



MEDIA RELEASE *For Immediate Release*

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A Turning Point for Spiritual Care in Victoria: Advocating for Vital Funding and Holistic Healthcare

Introduction: Spiritual Health Association (SHA) stands at a pivotal moment as imminent funding cuts pose a threat to the quality and reach of spiritual care in Victorian health services. These cuts not only challenge the delivery of faith-specific spiritual care, cherished by our diverse community, but also risk diminishing the standard of holistic healthcare that Victoria is known for. In response to these challenges, SHA has sent an [Open Letter to the Hon. Jacinta Allan, Premier of Victoria](#).

Background: For seven decades, government funding has been instrumental in enabling faith communities to provide tailored spiritual care in healthcare settings, reflecting the choices of 74% of Victorians affiliated with a faith. In the last year alone, this support facilitated spiritual care for over 16,500 patients across 40 hospitals in Victoria.

Specific Impact of Funding Cessation:

- The potential loss of specialised faith-specific care, undermining healthcare equity.
- A significant setback for SHA's ability to offer comprehensive support, quality assurance, and sectoral research.

Reputation and Leadership: Victoria is recognised nationally and internationally for its innovative approach to spiritual care, largely driven by SHA's efforts in line with the principles recognised by the World Health Organization. This reputation is now at risk.

Call to Action:

To Victorian Premier and Government Officials:

- Reconsider the decision to cut funding.
- Recognise the indispensable role of SHA in enhancing healthcare quality and safety.

To the Community:

- Voice support for the continuation of these essential services.
- Engage with SHA and promote awareness of spiritual care's importance.

To Health Services and Workers:

- Acknowledge the impact of SHA's contributions.
- Join the advocacy for sustained support and funding.

Conclusion: In the face of these challenges, SHA is more committed than ever to champion the [National Model for Spiritual Care in Health](#) that honours the diverse beliefs and needs of all Victorians. We seek to engage with potential funding partners, the community, and healthcare professionals, highlighting spiritual care's essential role in comprehensive healthcare. Our vision is steadfast: a healthcare system rooted in compassion, addressing the spiritual needs of every Victorian, inclusive of all faiths and worldviews. [END]

Spiritual Health Association is the peak body for spiritual care in the health sector.
For all media enquiries, contact Alicia Stafford: communications@spiritualhealth.org.au / 0416 887 254