



## The United Church of Canada Saskatchewan Conference

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April 5, 2018

The Honourable Scott Moe  
Premier of Saskatchewan  
226 – 2405 Legislative Drive  
Legislative Building  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
S4S 0B3

The Honourable Jim Reiter  
Minister of Health  
204 – 2405 Legislative Drive  
Legislative Building  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Moe and Mr. Reiter:

Re: Spiritual Care in Saskatchewan

I am writing this letter as the President of Saskatchewan Conference of The United Church of Canada. According to the most recent figures, the United Church has 20,458 members and many thousand more adherents in 250 churches across Saskatchewan. In addition, from the latest census we know that 19.5% of people in Saskatchewan claim affiliation with the United Church.

At the recent meeting of the Saskatchewan Conference Executive, the decision was made to call upon the Government of Saskatchewan:

- to reinstate professional multi-faith spiritual care staff within provincial healthcare, and,
- to immediately include within its Ministry of Health budget the necessary funds to re-establish departments of Spiritual Care and to staff them with well-qualified professional, multi-faith spiritual care practitioners.

In health care situations, people experience many stresses and losses all of which have spiritual dimensions which are connected with questions of the fundamental nature of reality and being and which may or may not include religious concerns.

Spiritual care practitioners are the only healthcare professionals trained specifically to engage such questions with patients, residents, and their families and in a system that



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prides itself on holistic and patient-centered care, they are the only professionals trained and equipped to care for the spirit.

Increasingly, evidence shows that professional spiritual care in health care improves patient, resident and family experiences and improves medical outcomes. By eliminating the services of multi-faith spiritual care professionals, patients, residents and families will no longer receive such emotional and spiritual support. This may result in already-busy health care workers needing to care more intentionally for secondary stress-related health concerns.

Spiritual care professionals have achieved at least the equivalent of a master's degree level of education, as well as multiple units of nationally-regulated spiritual care training. They are equipped uniquely by this education and training to care for the complex emotional and spiritual needs of all people.

Accreditation Canada is an accreditation body that works with patients and residents, policy makers and the public to improve quality of health and social services for all. It requires that patients and residents have access to adequate spiritual care. The Province of Saskatchewan is the only Canadian province not funding spiritual care in public health institutions.

As such, we ask that the Government of Saskatchewan reinstate multi-faith spiritual care staff within provincial health-care institutions and budget the necessary funds to re-establish Spiritual Care Departments with well qualified professional staff.

If you would like to discuss this issue further, please feel free to contact me at 1-306-862-4108.

In Peace,

Rev. Krystal Sheremeta  
President  
Saskatchewan Conference  
The United Church of Canada

cc. The Honourable Ryan Meili  
Leader of the Opposition  
265 – 2405 Legislative Drive  
Legislative Building  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
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