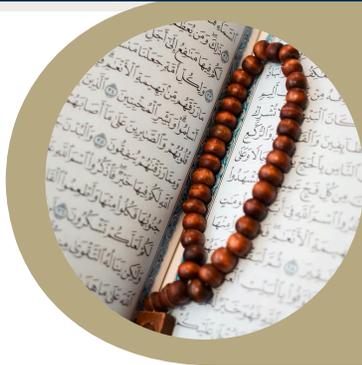




Muslim End-of-Life Care Info Sheet For Healthcare Facilities



Supporting Muslim patients and their families



Muslim Beliefs on Life and Death

Muslim patients often view life as a sacred trust from God rather than an absolute personal possession. While beliefs and practices vary among individuals and communities, this perspective commonly encourages efforts to preserve life and pursue medical treatment. At the same time, because life is understood as temporary and ultimately belonging to God, many Muslims may accept death when medical treatment is no longer beneficial.



Common Practices at End-of-Life

- Patients may like to hear the Quran being recited (in-person or audio)
- Orientation in the direction of the Qibla (direction of prayer / Mecca) when possible
- Increased visitation by family and community members
- Encouragement to recite the declaration of faith (shahadah), particularly as last words
- Request for presence of a Muslim chaplain or imam
- Not all Muslim patients will have an advance directive; practices and preparation differ



Family Involvement

- Family presence and participation in decision-making are highly valued
- Religious consultation may be requested before major decisions



Pain Management and Suffering

While Islamic tradition values patience and views suffering as a potential means of spiritual expiation, this should not be interpreted as a refusal of care.

- Pain relief is acceptable and often religiously encouraged.
- Healthcare providers should proactively offer pain management, as some patients may underreport pain if they view suffering as a spiritual "test." Reassure patients that seeking relief does not diminish their faith or spiritual reward.
- When appropriate, palliative care can be framed as maintaining the dignity of the body as a trust from God during the final stage of life.



Organ Donation

- Scholarly opinions differ
- Majority opinion permits organ donation to preserve life
- Families may request religious consultation before deciding



Common Practices - Immediately After Death

- Family may close the eyes and cover the body. Quiet prayer or Qur'an recitation is common.
- Emotional expression varies across cultures.
- Upon hearing news of death, Muslims commonly say: "Inna lillāhi wa inna ilayhi rāji'ūn" ("To God we belong and to Him we return." — Qur'an 2:156).



After Death

- Cremation is prohibited; burial should occur as soon as reasonably possible (ideally within 24 hours if feasible).
- The body is transferred for ritual washing, performed by trained community members or family of the same gender.
- Autopsy is generally discouraged unless legally required.
- Timely release of the body is greatly appreciated by the family and community.

How Hospitals Can Offer Support

Offer:

- Access to a Muslim chaplain or Imam
- Space for prayer and recitation
- Flexibility in visiting policies when possible
- Clear, compassionate communication, including ensuring families understand the patient's condition, treatment options, and the implications of a DNR.
- Balance family presence with patient comfort and medical needs
- Respectful handling and timely release of the deceased

Ask:

Are there any religious or cultural practices we should be aware of to better support your family?

COMMUNITY & RELIGIOUS SUPPORT

Local mosques can assist with:

- Religious consultation at end of life
- Funeral and burial coordination
- Ritual washing (ghusl) arrangements
- Family and community support

Partial List of Funeral Homes for Muslims:

- Janaza Services of Georgia (Norcross): 706 973 1529
- Youngs Funeral Home (Downtown): 678 576 4948
- Hines Funeral Home (Atlanta NW): 404 792 2400
- Hope Funeral Home (Riverdale): 404 697 2820

Contact Us:



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