CASC/ACSS Conference 2015
- Conference Workshops

D4 Fri Apr 17 PM   *Spiritual Care without God: Understanding and working with non-believers*

Description: While CASC has increasingly reflected the diversity of Canadians' religious beliefs, secular patients do not generally access spiritual care professionals (chaplains). This workshop will promote insight into non-believers' worldviews. In particular, we will explore one life-affirming, compassionate worldview: secular humanism, which, despite its atheistic premise, is compatible with the humanistic orientation of CPE. We will offer approaches for spiritual care providers to communicate with non-believing patients in their joint quest for meaning. Spiritual care providers may discover that they have already been employing many secular humanist frames of reference in their work and that they are skilled at existential psychotherapy without "God-talk".

Target/Style: Spiritual Care professionals/chaplains working with those who identify as atheist, secular, agnostic or humanist - Beginner or Advanced – Integrated

Presenters: Klara Siber (Sieber) - Simic is a spiritual care professional at Toronto Rehab, University Health Network. Klara began her undergraduate studies curious about the relationship between psychology and religion. In 1998 she graduated with a degree in Religious Studies and later a Master of Divinity Counselling degree from Tyndale University and Seminary (2002). As part of her graduate education, she completed internships in counselling and family therapy. In 2003, she finished a clinical residency in spiritual care and took a position of a spiritual care professional in the Department of Critical Care Medicine at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. Her work experiences in Intensive Care, particularly the ethical complexities around the use of medical technology at end-of-life, have encouraged her to pursue further studies in Bioethics. In 2010, she received a Master of Health Sciences (Bioethics) from the University of Toronto. Over the past 11 years, Klara has participated in numerous projects to improve patient and family centred care. Her research interests include ways in which spiritual care improves palliative care. She joined the UHN Spiritual Care Team in June of 2014. Klara is a certified member of the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care and member of the Association for Death Education and Counselling. Klara enjoys connecting with nature. Her favourite activities include singing, travel, skiing, long walks and camping. **Ralph Lewis** obtained his MD (MBBCh) in 1990 at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, where he grew up. He completed residency training in Psychiatry at the University of Toronto in 1996 and went on to do a two year clinical research fellowship jointly at Sunnybrook and CAMH (Clarke Institute of Psychiatry), with a concurrent Masters of Science in Neuroscience at the University of Toronto. He has held a staff physician appointment at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre since 1998, with a faculty appointment as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. Dr. Lewis's clinical work is with youth and young adults with complex mood, anxiety and psychotic disorders and other mental health problems, as well as with adults

of all ages with mental health problems associated with cancer, including patients with terminal illness. In the last several years, Dr. Lewis has been increasingly interested in the role of belief systems in mental health, as well existential struggles faced by patients confronting life threatening or life altering illnesses. He identifies personally as a secular humanist, but has extremely close personal and professional relationships with people of strong religious faith, and takes an active interest in understanding those faith traditions. Ralph lives in Toronto with his wife and three children.