

The Urgency of Spiritual Care Training for Islamic Chaplains

Jarir Idris^{a*}, Anni Nurul Hidayati^b

^aFaculty of Da'wah and Communication, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia; ^bFaculty of Adab and Languages, Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

Objective: This article examines the urgency of spiritual care training for newly appointed Islamic chaplains and its contribution to strengthening their professional competencies in healthcare and social service settings in Indonesia. **Method:** This study employs a library research approach by critically reviewing scholarly literature on spiritual care, chaplaincy education, holistic healthcare, and the competencies required of Islamic chaplains. The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis to identify major themes related to training needs and competency development. **Results:** The findings reveal that the increasing demand for services addressing patients' physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs has positioned spiritual care as an essential component of patient-centered healthcare. Nevertheless, Islamic chaplains in Indonesia continue to face challenges, including the lack of standardized competency frameworks, systematic training curricula, and professional practice guidelines. The reviewed literature indicates that structured spiritual care training significantly improves chaplains' knowledge, practical skills, and professional competencies in assessing spiritual needs, delivering appropriate spiritual interventions, communicating religious values with cultural and spiritual sensitivity, providing emotional and existential support, and collaborating effectively within multidisciplinary healthcare teams. Furthermore, such training facilitates the internalization of core Islamic values, including *sabr* (patience), *tawakkul* (trust in God), *husn al-zann* (positive regard toward God and others), compassion, and sincerity, into professional practice. **Conclusion:** Developing and implementing a standardized Islamic-based spiritual care training program is a strategic initiative to enhance the quality of spiritual care services, strengthen the professional identity of Islamic chaplains, and address the growing need for holistic, integrated, and patient-centered healthcare and social services in Indonesia.

Keywords: Islamic Chaplains; Spiritual-Care; Spiritual-Care Training; Healthcare.

Article History:

Received : February 2026
Accepted : June 2026

Copyright © 2026 Authors
This is an open access article under
CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 license



Introduction

Nowadays, the importance of health has become a public concern. Health is not only seen physically but also non-physically. Therefore, health services are not limited to treating patients suffering from illnesses, but rather, health services at least look at the definition of health holistically. Holistic health services are now increasingly important, recognizing that humans suffer not only physically but also require attention to mental, social, and spiritual aspects (Rachmawati et al. 2017). In this context, hospitals, as one of the health care institutions, play a crucial role in providing comprehensive spiritual support for patients and their families (Nurhidayati and Handayani, 2018). Islamic chaplains in hospitals, as an integral part of the

multidisciplinary team, hold a significant responsibility in providing guidance, emotional support, and relevant religious understanding to Muslim patients facing illness and suffering (Rani et al., 2020). Hospitals are institutions that provide comprehensive health services, including emergency services, inpatient care, and outpatient care (Elvana et al. 2022).

The quality of the interaction between nurses and patients is a key determinant of patient satisfaction, requiring structured therapeutic interaction stages, from pre-orientation to termination (Kumajas, 2019). Islamic chaplains play a crucial role in providing ongoing services and support, striving to meet patient expectations. This requires the ability to provide comprehensive information and emphasize physical and mental health behaviors (Nuraeni, 2022). Illness often triggers existential questions, anxiety, and a sense of the meaning of life, especially for patients with chronic illnesses or terminal conditions. Therefore, Islamic chaplains are present to help patients find peace, strength, and hope in facing trials, through an approach grounded in Islamic religious values and spirituality.

In Fact, newly recruited Islamic chaplains in hospitals often face significant challenges in carrying out their duties effectively. Limited understanding of hospital protocols, professional ethics, and effective communication skills can hinder their ability to provide quality care. Furthermore, a lack of experience dealing with diverse patient conditions, cultural backgrounds, and religious beliefs can make it difficult to build good relationships and provide relevant support. Furthermore, the competence of Islamic chaplains is crucial because healthcare facilities provide services oriented towards patient safety in this world and the afterlife (Ardianto et al. 2021). Therefore, spiritual care training is crucial to equip new Islamic chaplains with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to provide optimal care. Comprehensive training for new Islamic chaplains will equip them with a deep understanding of the concept of spirituality in Islam, the principles of counseling, effective communication techniques, and knowledge of various illnesses and medical conditions commonly faced by patients (Arifin et al. 2022).

Through structured spiritual care training, Islamic chaplains will be equipped with the skills to conduct comprehensive spiritual assessments, identify patients' spiritual needs, and design appropriate interventions. This training will also help them develop skills in providing emotional support, resolving conflicts, and facilitating ethical decision-making processes consistent with Islamic values. More broadly, improving mental and spiritual health in the hospital environment also contributes to the creation of a more positive and supportive organizational culture.

Therefore, spiritual care training is not only an investment in the professional development of Islamic chaplains but also an investment in improving the overall quality of healthcare services, which will ultimately provide significant benefits for patients, families, and the community (Swihart et al. 2019). Improved performance of Islamic chaplains, achieved through effective training, also contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of spiritual care in hospitals (Laylani et al. 2023).

The importance of spiritual care training for new Islamic chaplains in hospitals is further reinforced by public demand for holistic, patient-centered healthcare services. The public is increasingly recognizing the importance of spiritual aspects in the healing and recovery process and expects healthcare professionals, including chaplains, to provide comprehensive and relevant support. Furthermore, the rapid pace of change presents significant challenges for the younger generation, such as identity crises, pressures from popular culture, and an increase in emotional and mental health problems (Putri et al. 2016).

Therefore, Islamic chaplains need to have a deep understanding of contemporary issues and be able to provide relevant guidance to patients from diverse backgrounds. With appropriate training, Islamic chaplains can help patients manage stress, develop effective communication skills, and enhance decision-making abilities (Rofiqi et al. 2023). This training will also equip Islamic chaplains with the skills to integrate Islamic spiritual values into their counseling and patient care practices, creating a more comprehensive and meaningful approach. Through a holistic approach that considers physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects, it is hoped that patients can achieve optimal recovery and improve their quality of life.

Method

The research method used was a literature review. The literature review approach is relevant to assessing the urgency of spiritual care training for Islamic chaplains (Afdhol 2021). This method allows researchers to gather in-depth information from various relevant written sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, research reports, and other documents discussing spiritual training, spiritual care in an Islamic context, and the needs and challenges faced by new Islamic chaplains (Assyakurrohim et al. 2022).

This literature review will provide a solid theoretical foundation for understanding the importance of spiritual care training, its principles in Islam, and the urgency of good training to equip chaplains with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide effective services. This literature review will be conducted systematically

by identifying relevant keywords, searching for credible and reliable sources, evaluating the quality and relevance of the information found, and synthesizing findings from various sources to generate a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Putri et al. 2016).

Literature research is a series of activities related to the collection of library data, which is then analyzed and processed into research materials (Pratiwi and Sari 2019). Data and information will be collected related to the challenges and implementation of spiritual care (spiritual services) for new Islamic chaplains, supported by data from national and international scientific journals and books as references (Saputra et al. 2024). In conducting this literature review, the first step is to formulate specific and focused research questions, such as “How is spiritual care important?”, “What skills and knowledge are most important for new Islamic chaplains in providing spiritual care?”, and “What are the challenges in initiating effective spiritual care training for Islamic chaplains?” Once the research questions are formulated, the next step is to conduct a comprehensive literature search using various academic databases, libraries, and other online sources.

This literature search will focus on sources discussing the training of Islamic chaplains, spiritual care in Islam, spiritual needs in Islam, and training models proven effective in improving spiritual care competencies. Content analysis will be used to identify key themes and information in each journal article and compile relevant findings (Shodiq 2023). Once the literature has been collected, the next step is to analyze and synthesize the information found. Qualitative data analysis will be used to identify patterns, themes, and key arguments emerging in the literature. This process involves reading and thoroughly understanding each source, identifying key concepts, comparing and contrasting findings from various sources, and identifying knowledge gaps that need to be filled by further research. Data obtained from the literature review will be analyzed using an interactive qualitative model (Sholeh 2023).

Results and Discussion

Spiritual care training is crucial for new Islamic chaplains in hospitals for several fundamental reasons related to patient needs, evolving healthcare practices, and the integration of spiritual values into the healing process. In the context of modern healthcare, a holistic approach is increasingly recognized as an integral part of patient care, focusing not only on physical and medical aspects but also on psychological, social, and spiritual well-being (Rachmawati et al. 2017). Spirituality plays a central role in providing strength, hope, and meaning to patients in the face of illness and

suffering (Patima and AB 2023). Islamic chaplains, as the frontline providers of spiritual support, need comprehensive preparation to provide effective and relevant services to patients. Training is essential to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand the various dimensions of Islamic spirituality, including fundamental religious principles, worship practices, ethical values, and sources of inspiration from the Quran and Hadith.

An important aspect of spiritual care training is understanding how to respond to the spiritual needs of patients with diverse backgrounds and conditions. Patients with chronic illnesses, for example, may experience profound feelings of loss, helplessness, and despair, requiring intensive spiritual support to find meaning and purpose in life amidst suffering. Patients facing difficult medical decisions, such as surgery or palliative care, may require spiritual guidance to make decisions that align with their values and beliefs. Patients nearing the end of life require compassionate and understanding spiritual support to prepare for death with calm and peace. Furthermore, spiritual care training will help Islamic chaplains develop effective therapeutic communication skills (Kumajas, 2019).

These skills include the ability to listen empathetically, ask relevant questions, provide emotional support, and convey reassuring and affirming spiritual messages. Effective communication also involves understanding the patient's body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, as well as responding appropriately to their non-verbal needs. In this context, Islamic chaplains need to understand that each patient has a unique spiritual experience and understanding, so the approach used must be tailored to their individual needs. Spiritual care training will also equip Islamic chaplains with knowledge of the ethics of spiritual care, including the principles of confidentiality, professionalism, and respect for cultural and customary differences.

The principle of confidentiality requires Islamic chaplains to strictly safeguard patients' personal information and not disclose it to others without permission. Professionalism requires them to act with integrity, honesty, and responsibility in all interactions with patients and colleagues. Respect for the customs and culture of the patient's region of origin requires them to treat all patients with respect and without discrimination, regardless of their background. Therefore, comprehensive spiritual care training will enhance the ability of Islamic chaplains to provide quality, patient-centered care, which ultimately improves patients' spiritual well-being and quality of life. This improvement in service quality is crucial for maintaining public trust in hospitals (Ardianto et al. 2021).

Furthermore, the urgency of spiritual care training is also driven by the growing awareness of the importance of integrating spiritual values into overall healthcare (Aprilia et al., 2024). This training can help new Islamic chaplains further enhance spiritual therapy (Ernawati et al., 2020). This integration benefits not only patients but also healthcare workers themselves. Islamic chaplains, who provide 24-hour support, must possess the knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes in accordance with the professional code of ethics (Nuraeni, 2022). Furthermore, through appropriate training, nurses and other medical personnel can convey messages containing spiritual values derived from the Quran and Islamic teachings, which have the potential to provide peace and inner strength to patients (Arifin et al., 2022). This can also help patients better understand the meaning of life and death, as well as increase their sense of gratitude and submission to Allah (Nurhidayati & Handayani, 2018).

Although the urgency of spiritual care training is clear, its implementation in the field may face various challenges. One major challenge is the lack of coordination among healthcare professionals, including nurses and doctors, to collaborate on the benefits and evaluation of spiritual care services. Another challenge is the lack of awareness and support from hospital management and related parties regarding the promotion of physical and mental health. Therefore, coordinated and sustained efforts are needed to address these challenges and ensure that spiritual care training can be implemented effectively and sustainably.

Solving these challenges and ensure the effective implementation of spiritual care training, a comprehensive and integrated strategy is required. Regular evaluation of the training program and spiritual care services provided is also crucial to ensure that they remain relevant and effective in meeting patient needs. This can be done through patient satisfaction surveys, interviews with healthcare professionals, and analysis of spiritual care performance data (Wahyuni 2019). Thus, spiritual care training has significant implications for the overall quality of healthcare services. By improving the competence of Islamic spiritual staff, hospitals can provide more holistic and patient-centered services, which not only pay attention to physical and psychological aspects, but also spiritual aspects.

Conclusion

Spiritual care training for new Islamic chaplains is an urgent need amidst the increasing complexity of patient and family needs in healthcare and social services. Literature reviews indicate that chaplains play a strategic role in providing spiritual, emotional, and religious support, particularly in crisis situations, terminal illness, or

trauma. However, the lack of formal training and competency standards in spiritual care prevents many chaplains from optimally fulfilling this role. The literature indicates that spiritual care training can enhance chaplains' understanding of patients' spiritual needs holistically, strengthen empathetic communication skills, and facilitate collaboration with other healthcare professionals. In an Islamic context, spiritual care based on the values of monotheism, patience, gratitude, and surrender (*tawakkal*) makes a significant contribution to patient peace of mind and quality of life. Therefore, it is imperative to immediately develop and implement a systematic and sustainable Islamic-based spiritual care training curriculum for new chaplains. This effort will not only strengthen the professionalism of chaplains but also address the need for spiritual services that align with the religious values of Indonesian society.

References

- Afdhol, A. F. (2021). Dilematis perencanaan karir mahasiswa akhir pendidikan agama Islam. *Journal of Education Humaniora and Social Sciences*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.34007/jehss.v4i2.821>
- Ardianto, Y. D., Jati, S. P., & Nandini, N. (2021). Analisis kebutuhan pelatihan berdasarkan kemampuan kerja jabatan (KKJ) dan kemampuan kerja pribadi (KKP) petugas Klinik Satmoko. *Media Kesehatan Masyarakat Indonesia*, 20(4), 283–290. <https://doi.org/10.14710/mkmi.20.4.283-290>
- Arifin, M. Z., Suliyono, S., Ghofur, A., & Askan, F. (2022). The Qur'anic therapeutic spiritual communication on the patient's spiritual problems in nursing care. *Jurnal At-Tibyan*, 7(1), 77–91. <https://doi.org/10.32505/at-tibyan.v7i1.3902>
- Assyakurrohim, D., Ikhrum, D., Sirodj, R. A., & Afgani, M. W. (2022). Metode studi kasus dalam penelitian kualitatif. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sains dan Komputer*, 3(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.47709/jpsk.v3i01.1951>
- Elvana, Y., Hariyati, H., & Setianto, B. (2022). Analisis SWOT untuk menentukan strategi bersaing saat masa pandemi COVID-19 pada Rumah Sakit Islam Surabaya. *Fair Value: Jurnal Ilmiah Akuntansi dan Keuangan*, 4(11), 5132–5146. <https://doi.org/10.32670/fairvalue.v4i11.1807>
- Kumajas, S. S. (2019). Hubungan pengetahuan perawat tentang komunikasi terapeutik dengan kepuasan pasien di Ruang Cendana Rumah Sakit Tingkat III Wolter Mongisidi. *Nursing Inside Community*, 2(1), 34–40. <https://doi.org/10.35892/nic.v2i1.270>
- Laylani, N., Nasution, S. L., & Halim, A. (2023). The effect of work experience, work ethos, training, and improving work achievement on employee performance at PT

- PLN UP3 Rantauprapat. *Daengku: Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Innovation*, 3(2), 313–321. <https://doi.org/10.35877/454RI.daengku1521>
- Nuraeni, N. (2022). Persepsi klien gagal ginjal kronis yang menjalani hemodialisa tentang dukungan psikologis perawat di Unit Pelayanan Hemodialisa RS Immanuel Bandung. *Formosa Journal of Applied Sciences*, 1(4), 595–608. <https://doi.org/10.55927/fjas.v1i4.1349>
- Nurhidayati, N., & Handayani, B. L. (2018). The role of spiritual guidance for the patient in reinterpreting pain at Al-Irsyad Hospital in Surabaya. *Jurnal Entitas Sosiologi*, 7(2), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.19184/jes.v7i2.16628>
- Patima, P., & AB, S. (2023). Development of spirituality assessment of nursing instruments in nurses at Labuang Baji Hospital Makassar. *International Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Science*, 7(1), 57–65. <https://doi.org/10.29082/ijnms/2023/vol7/iss1/435>
- Pratiwi, A. O. S., & Sari, N. R. (2019). Terapi wudu: Solusi layanan bimbingan dan konseling untuk mencegah perilaku delinkuensi pada siswa sekolah menengah berbasis Islam. *Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling Ar-Rahman*, 5(1), 55–61. <https://doi.org/10.31602/jbkr.v5i1.1840>
- Putri, W. S. R., Nurwati, N., & B., M. (2016). Pengaruh media sosial terhadap perilaku remaja. *Prosiding Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.24198/jppm.v3i1.13625>
- Rachmawati, N., Dwiantoro, L., & Warsito, B. E. (2017). Pengaruh metode drill dalam supervisi klinis terhadap spiritual care perawat. *JNKI (Jurnal Ners dan Kebidanan Indonesia)*, 5(2), 115–122. [https://doi.org/10.21927/jnki.2017.5\(2\).115-122](https://doi.org/10.21927/jnki.2017.5(2).115-122)
- Rofiqi, R., Iksan, I., & Mansyur, M. (2023). Melangkah menuju kesehatan mental yang optimal: Program inovatif di lembaga pendidikan Islam. *Edu Consilium*, 4(2), 76–86. <https://doi.org/10.19105/ec.v4i2.9237>
- Saputra, B. E., Simorangkir, G. V., Habibah, S., Chan, F., & Noviyanti, S. (2024). Konsep dasar ilmu pengetahuan sosial di sekolah dasar. *Ainara Journal*, 5(1), 50–58. <https://doi.org/10.54371/ainj.v5i1.328>
- Shodiq, S. F. (2023). Pemanfaatan e-learning dalam pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam. *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 5(2), 983–994. <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v5i2.4891>
- Sholeh, M. I. (2023). Strategi efektif dalam manajemen pendidikan untuk meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran. *Tarbawi Ngabar: Journal of Education*, 4(2), 139–150. <https://doi.org/10.55380/tarbawi.v4i2.462>

- Swihart, D., Yarrarapu, S. N. S., & Martin, R. L. (2019). *Cultural religious competence in clinical practice*. StatPearls. <https://europepmc.org/article/MED/29630268>
- Wahyuni, D. (2019). Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) sebagai upaya promotif dan preventif dalam perawatan paliatif di Desa Sakatiga. *Jurnal Pengabdian Sriwijaya*, 7(3), 814–820. <https://doi.org/10.37061/jps.v7i3.9777>