

# Pastoral Care in Islam

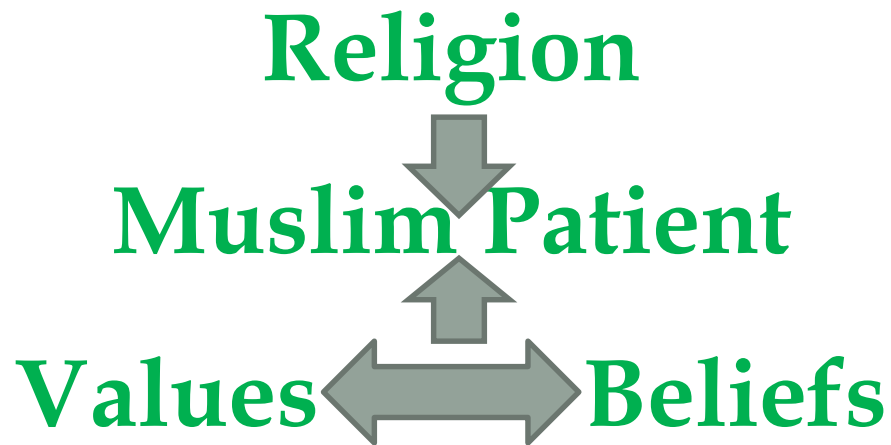
## A Historical And current day Narrative



ISLAMIC COUNCIL OF VICTORIA



# *Islamic Spiritual Care*



# Pastoral care an obligation since the beginning of Islam over 1400 years ago...

- In illustrating the empathy that believers are required to feel for each other,

The Prophet Muhammad (**P**eace **B**e **U**pon **H**im) is reported to have said,

**“The parable of the believers in their mutual love and mercy towards one another, is like that of a living body; If one part of it feels pain, the whole body suffers in sleeplessness and fever.”** (Muslim)

# In Islam Pastoral care is a right not an option!

The Prophet PBUH reportedly said,

**“The rights of a Muslim over another Muslim are six...**

- 1. When you meet him, you greet him with the *salaam*;**
- 2. when he invites you, you accept his invitation;**
- 3. when he consults you in a matter, you give him sincere advice;**
- 4. when he sneezes and praises Allah, you ask Allah to have mercy on him;**
- 5. when he is sick, you visit him;**
- 6. and when he DIES, you follow his funeral.”(Bukhari)**

# The great Importance of visiting the sick,

The Prophet PBUH, In a Hadith Qudsi\* (Sacred Narration), said:

**“On the Day of Resurrection, Almighty Allah will say, ‘O son of Adam! I became sick and you did not visit me!’ The person will say, ‘O Lord, how can I visit you and you are the Lord of all that exists!’ Allah will say, ‘Did you not know that my servant ‘so and so’ was sick, and you did not visit him? Did you not know that if you visited him, you would have found me with him?’”** (Muslim)

\*Hadith Qudsi ( Sacred Narration): is a narration (hadith) which, from the perspective of its meaning, is from Allah, the Exalted, and from the perspective of its wording, from the Messenger of God (PBUH).

[Jurjani, al-Ta`rifat]

# Virtues of visiting the sick regardless of their religion

- “Whoever visits a sick person is plunging into mercy until he sits down, and when he sits down he is submerged in it.” (*Silsilah Al-Saheehah*)

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

- “Whoever visits a sick person or visits a brother in Islam, a caller cries out to him from heaven: ‘May you be happy, may your walking be blessed, and may you occupy a dignified position in Paradise.’” (*Saheeh al-Tirmidhi*)

# More on The great reward awaiting those who visit the sick:

Prophet Muhammad PBUH said,

**“A Muslim visiting his sick brother will continue to be in the harvest of Paradise until he returns home.”** (Muslim)

Also he PBUH said:

**“When a Muslim visits his sick brother in the morning, 70,000 Angels pray for his forgiveness till the evening. And when he visits him in the evening, 70,000 Angels pray for his forgiveness till the morning”** (Tirmidhi)

# What did the Prophet do or say when visiting the sick:

- “If someone fell sick, the Prophet would pass his right hand over them while saying the following prayer:  
‘O Lord of humanity!, take away the suffering, bring the recovery, there is no cure but Your cure, a cure that leaves no illness.’  
(*Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim*)
- Also, from the practice of the Prophet when visiting the sick was to say: “No worry. It is a cleansing and purification, if God so wills.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhari*)



# Sabr “*Patience*” in this world a way to success in the Hereafter

- *And most certainly shall We try you through peril and hunger, and through loss of worldly goods, lives, or fruits [of labour], and give glad tidings to those who maintain a state of sabr: those who when calamity befalls them say, “Indeed we belong to God, and to Him is our return.” It is they upon whom their Sustainer’s blessings and grace are bestowed, and it is they who are guided. Qur’an 2:155-57.*
- *And the ones who maintain sabr in misfortune, hardship, and peril: those are the sincere and the pious. Qur’an 2:177.*
- *And those who maintain sabr and are forgiving of others: indeed, this is the heart of things/ focus for the heart. Qur’an 28:80.*
- *You who have attained consciousness of God – Exhibit Sabr when meeting adversity, and vie with one another in Sabr . Qur’an 3:100.*
- *Seek support through sabr and prayer. Qur’an 2:153.*

# The Glad tiding for enduring hardship with patience :

- *“And so with every hardship comes ease, Indeed, with every hardship comes ease.” Qur’an 94:5-6*
- *“and persevere whatever may befall thee. Lo! that is the commended attitude” Qur’an 31:17*
- *“I never allow to go to waste the efforts of any among you male or female.” Qur’an 3:195.*
- *“No soul can fathom what bliss lies in wait for them as a reward for all that they endured.” Qur’an 32:17*

# Illness expiates sins and earn rewards

## *Selection of The Prophet's sayings PBUH:*

- *“The believer will see in his record, on the Day of Resurrection, some merits he knew he did not earn, nor know anything about the good deeds responsible for them. He will be asked, “Do you recognize these?” So he will say, “I do not know how I came by these.” Then he will be told, “These are compensation for the supplications you made during your earthly life [which were not fulfilled in the manner you desired]”*
- *“One submitted to God who suffers discomfort, even that of a pricking of a thorn, Allah elevates his standing and wipe out his sins.”*
- *“One conscious of God, doesn't suffer hardship, illness, grief, or mental worry, unless sins are expiated with it.”*
- *“Be moderate and stand firm in the face of trouble that falls into your lot as one submitted to God, since this is expiation; even in stumbling on a path or being pricked by a thorn.”*
- *“One day's fever expiates a year's worth of sins.”*

# *Principles of Medical Ethics*

- **Necessity overrides prohibition** (insulin from pork, medications with alcohol).
- **Remove harm at every cost** if possible (quit smoking, risk factors, disease therapy).
- **Accept the lesser of two harms** if both cannot be avoided (abortion in risk to the pregnant woman).
- **Public interest overrides individual interest** (blood and organ donation).

# *Health, Religion & Ethics*

- **Contraception**
- **Fertility**
- **Cloning**
- **Medications**
- **Resuscitation**
- **Brain Death**
- **Organ Donation**
- **Euthanasia**
- **Death**
- **Life after Death**

# *Recommended:*

- **Blood and organ donation.** (giving and receiving).
- **Circumcision of male infants** (7<sup>th</sup> day). (Female circumcision as cultural practice rather than religious)
- **Breast feeding** (two years).
- **Human skin bank:** lawful for medical grafting and unlawful for cosmetics and misleading others.

# *Permissible:*

- **Autopsy:** for medical reason or required by law.
- **Reconstructive Surgery** (post mastectomy).
- **Do Not Resuscitate order:** when the treatment becomes futile.
- **Withdrawal or withheld therapy** is permitted in brain death.
- **Genetic Engineering:** to alter or cure diseased genes.
- **Abortion:** pregnancy that risk the mother's health, physically or mentally.
- **Contraception:** Islam permits all methods of contraception between husband and wife which are *not harmful*, are *reversible* and are *not causing abortion*.
- **Artificial insemination / IVF :** when using the husband's sperm and the wife's ovaries and uterus.
- **Death of one of the spouse terminates the marriage contract on earth**, thus frozen sperm from husband can not be used after his death.

# *Continue...*

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# *Discouraged*

- **Forced feeding the sick.**
- **Smoking**
- **Divorce**
- **Elective abortion**

# *Not Permissible*

- **Surgical contraception:** Sterilization: Vasectomy & tubal ligation. (Permitted for mentally sick or when pregnancy risks mother's life).
- **Sperm or ova donation.**
- **Fetal Sex Determination.**
- **Elective abortion** in a healthy mother.
- **Human milk bank.**
- **Human cloning** (permitted for tissues and organs).
- **Surrogacy Uterus:** Surrogacy involving a third person is not permissible.
- **Cosmetic surgery:** Changing the creation of God.

# Continued...

- **Food:** non Halal meat, pork or dead animal/bird.
- **Drink:** alcohol.
- **Active Euthanasia:** voluntary, non-voluntary and Involuntary are **not permissible** under any circumstances.
- **Passive euthanasia:** treatment is not obligatory when there is no hope of survival (palliative). However, patients should be provided with food, drink, nursing, and relief from pain until death.
- **Suicide:** include assisted suicide and physician's assisted suicide.
- **Murder.** "*take not life which Allah has made sacred*" Qur'an 6:151.
- **Others:** interest, theft, gambling and drugs.

# *Female Modesty*

- **Dress:** Provide a long-sleeved gown or allow to wear her own cloths.
- **Examination:** exposure of the patient's body parts should be limited to the minimum necessity.
- **Sex:** Sensitivity when asking a single, widow or a divorced about sexual habits.
- **Respect privacy** (opposite gender practitioners advised not to touch while talking or unnecessarily).
- **If opposite gender: avoid shaking hands** to prevent unnecessary embarrassment.

# *Palliative Care*

- **When death is inevitable**, Islam directs that the patient **be allowed to die without heroic measures**.
- Muslims disapprove of any medical care that may **hasten the death** of a patient.
- Muslims prefer to **die at home** if possible with the family providing comprehensive physical and spiritual support.
- **Death is not prepared for** with prior funeral arrangements and viewed as an interference in God's will.

# Death

- **Death definition:** when soul leaves the body.
- **Death is Inevitable:** “ *Every soul shall have a taste of death: In the end, to Us shall you be brought back.*” Qur’an 29:57
- **The dying person:** should slightly sit up or lie with their face towards Mecca. Ideally one should die with the Declaration of Faith on the lips (Shahada).
- **When death occur:** eyes should be closed; all connected tubes removed; all limbs flexed and the body straightened.

# *After Death*

- **Washing and burying** the body as soon as possible (preferably same day), on the right side, facing Makka.
- **Respect** for the body and prayers over the dead.
- **Recitation** of the whole Quran if possible.
- **Mourning should not be excessive**, as this would **disturb the dead** as well as show **lack of acceptance** of God's will and Destiny regarding death.

# *Funeral & Mourning Period*

- **Funeral is simple (king or pauper the same)**
- Deceased buried in a white shroud (men 3 pieces, women 5 pieces) without a **coffin**. Islam forbids **cremation**.
- **Official Mourning period is 3 days.** Wife mourns her husband 4 months and 10 days. She is not to remarry, leave her home unnecessarily, or wear decorative clothing during that period. Pregnant widow may remarry after childbirth if she chooses to.



# *Life After Death*

- **Angels visit the dead** in grave after burial and after the departure of last person/visitor.
- **Believers are comfortable** waiting till judgment day.
- **Judgement Day:** resurrection of bodies. (Heaven or Hell)
- **Child** is regarded sinless until the age of maturity. The soul of the child is automatically transferred to paradise.

# *Family Duties After Death*

- **Payment of Funeral expenses if they afford it, alternatively the Muslim community becomes responsible.**
- **Payment of his/her debts.**
- **Execution of his/her will.**
- **Distribution of the remaining estate.**
- **Keep ties with family and friends of diseased**
- **Continue to pray for diseased/spend charity on their behalf.**

# *Final thoughts*

- Listen to patient and family.
- Demonstrate sensitivity/empathy.
- Respect Patient's Values and Beliefs.
- Remain Flexible.
- Avoid Speculation.
- Respond to Who, What, Where, When?
- Provide Reassurance.
- Treat each patient as an individual ,
- Don't be afraid of asking, contact ICV, local mosque/Imam if more support deemed necessary