

RESUMO - SAÚDE E ESPIRITUALIDADE

THE INFLUENCE OF FAITH ON PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL OUTCOMES IN PATIENTS WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

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Introduction: The diagnosis of serious illnesses represents a critical turning point in a patient's life, associated with emotional distress, uncertainty, and changes in one's perception of self and existence, impacting mental health, quality of life, and the meaning of life. This moment marks a rupture in one's life trajectory, leading to reflection on finitude, purpose, and values. In this context, faith and spirituality emerge as important coping resources, potentially intensifying the search for spirituality, acting as emotional support and influencing adherence to treatment and outlook on life. Objective: To understand the influence of faith on psychological and clinical outcomes in patients with serious illnesses. Methods: This is an integrative literature review conducted in the Virtual Health Library and PubMed: U.S. National Library of Medicine databases, using the Medical Subject Headings from U.S.National Library of Medicine: Critical Illness, Prognosis, and Religion. Original articles in English published in the last 10 years and available in full text were included. Studies that did not directly

address the topic were excluded. Results: Faith was found to have a significant influence on psychological outcomes, being associated with reduced anxiety and depression, as well as a greater ability to deal with the disease, treatment and well being. Spirituality contributes to hope, resilience, and a sense of purpose, facilitating adaptation to illness. Regarding clinical outcomes, an association was observed with better quality of life, greater adherence to treatment, and a possible impact on prognosis. Religious support also contributed to well-being and the perception of care. On the other hand, negative religious coping (believing that the illness is a punishment from God) was related to greater emotional distress. Therefore, the influence of faith on coping with critical illness depends on the patient's personal experience Conclusion: The diagnosis of serious illnesses has far-reaching impacts on patients' lives, and spirituality emerges as an important coping resource. When positive, it is associated with improved mental health, quality of life, and treatment adherence. Thus, incorporating the spiritual dimension into healthcare practice promotes more humanized and comprehensive care.

Palavras-chave: critical illness; prognosis; religion.