

Health Care Providers' Handbook on  
**MUSLIM PATIENTS**

**With compliments of**

The Islamic Council of Queensland

PO Box 204

Sunnybank Qld 4109

# HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS HANDBOOK ON MUSLIM PATIENTS

## FOREWORD

Islam is the core of the culture of many migrants from the Middle East, Bosnia, Turkey, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Fiji and Southern Africa. In fact, Muslims from all corners of the globe can be found within our Queensland community.

Muslims may feel less alone if health services staff are more aware of Islamic culture and needs. Hospitals and other institutions dealing with the public, and any professional who may come in contact with Muslims in the course of their professional duties, will find this booklet of great benefit.

The Chairman  
Islamic Council of Queensland  
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## INTRODUCTION

The material presented here is for the information of all who are concerned with the medical, social and welfare needs of Muslims. An understanding of Islam is essential for all health providers dealing with Muslims, to improve care and attendance of patients and to achieve better compliance with medications. This publication deals briefly with those aspects of Islam which would affect treatment of social, psychological, welfare and medical problems of Muslims.

All health providers would be confronted by a Muslim patient at some stage. Islam is poorly understood in Australia. Islam is a universal religion comprising all nationalities of the world. One must endeavour to differentiate between ethnic customs and the Islamic tradition. Islam places the onus of practising religion on the individual. Discussion with Muslim patients and/or relatives will be helpful for maintaining the individual approach so vital to effective care.

Some of the older generation Muslims coming from such countries as Lebanon and Turkey understand very little English. To live in a country where their religion is not well understood and sometimes ridiculed often leads many Muslims not to seek medical attention until the disease has reached an advanced stage.

The preservation of life overrides all the guidelines presented in this publication. Islam allows exceptions to its rules in emergency situations but these must truly be life threatening.

The information contained in this booklet is of a general nature. The text has been condensed for easier reference into three sections. For more information on a particular subject, please contact the Islamic Council of Queensland.

Section One:	Guidelines for health staff taking care of Muslim patients.
Section Two:	Information about specific aspects of Islam that affect health.
Section Three:	Background information about Islam.

## SECTION ONE: GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH SERVICES

**Implementation of these guidelines would make the stay of a Muslim patient in hospital more acceptable and comfortable. It would also ensure that the care being provided was of the highest quality possible for Muslim patients. The recommendations cover aspects of clinical care, food services, religious observance and visiting arrangements amongst others.**

### HYGIENE

Washing facilities should be made available in the ward and in the toilets in the form of a simple plastic container for the individual to wash his or her private parts.

In-patients who are bedridden, special care should be taken with cleanliness, especially with discharges, urine and stools and bleeding from any orifice, bearing in mind that the patient may wish to pray in bed. A beaker or flask of water should be made available to bedridden Muslim patients whenever they use a bed pan. Bed baths must be given by members of the same sex.

### RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

If possible, a room should be made available as a prayer room. The hospital chapel may be used for this purpose provided no icons are present. The hospital or health institution should know the direction of Mecca, ie. roughly west-north-west in Australia. This could then be easily pointed out to the patient as all Muslims face Mecca for prayer.

### FOOD SERVICES

All kitchen staff should be aware that only halal meat (ie. meat slaughtered according to religious requirements) must be given to Muslim patients. They should also be made aware that Muslims do not eat pork or any other pig meat and its products eg. bacon, ham sausages, etc. Separate utensils should be used. For example, the knife used for slicing pork must not be used to cut anything to be given to a Muslim.

Halal food should be made available to Muslim patients. If this is not possible, Muslims should be given the choice of having seafood, eggs, fruit and vegetables.

Depending on the ethnic background of Muslim patients, they may prefer to eat from separate plates with their fingers rather than from one plate with a knife and fork. Ask the patient, the family, interpreters or community representatives.

Water is traditionally taken at meals, therefore ensure that it, plus a glass to drink from, is readily available.

Be aware that Muslims are advised not to eat to capacity and always to share food. Expect small amounts of uneaten food but try to identify problems with food acceptance if large amounts are left untouched.

When serving food or drinks allow for receipt in the right hand. Muslims consider the left hand unclean since it is used to cleanse oneself after going to the toilet. Therefore when eating, or giving or receiving only the right hand may be used.

Handwashing before and after meals is particularly important to Muslims. Bathroom facilities are readily available to ambulant patients, however washing facilities should be made available to bedridden patients at meal times.

## CLINICAL OR NURSING CARE

It is preferable for a female Muslim to be cared for by females and a male Muslim by males. This is most important during confinement when strict privacy is very essential. Only female health workers should be present. Exposure should be kept to a minimum. The position of delivery should be discussed and the woman given the choice. There is no reason, except for modesty or embarrassment, that a husband should not be present during childbirth.

Where a choice exists, medicines containing alcohol should not be used. In emergency situations, this rule does not apply if an alternate drug is not available, but this should be explained to the patient. If the medication is absolutely necessary, then Islam permits its use.

Present medical examination techniques should be modified where possible so that as little of the patient is exposed as possible, whilst not inhibiting the medical procedures. For example, in Ireland great emphasis is placed on modesty, where a screen separates the woman at the waist from the examiner performing a vaginal or rectal examination. Even the legs are draped.

Facilities should be provided for male circumcision if required.

Do not touch the head or hair, in a good natured or affectionate way, unless during a medical examination. Muslims do not like their heads being touched. The head is also used during daily prayers; the forehead being touched to the ground numerous times.

Strict adherence to fasting may lead to problems with medication and compliance. The midday dose will not be taken unless the schedule is reorganised, eg. three times a day may be early morning, while breaking fast and at bed time. Once or twice daily doses would be more practical where applicable.

## PATIENT'S RIGHTS

Patients should be allowed to be dressed according to their requirements. Suitable clothing should be made available or requested from family so that the patient can be covered appropriately.

Patients must be informed that they have the right to refuse to be examined by medical students. This information should be given to them in their own language if they do not understand the English language.

In these circumstances informed consent must not be only in English. It must be verbal as well as written in their own language so that the issue is fully understood. In circumstances where the patient has difficulty communicating in English, a professional interpreter should be arranged.

## BILINGUAL STAFF

Maternity hospitals should employ bilingual, (eg. English/Arabic and English/Turkish Muslim health workers) where possible and if the demand exists. This would be an invaluable resource.

## MATERNITY SERVICES

After delivery, the placenta (which is part of the baby) should be offered to the parents for disposal by burial in accordance with Islamic tradition.

Intra-Uterine Death. A foetus after the age of 120 days is regarded as a viable baby. A miscarriage or an intra-uterine death occurring after 120 days after conception would require burial. Therefore, foetuses from such events must be given to the parents for proper burial. The foetus is given a name before burial.

## VISITING ARRANGEMENTS

Where possible, arrangements should be made to accommodate large numbers of visitors in hospitals.

## SOCIAL WORK

A list of Muslim patients should be made available to hospital social workers and Islamic religious leaders associated with the hospital.

If it is necessary for a Muslim child to be placed in temporary care while a patient is hospitalised they should be placed with Muslim families due to their specific dietary and lifestyle needs. This can be arranged through the Islamic Council of Queensland or other Islamic organisations.

When dealing with a case involving a child or adolescent, a Muslim social worker should be contacted to deal with his or her specific needs.

## FOR A TERMINALLY ILL PATIENT

If a patient is in coma, it is preferred that the face of the patient be turned to face Mecca, ie. roughly west-north-west.

It is important for Muslims to recite the Qur'an or prayers in front of the patient or in a room close by. The relatives of many patients will go out of their way to conceal this practice so as not to bother the hospital staff or not to feel embarrassed. The relatives should be invited to pray if they wish.

The hospital chapel may be used for prayers, provided no icons are present in the chapel.

A cross must not be placed on the patient. A cross must not be left in the private room.

Access to a religious leader should be made available if not already arranged by the relatives. Contact the Islamic Council of Queensland.

A member of the family may wish to remain with the patient at all times, in line with medical arrangements as necessary.

## TRANSPLANTS

Transplants of various human organs are acceptable in Islam; this would include blood transfusions. Certain conditions have to be fulfilled, namely:

- the donor must not be at risk while alive (eg. blood transfusion, kidney transplants);
- the donor's and/or family's permission has to be obtained. Organ donations should not be the outcome of compulsion, family embarrassment, social or other pressures, exploitation for financial or other reasons.
- no vital organ is to be removed while the person is alive. In heart transplantation, the donor has to be clinically dead before the heart is removed.

## FOR A PATIENT WHO HAS JUST DIED

The face of the deceased should preferably be turned towards Mecca, ie. west-north-west.

The face and indeed the whole body of the deceased must be covered by a sheet.

The body must be handled as little as possible. Muslims believe that the body 'feels' pressure and pain numerous times more than that applied. Muslims also believe that the soul remains close to the body until burial.

The body must be handled with utmost respect only by a person of the same sex.

Relatives may wish to pray close to the body or in a room close by.

Islam prohibits post-mortems. However, the statutory laws of the country must be followed with respect to post-mortems.

A cross must never be placed on the body.

The body should not be washed. Islamic washing of the body is done before burial (Ghusl before burial). If no relatives are available then the Islamic Council should be contacted.

Muslim burials are performed as soon as possible after death, sometimes on the same day.

## SECTION 2: INFORMATION ABOUT ISLAMIC BELIEFS AFFECTING HEALTH CARE

There are a number of Islamic religious beliefs which will affect the attitudes and behaviour of Muslim patients in hospital. It is important that health staff have some understanding of these attitudes and beliefs so that more appropriate care may be provided. These are listed under headings to allow the easy access to information you are seeking.

## FOOD

Pig meat and all its products (ham, bacon, etc) are forbidden to Muslims, together with wild animals that use their claws or teeth to kill their victims, all birds of prey, rodents,

reptiles, worms and the like, and dead animals and birds that are not slaughtered properly according to Islamic rites.

Alcohol and any other intoxicating substance are prohibited in Islam.

Muslims eat halal meat, ie. the animal must be slaughtered according to Islamic rites. This practice is similar to the Jewish practice to make their meat kosher.

Muslims are allowed to eat all seafood and dairy products. Halal meat is easily available in Brisbane.

## RANGE OF FOOD CHOICE

Foods approved (HALAL) and forbidden (HARAM) by the Islamic faith are summarised in the table opposite:

### APPROVED (HALAL)

#### **Meat and Substitutes:**

Chicken, beef, lamb killed by Muslim slaughtermen

All seafood

Eggs cooked in water, butter, vegetable margarine or vegetable oil.  
Dried beans and lentils, baked beans

#### **Milk and milk products**

Milk, yoghurt, cheese, ice cream made without animal fat  
eg tofu ice cream, gelati or sherbet

#### **Fruit and Vegetables**

All fruit or vegetables raw, dried, canned or cooked using water, vegetable fats or butter

#### **Bread and Cereals**

All breakfast cereals. Bread, cakes and biscuits prepared without animal fat other than butter (read labels). Rice cooked without animal fat. Pasta

#### **Fats and Oils**

Butter, vegetable margarine, olive oil, peanut oil  
vegetable oils.

### FORBIDDEN (HARAM)

Pork and all pig products (bacon, ham salami)

Ice cream made with animal fat

Any fried or roasted in lard or dripping

Lard, dripping, suet, other animal fats (except butter) and any other foods made with or cooked in them.

**Beverages**

Tea, coffee, water, fruit juices, soft drinks, mineral and soda water, cordials

Alcohol and foods cooked with alcohol eg. trifles, puddings, sauces

**Soups**

Any made without pork, ham or animal fats

Any with ham bone stock

**Desserts**

Any without alcohol, lard, dripping or suet eg. fruit-based, custards, tofu ice cream, gelati or sherbet, puddings made with butter or vegetable margarine, egg dishes, rice dishes.

Any with alcohol, lard, suet dripping, ice cream with animal fat

**Miscellaneous**

Coconut milk, Spices, including chilli, curry powder. Pickles, chutneys

Gelatine (pork product)  
Vanilla essence (alcohol base)

**DRESS**

A Muslim is not allowed to expose his or her body. A female is required to be covered from head to ankles. Only her face, hands and feet may be exposed. The Qu'ran clearly defines this and also details the family members in front of whom she may appear without her head cover. One may find various adherence to this dress code depending on the individual.

A male is not allowed to expose the area between his umbilicus and his knees.

**FASTING**

Fasting in the month of Ramadan is compulsory for all healthy, adult Muslims on reaching puberty. Every individual is responsible for his or her own fast.

Fasting begins an hour before sunrise and ends at sunset. It is a total fast with abstinence from any food or drink. Smoking is not allowed. Gargling is acceptable as long as no fluid goes down the throat.

Besides fasting in Ramadan, some Muslims also keep optional fasts. Fasting is a purification inwardly and outwardly.

Exempted from fasting are pregnant, lactating or menstruating women, the ill and travellers.

Islam puts the onus on the sick person to decide whether to fast, having consulted a Muslim physician. The Islamic Council of Queensland may be contacted for the name and telephone numbers of practising Muslim physicians.

## **WOMEN IN ISLAM**

Islam is often misunderstood by some people who believe that it degrades and oppresses women. In fact, according to the Qur'an men and women are equal and should be treated as such.

The Muslim woman has the right to choose her own husband. Both are considered equal partners in life. As a wife, she has a right to kind and just treatment by her husband, which she should reciprocate. She has a full right to participate in any decision, domestic or political. She can carry her own surname and does not lose any rights after marriage. She has full rights over the money that she earns.

Islam considers the raising of children in a careful and upright manner with discipline to be vital. Hence, the role of the housewife and mother is encouraged and greatly respected.

## **CARE OF THE ELDERLY**

The elderly in the community are regarded with deep respect. They are given priority in all walks of life. The Qur'an and the Sunnah encourage the care of the elderly. According to the Prophet Muhammad, Heaven would be found under the feet of one's mother. Therefore, the care of the elderly is regarded as an avenue to Heaven, another expression of worship.

Whether they live together with their children or separately, parents are usually consulted in all decision making processes.

## **NEWBORN**

It is important for a newborn child to have the call to prayer recited in each ear soon after birth. It is possible that the parents may want a learned person in Islam to perform this task.

Circumcision is performed on all male children. The timing of this varies but it must be done before puberty.

A tradition of the Prophet Muhammad, of removing the hair of the new-born soon after birth is practised by many Muslims.

## **EMBRYO EXPERIMENTATION**

Embryo experimentation is forbidden in Islam. This is regarded as tantamount to tampering with God's creation.

## **IN-VITRO FERTILISATION**

In-vitro fertilisation and artificial insemination are permitted in Islam provided that the husband's sperm is used. Donor sperm is strictly prohibited.

## **ABORTION**

Abortion is not permitted in Islam unless there are very strong medical reasons.

The first four months of pregnancy are recognised as a critical period for the development of the foetus. Abortion during this period for strong medical reasons is allowed. However, after the four month period has passed, the foetus is regarded as 'alive'. The termination of pregnancy after this stage is regarded as murder.

If pregnancy constitutes a serious threat to life of the mother, then an abortion is permissible irrespective of the period of gestation.

## **CONTRACEPTION**

Islam recognises that only God has the power to give children to couples. No course of action to alter this will make any difference to numbers in the family

Reversible contraception: the use of the pill, intra-uterine devices, diaphragms, spermicides and condoms are not forbidden in Islam but are regarded as undesirable. The use of these methods must be indicated on medical grounds where pregnancy is contra-indicated and must not cause harm to the user. The husband and wife must seek each other's permission to practice contraception.

The rhythm method and coitus interruptus are acceptable forms of contraception. The husband is not allowed to practise coitus interruptus without his wife's permission.

Irreversible contraception: tubal ligations and vasectomies are not desirable.

If pregnancy is contra-indicated on medical grounds, whether physical or mental, contraception in such a case is permissible.

## **VISITING THE SICK**

Strong emphasis is placed on the virtues of visiting the sick.

The sick Muslim is usually happy to receive many visitors.

It is a requirement of the family members of the sick Muslim to notify as many people as possible of the illness. This is usually done by the close relatives.

## **GRIEVING AND BEREAVEMENT**

Death is seen as something predestined by God. It is only the beginning of eternal life. The more pious families may thus appear inappropriately calm and accepting by Western standards.

In Islam, grieving is allowed for only three days maximum.

Widows may marry after a period of four months and ten days, during which time she must have at least one menstruation. This is to ensure that she is not pregnant.

A pregnant widow may remarry after a period of 42 days have elapsed since the birth of her child. This child must bear the name of the deceased.

The outward show of grief in the form of chest banging or wailing is forbidden.

## **EUTHANASIA**

Euthanasia is forbidden in Islam. It is regarded as murder by the person who is performing it and suicide for the person ending his/her life.

## **SUICIDE**

Suicide is forbidden in Islam.

## **MENTAL ILLNESS**

A person diagnosed as having a mental illness, eg. psychosis, dementia, mental retardation etc., is absolved from all the obligatory requirements in Islam. For instance, they are not required to pray obligatory prayers, fast or perform their pilgrimage. In the first instance the family (if any) is responsible for the patient. If this is not possible, his or her care becomes the responsibility of the State.

## **THE FAMILY UNIT**

Marriage is something solemn and sacred. It is a contract to which God himself is the First Witness and the First Party. It is concluded in His name, in obedience to Him and according to His ordinances.

Husbands and wives have definite responsibilities which are complementary to each other. They must show mutual respect at all times.

God enjoins on men and women benevolence towards their parents.

Mothers enjoy more recognition and a higher honour in the sight of God than fathers.

The parent-child relationship is also complementary. Each is required by God to obey and show love and respect to the other.

The privacy of family members living in the same house and others is clearly detailed in the Qur'an. Extended family systems are encouraged in Islam, to provide extra care for the young and the elderly.

One of the most inalienable rights of the child in Islam is a right to life and equal chances in life. No discrimination of any kind is permitted.

Muslim men are permitted to have up to four wives. This is not a recommendation but a permission given by God under certain circumstances (for example, to compensate for the loss of men in wars; to minimise prostitution and adultery; where a previous wife is so disabled that she cannot care for her family; where a wife is unable to bear any children). It is a requirement that all wives be treated equally.

Man is ordained by God to extend his utmost help and kindness to other family members and relations.

## **HUMAN RELATIONS**

The unity of mankind is conceived in the light of the common parentage of Adam and Eve. Every human being is a member of the universal family. Because of this common bond, there is no room for racial prejudice, social injustice or second-class citizenship. The Qur'an and Sunnah eliminate racial pride and claims of national or ethnic superiority.

Islam emphasises disciplining the basic drives, the impulses of sex and anger. When these are left uncontrolled, they can destroy peaceful and harmonious human existence.

Pre-marital sex and adultery are strictly prohibited in Islam. From puberty on, males and females are not allowed to mix freely unless they are family members. All manner of talking, walking, looking and dressing in public that may instigate temptation, arouse desire, stir suspicion or indicate immodesty and indecency are prohibited.

There is no limit to sexual enjoyment between husband and wife, as long as it occurs in private. Sexual intercourse is forbidden during menstruation.

In Islam both sexes are equal. Their roles, of course, are different, as are their biological and psychological needs. The rights of women are equal to those of men, although not necessarily identical. The Qur'an strongly reproaches those who believe women to be inferior to men. Men are appointed guardians over women as they are responsible for providing food, shelter and clothing for their wives and children.

Homosexuality and lesbianism are not permitted in Islam.

## **DIVORCE**

If a husband and wife cannot live together in peace, where irreconcilable differences exist, Islam makes provision for divorce to both husband and wife after all attempts at reconciliation have failed. It is considered a grave sin to divorce without significant reason.

## **GAMBLING**

All forms of games of chance are prohibited in Islam, this would include raffles and sweeps.

## **INHERITANCE**

The disposal of a deceased's estate is detailed in the Qur'an and practising Muslims usually follow this.

## **FOSTER CARE**

Foster care, especially of orphans, is encouraged in Islam provided that:

- the child is allowed to retain the name of the biological parents. If the name is unknown, he/she must be called a brother/sister in faith;
- the wealth of the child, if any, especially in the case of orphans is kept separately and given to the child when he/she reaches adulthood;
- on attaining puberty, the adopted person assumes the status of a stranger in the house with all its Islamic ramifications,

- marriage may take place between a foster person and a member of the family of the foster family, provided that the foster mother did not breast-feed both persons concerned;

## **ADOPTION**

Adoption as practised in Australia, is unacceptable in Islam, eg. change in surname of child and child loses all connections with biological parents.

## **SECTION 3: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT ISLAM**

Islam literally means "Submission to the Will of Allah (God)". Islam is a religion of peace.

A Muslim is a person who submits to the Will of Allah. Islam as outlined in the Holy Qur'an (The words of Allah) and the Sunnah (the practice of Prophet Muhammad, *May the blessings of Allah be upon him and peace*) consists of six articles of faith and five fundamental pillars.

## **ARTICLES OF ISLAMIC FAITH**

A Muslim believes in Allah (God Almighty), angels of God, Prophets of God, Books of God (eg. Psalms of David, The Torah, the Bible and the last of all divine revelations, the Holy Qur'an), the Hereafter and Fate (the decree of what is good and what is evil has been predestined by God).

## **FUNDAMENTAL PILLARS OF ISLAM**

1. Belief in Allah, the One God and in the Prophet Muhammad who is His Last Messenger.
2. Prayers or Salaat.
3. Fasting during the month of Ramadan, the annual religious fast that follows the lunar calendar hence is 10 days earlier each year.
4. Zakaat. Compulsory annual excise of 2.5% on accumulated wealth, merchandise, certain crops and livestock in agricultural societies and subterranean and mineral wealth. This compulsory excise is paid by the Muslim who attains certain financial standards prescribed by Islam. It is used entirely for the needy.
5. Hajj. The greater Pilgrimage to the Kaabah, The House of Allah in Mecca, and the performance of the rites of pilgrimage in the designated sacred area which surrounds the Kaabah.

## **SALAAT- PRAYERS**

Salaat consists of fixed sets of standings, bowings, prostrations and sittings in worship of Allah. There are five obligatory daily prayers. It is necessary to be in a state of ghusl and wudhu before one can perform the Salaat. Salaat is a purification outwardly and inwardly. A Person in Salaat must not be disturbed The Salaat is always performed in Arabic.

The five daily prayers, besides remembering God, thanking Him and asking for forgiveness, act as an extremely good form of exercise for all parts of the body. Thus it offers discipline, punctuality, meditation, relaxation and physiotherapy all together.

The Salaat may be performed in a sitting position, or in a lying position if unwell. A Muslim in prayer faces the Kaabah. In Brisbane, this direction is west-north-west.

## **THE BOOK OF ISLAM: THE QU'RAN**

The Holy Qur'an is recognised by Muslims to be the last revelation from God to mankind before the end of the world. It was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through the Archangel Gabriel. The Qur'an amends, encompasses and abrogates all of the earlier revelations to the earlier Prophets, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus - *peace be upon them*. It contains guidelines for all of mankind, ranging from social welfare issues, politics and economics through to a complete ethic for living a wholesome life.

The Qur'an was revealed over a period of 23 years and is preserved in its original form in the classic Arabic language. It has been translated into many languages.

## **PROPHET MUHAMMAD (571 - 632 A.D.)**

The Prophet Muhammad who is the completing link in the chain of Prophethood, was a living example of how Allah Almighty wants human beings to live. The Qur'an was revealed to him through the Archangel Gabriel and written down by scribes word for word and letter by letter. The Sunnah, on the other hand, is the sayings, behaviour and attitudes of the Prophet Muhammad, which is the application of the Qur'an to the practical way of life. Hence, a Muslim always endeavours to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet.

## **THE KAABAH**

The Kaabah, "The House of God", is in Mecca, Saudi Arabia and is a cuboid structure the size of a three-storey building first built by Prophet Adam and reconstructed by Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael. All Muslims face the Kaabah to pray. In Brisbane this direction is west-north-west.

## **CLEANLINESS**

Cleanliness is part of the Islamic faith. A Muslim cannot pray or hold a copy of the Qur'an without having washed beforehand. There are various types of washings:

### **1. Ghusl**

Washing the entire body in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. It is necessary to have ghusl on embracing Islam, after sexual intercourse or seminal emission, at the end of menstruation and after childbirth and before burial. It is necessary to be in the state of ghusl or wudhu before one performs the salaah or holds a copy of the Qur'an. Ghusl is a purification inwardly and outwardly.

### **2. Wudhu**

Washing the hands, mouth, nostrils, face, forearms, wiping the head, ears, and the neck and washing the feet with clean water, in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, so as to be pure for prayer/ Salaah.

Once one has done wudhu, one remains in wudhu until it is nullified by any of the abovementioned conditions which make it necessary to have ghusl: emissions of impurities from private parts (urine, faeces, passing wind, prostatic fluid, discharge), loss of consciousness by whatever means, usually by sleeping or fainting, physical contact between man and woman where sexual pleasure is either intended or obtained; a discharge of vomit or a discharge of blood from any external orifice, including mouth, nose, ears, anus and vagina. For the latter reason, a woman during her menstruation is unable to perform her Salaat/prayer.

### **3. Tayammum**

A form of purification for prayer using dust, earth or stone, when water for ghusl or wudhu is either unavailable or would be detrimental to health. Tayammum is performed by striking the earth with the palms of the hands and lightly wiping the face and forearms. Other relevant issues of cleanliness include the removal of pubic and axillary hair, a Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, and the washing of the relevant parts of the body after emptying the bladder and bowel.

### **CONCLUSION**

Health professionals should be sensibly aware of Muslims' beliefs.

A holistic assessment of a patient includes cultural and religious beliefs.

Implementing sensitive and appropriate health care will enhance positive health outcome.

This will help in the rapid recovery of the patient. Even a few sensitive and well-informed words should produce dramatic effects in getting the Muslim patient to relax and establish trust in the health care system.

Muslim doctors, solicitors, teachers, social workers, welfare workers etc. are available if problems exist. The Islamic Council of Queensland should be contacted during office hours.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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