



For Immediate Release

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Nation's Leading Physician in Movement to Integrate Spirituality into Healthcare to Give Free Lecture

Dr. Christina Puchalski to speak on January 13th at Unitarian Society

January 5, 2010, Santa Barbara, CA— Hospice of Santa Barbara, Visiting Nurse & Hospice Care, La Casa and Cottage Health System present Dr. Christina Puchalski, one of the nation's leading physicians in the movement to integrate spiritual care into healthcare, speaking on Wednesday, January 13th at 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Society, 1535 Santa Barbara St. in Santa Barbara.

Dr. Puchalski will give an overview of new trends and practices that are being developed to integrate patient's spiritual concerns and communities of support into health care practices during the free lecture entitled *Emerging National Trends in Spirituality and Health: A Physician's Perspective*. "Spirituality" is a broad term which can include religious traditions, individual spiritual sensibilities, and, most generally, whatever gives someone a sense of meaning in life.

Christina Puchalski, MD, MS, is the Executive Director of the George Washington Institute for Spirituality and Health, Washington, DC, and a Professor of Medicine and Health Sciences at The George Washington University School of Medicine, where she has pioneered novel and effective educational and clinical strategies to address the spiritual concerns common in patients facing illness.

In 2005, Dr. Puchalski was interviewed on CNN during the Terri Schiavo case, a seven-year long legal effort by Michael Schiavo to have his wife, Terri Schiavo – diagnosed as being in a persistent vegetative state (PVS) for several years – disconnected from life support

An active clinician, board-certified in Internal Medicine and Palliative Care, Dr. Puchalski has received numerous awards including the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey's Faculty Humanism in Medicine Award. She is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians and was recently inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society as well as awarded the 2009 George Washington University Distinguished Alumni Award. She is on the editorial board of several Palliative Care journals and chair or coauthor of several major conferences and initiatives in spirituality and health.

Dr. Puchalski has a background as a basic scientist at NIH, thus bridging the art and science of medicine in her work. She is widely published in journals with work ranging from basic research in biochemistry to issues in ethics, culture and spirituality and healthcare. She has authored numerous chapters in books and edited and authored a book published by Oxford University Press entitled *Time for Listening and Caring: Spirituality and the Care of the Seriously Ill and Dying* with a forward by His Holiness, The Dalai Lama.

Her many publications and presentations have urged the development of a patient-centered perspective in healthcare, with specialization in the importance of integrating spirituality and compassion into one's professional practice. Her work has been featured on numerous print and television media including

Good Morning America, ABC World News Tonight, NBC Nightly News, The Washington Post, The New York Times, and the Washington Times.

The mission of Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. is to provide care to anyone experiencing the impact of a life-threatening illness, or grieving the death of a loved one. All services are provided free of charge. For more information, please visit www.hospiceofsantabarbara.org or call (805) 563-8820.

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