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How Ethics Can Inform Spiritually Sensitive Social Work

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**North American Association of Christians in Social Work
68th Annual Convention
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Title: How Ethics Can Inform Spiritually Sensitive Social Work

Summary (252 words):

Sensitivity to the importance of spirituality in social work practice has grown over the past thirty years (Kvarfordt, Sheridan, and Taylor, 2017; Oxhandler & Pargament, 2014). Research suggests that social workers more commonly consider spirituality as an expression of cultural diversity, if not inherent to being human adding to biopsychosocial dimensions of development (Barker, 2007; Kvarfordt et al., 2017; Lun & Wai, 2015). However, social work practitioners and educators express discomfort in addressing spirituality, perhaps, due to limited training (Buckley, 2012; Oxhandler & Giardina, 2017; Oxhandler, Parrish, Torres, & Achenbaum, 2015) and supervision (Birkenmaier, Behrman, & Berg-Weger, 2005). As with any approach in social work practice, a review of professional ethics can provide essential direction (Hodge, 2005, 2006, 2016; Rice & McAuliffe, 2009; Sherr, Singletary, & Rogers, 2009; Sheridan, 2010). This workshop will define spiritually sensitive social work based on a comprehensive review of the literature (Canda & Furman, 2010; Callahan, 2017) and professional guidelines set forth by the Council on Social Work Education (2015), National Association of Social Workers ([NASW], 2015), and North American Association of Christians in Social Work (2017). The NASW (2017) Code of Ethics followed by ethics-based practice models that employ Virtue Ethics and Care Ethics (Banks & Gallagher, 2009; Chamiec-Case, 2007, 2013) will be discussed. This discussion will focus on broad application of professional ethics for the delivery of spiritually sensitive social work. The workshop will conclude with an opportunity for participants to apply new learning to case scenarios and share the potential for application in practice.

Abstract (50 words):

Sensitivity to spirituality in social work practice has grown over the past thirty years; however, social work practitioners and educators express discomfort in addressing spirituality. This workshop provides an opportunity for participants to learn more about ethics-based practice models for the delivery of spiritually sensitive social work.

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Learning Outcomes:

1. Define spiritually sensitive social work
2. Identify ethical guidelines that apply to social work practice
3. Apply ethical guidelines to inform spiritually sensitive social work

Biography (103 words):

Ann M. Callahan, PhD, LCSW is an Associate Professor in the Social Work Program at Eastern Kentucky University. She has a license in clinical social work and over 20 years of social work-related experience. Dr. Callahan has extensive experience in teaching across the social work curriculum with a commitment to quality course design and facilitating online education. Her research focuses on advancing hospice, palliative, and long-term care through the delivery of spiritually sensitive social work. This has resulted in numerous presentations and publications, including the book *Spirituality and Hospice Social Work* published by Columbia University Press. Please visit <http://dranncallahan.info/> to learn more.