1. **Scope and general policies of the Journal**

The journal SPIRITUAL CARE (SPIRCARE) serves as a platform for multidisciplinary research and interprofessional exchange. Articles present new research approaches, methods of practising Spiritual Care and the relevance of this research area for education in health professions and pastoral care. Moreover, the journal supports the conceptualization and further development of this area in German speaking countries as well as the international discussion about spiritual care.

SPIRCARE welcomes German and English language articles in the following categories:

- Original Articles
- Reviews
- Miscellaneous:
  - Field reports
  - Case reports
  - Essays
  - Letters to the editor
  - Editorial
  - Communications
  - Das Stichwort
  - Spiritual impulse
  - Interviews
  - Conference reports
  - Book reviews
  - Obituaries

Each issue of SPIRCARE deals with a main topic on which invited, renowned authors give an overview, report the results of their studies or outline projects. This is complemented by experience reports and descriptions of practical examples. In addition, Spiritual Care informs on a regular base about German and international discussion on spiritual care in medicine, nursing, social work, psychotherapy, pastoral care and other relevant fields. News from research associations and on public health university courses are provided as well as on events on the subject spiritual care.
Peer review: All contributions submitted for publication are reviewed by at least two renowned experts in the field, selected and invited by the Editor-in-Chiefs. All submissions will be subject to a rapid double-blind peer-review process. Authors may also indicate names of reviewers whom they wish to be included or excluded from reviewing their manuscripts.

Turnaround times: SPIRCARE aspires to notify authors about the review decision within 4 weeks from submission date. When manuscripts are accepted with revision, the revised manuscript should be returned within approx. 6 weeks. Accepted articles are published approx. 3-4 weeks after acceptance.

Unpublished material: Submission of a manuscript to SPIRCARE implies that the work described has not been published previously, except in the form of an abstract, academic thesis or lecture; that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere; that publication of the work is approved by all authors and tacitly or explicitly by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out; and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere, in English, German, or in any other language, without the written consent of the Publisher.

2. Ethical conduct of research

For information on plagiarism, please refer to COPE Committee on Publication Ethics. Please note that SPIRCARE uses the plagiarism detection software CrossCheck by “iThenticate” to assess for potential overlap in prior publication(s). Any previously published material must be referenced appropriately in the manuscript. All authors indicate that they agree to the submission of the manuscript and the correctness of the content.

Research funding, conflict of interest and author contributions: Sources of funding that have supported the work have to be stated as well as how the research described in their article was funded, including grant numbers if applicable. A conflict of interest for a given manuscript exists when a participant in the peer review and publication process – author, reviewer, and editor – has ties to activities that could inappropriately influence his or her judgment, regardless of whether judgment is, in fact, affected. Financial relationships with industry (for example, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, expert testimony), either directly or through immediate family, are usually considered the most important conflicts of interest. However, conflicts can occur for other reasons, such as financial support of the study, ties to health insurance, politics or other stakeholders, personal relationships, academic competition, and intellectual passion.

To ensure fair and objective decision-making, authors must declare any associations that pose a conflict of interest (financial, personal or professional) in connection with the manuscript under evaluation. This must be declared during the submission process and also at the end of the manuscript (even if you have no declaration to make). Authors may declare individual contributions of each author, if applicable. All the authors have to declare that they accepted responsibility for the entire content of the submitted manuscript and approved submission.

Informed consent: The protection of privacy is a legal right that must not be infringed without individual informed consent. In cases where the identification of personal information is necessary for scientific reasons, authors should obtain full documentation of informed consent, including written permission from the patient or their legal guardians prior to inclusion in the study.
Authorization for the use of human subjects: Manuscripts containing information related to human use should clearly state that the research complies with all relevant national regulations and institutional policies and has been approved by the authors’ Institutional Review Board or any equivalent Committee. Copies of the guidelines and policy statements must be available for review by the Managing Editor if necessary. The editors reserve the right to seek additional information or guidance from reviewers on any cases in which concerns arise. All investigations with human subjects must have been conducted by following the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki, what is more authors must identify the committee or review board approving the experiments, and provide a statement indicating approval of the research.

The below mentioned statements should be customized and included before the Reference section of Original Articles and Reviews. Please adjust this text to your submission (e.g. Research funding: Please make your declaration or write „None declared.”)

Declarations on Research funding, Author contributions and Competing interests are mandatory for submission. Declarations of Informed consent and Ethical approval are mandatory if the use of human study participants or the identification of personal information was necessary for scientific reasons. Otherwise these explanations can be omitted.

Acknowledgments: (If applicable).
Author contributions: All the authors have accepted responsibility for the entire content of this manuscript and approved its submission.
Research funding: Declaration / None declared.
Competing interests: Declaration / Authors state no conflict of interest.
Informed consent: Informed consent was obtained from all individuals included in this study.
Ethical approval: The research related to human use complied with all the relevant national regulations, institutional policies, is in accordance the tenets of the Helsinki Declaration, and has been approved by the authors’ institutional review board or equivalent committee (approval number).

Copyright: Manuscripts are accepted on condition of transfer of copyright (for U.S. government employees: to the extent transferable) to the publisher. Once the manuscript has been accepted, it may not be published elsewhere without the consent of the copyright holders.

Note for authors of NIH-funded research: De Gruyter acknowledges that the author of a US-agency-funded article retains the right to provide a copy of the final manuscript to agency upon acceptance for publication or thereafter, for public archiving in PubMed Central 12 months after publication in SPIRCARE. Note that only the accepted author’s version of the manuscript, not the PDF file of the published article, may be used for NIH archiving.

3. Submission of manuscripts

Please submit manuscripts exclusively online at: https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/spircare

degruyter.com/spircare
4. Preparation of manuscripts

Language: Manuscripts must be written in clear and concise German or English. Please have your text proofread by a native speaker or professional language service before you submit it for consideration. For accepted manuscripts written in English by non-native speakers, the publisher offers a professional language polishing service. At proof stage, only minor changes other than corrections of printers' errors are allowed.

Cover letter: Each manuscript should be accompanied by a cover letter containing a brief statement by the authors describing the novelty and importance of their research.

Reviewers: The authors can recommend reviewers by providing their name, institution, country and e-mail address. Authors may also indicate names of reviewers whom they wish to be excluded from reviewing their manuscripts.

General format and length: Type the manuscript (including table legends, figure legends and references) double-spaced using 12 pt. font size and 1 inch margins. Do not use footnotes in the text, use parentheses instead.

When you submit your work, please ensure the following:

- The manuscript is complete and uploaded correctly. Please provide us with files in Microsoft Word format or similar, please do not send a PDF (the HTML version and the PDF file generated from the submitted files must be approved).
- The title should be short and concise.
- The anonymised manuscript contains no information about the authors.
- A title page with information about the authors must be added to each manuscript. This includes complete contact information of the corresponding author (title, first name, surname, institution, department, postal address, email address) as well as biographical information (max. 100 words). Information about each further author must contain: title, name, surname, institution as well as biographical information.
- All Figures and Tables have been uploaded and appear correctly at the end of the PDF.
- Abstract, Keywords, Tables and Figures, and captions and legends are included if required.
- All non-standard abbreviations should be listed alphabetically, (e.g.: DIN, dissolved inorganic nitrogen) after the keywords. In the text body, abbreviations are spelled out at first mention. Thereafter, only these abbreviations are to be used.
- Manuscript is spell-checked and within the character limit for the type of article.
- References are in the correct format.
- References mentioned in the reference list are cited in the text and vice versa.
- Informed Consent/Ethical approval is obtained if necessary and mentioned in the Author Statement at the end of Original Articles and Reviews.
- Numbers in the text, tables, or figures use decimal points, not commas.

General format and length of the types of articles accepted for submission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character count, references, figures and tables excluded</th>
<th>Word count in abstract</th>
<th>Number of keywords</th>
<th>Number of Tables &amp; Figures</th>
<th>Number of references</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

degruyter.com/spircare
Studies dealing with diagnostic accuracy: Please refer to the 2015 Standards for Reporting of Diagnostic Accuracy checklist ([STARD](https://www.equator-network.org/standards/reporting-guidelines/stard/)).

Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses of randomized controlled trials: Please refer to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses statement ([PRISMA](https://www.equator-network.org/standards/reporting-guidelines/prisma/)). Authors must include a suitable PRISMA flow chart in their submission. The flow diagram depicts the flow of information through the different phases of a systematic review. A template of the PRISMA flow diagram is available [here](https://www.equator-network.org/) as a PDF and Word document.

Case Reports: Please refer to the The CARE Guidelines: Consensus-based Clinical Case Reporting Guideline Development ([CARE](https://www.equator-network.org/standards/reporting-guidelines/care/)). Cases must contain an Introduction, the Case Description and a Discussion. At the end, authors should give 3-5 learning points.

Quotations: Quotations must be marked by quotation marks. For the text in German please use „German quotation marks“. Omissions and additions should be marked by squared brackets [ ... ]. Quotations within a quotation must be marked by single quotation marks („, quotation’ in quotation“). For citations within the text the following rules apply:

Longer quotations (more than 35 words): Please indent these quotations and skip quotation marks.

- one author: (Lawrence 2002)
- two authors: (Feuersträter & Hamdorf-Ruddies 2009)
- three or more authors: (Paal et al. 2015)
• several contributions of one author: (Bouissac 1987a; Bouissac 1987b; Bouissac 1994)
• contributions of several authors in chronological order: (Frick 2004; Schmucker 2009; Weiher 2011)
• new editions: (Frankl 1946/2005: 306)
• page numbers for direct quotations: (Koenig 2012: 165–174) and/or (Schweitzer 2004: 81 and 169)

**Quotations of Bible texts in German follow Loccumer rules:** Ökumenisches Verzeichnis der biblischen Eigennamen nach den Loccumer Richtlinien. Spelling/notation of biblical proper names follows also Loccumer rules: Gen 22,5.10 / 1 Joh 1,8–10; 2 Tim 4,13; Joh 1,1–2,14.

**References:** In the reference list please always provide complete bibliographical information. All authors must be included; et al. is not accepted. The names of the authors should appear as follows: Surname, blank space, up to 2 initials, (year of publication), title, journal volume and issue, colon, page numbers.


**Electronic Publications:**


**Tables:** Number Tables consecutively using Arabic numerals. Provide a short descriptive title, column headings, and (if necessary) footnotes to make each Table self-explanatory. In the footnote, refer to information within the Table with superscript lowercase letters, and do not use special characters or numbers. Separate units with a comma and use parentheses or square brackets for additional measures (e.g., %, range,
etc). Refer to Tables in the text as Table 1, etc. Use Table 1 (boldface), etc. in the title of the Table.

**Figures**

**General requirements:** All illustrations must be of reproduction-ready quality. They will be reduced in size to fit, whenever possible, the width of a single column. Lettering of all Figures within the article should be uniform in style (preferably a sans serif typeface like Helvetica) and of sufficient size (ca. 10 pt.). Uppercase letters A, B, C, etc. should be used to identify parts of multi-part Figures. In the legend, these letters are included in parentheses. Cite all Figures in the text in numerical order. Please insert tables, figures and other illustrations in the text, and also upload them separately as high-resolution TIFF or JPEG files. Please remember to obtain the copyright for the use of figures (print and online) yourself.

**Halftone figures and line drawings:** Figures should have a minimum resolution of 300 dpi (halftone figures) and 1200 dpi (line drawings) and be of good contrast. Faint shading may be lost upon reproduction. When drawing bar graphs, use patterning instead of grayscales.

**Color plates:** Authors are encouraged to submit illustrations in color if necessary for the scientific content of their work. Publication of color Figures is provided free of charge both in online and print editions.

**Figure legends:** Provide a short descriptive title and a legend, either below the Figure, in the main text, or on separate pages, to make each Figure self-explanatory. Explain all symbols used in a Figure. Remember to use the same abbreviations as in the text body.

**Videos:** Authors are encouraged to submit videos accompanying the article as Supplemental Material.

**Supplemental material:** You may submit Supplemental material, i.e. additional tables, figures, videos, appendices or other additional material (e.g. references) that exceeds the limitation of the article and/or illustrates the contents of your article. Supplemental material should be uploaded as separate file(s) during submission. Within the text, Supplemental material must be cited consecutively and be referred to as Supplemental material (e.g. see Supplemental Material, Figure 1, or Supplemental Figure 1). Supplemental material is subject to peer review as part of the manuscript. If the manuscript is accepted and the Supplemental material is posted online, it will be referenced in the article of the printed version together with the URL where it can be found.

**Nomenclature:** Follow the rules of the IUPAC-IUB Commission on Biochemical Nomenclature, as indicated in IUB Biochemical Nomenclature and Related Documents.

**Permissions:** It is the authors’ responsibility to obtain permission to reproduce original or modified material that has been previously published elsewhere.

5. **Post-acceptance**

**Proofs:** The Editor-in-Chiefs will inform the Corresponding Author of the manuscript decision. Accepted manuscripts must be provided in a Word document containing the final text for typesetting. The Corresponding Author of an article will receive the proofs in electronic form to check for editing and type-setting accuracy. The final, accepted version of the manuscript must adhere to the above guidelines. Please check the final
file of the article carefully because spelling mistakes, inconsistencies and errors will be faithfully translated into the typeset version. Major changes to the article after acceptance will not be considered without undergoing additional peer review and will cause extra costs.

**Open Access policy:** If your manuscript is accepted, open access publication is available for authors who wish to make their article freely available on De Gruyter Online. Authors choosing to publish open access pay an article processing charge. All articles undergo peer review and will be accepted for publication based on the quality of their scientific contribution. Choosing open access publication has no influence on the peer review or acceptance process. For more information on De Gruyter's open access policies please visit:


Please contact the Editorial Office with any further questions:
Katharina Appelt
Tel. +49-30-26005-325
E-mail: SPIRCARE.editorial@deGruyter.com