



## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

### What is medical assistance in dying?

Medical assistance in dying is one of a number of choices that can be considered in end-of-life care. It is a process where a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner (“practitioner”) helps a patient who wants to voluntarily and intentionally end their life by:

- Administering a medication to the patient that will cause their death peacefully; or
- Prescribing a medication that will cause their death peacefully. The patient may be able to take the medication themselves.

### Eligibility criteria

To receive medical assistance in dying, you must meet all of the following criteria:

- Have a serious and incurable illness, disease, or disability;
- Be in an advanced state of decline that cannot be reversed;
- Your suffering is constant and unbearable, and cannot be relieved in any way that you find acceptable;
- Your natural death is near, even if no one knows exactly how much time you have left;
- Be at least 18 years old;
- Be eligible for publicly-funded health services in Canada;
- Voluntarily request medical assistance in dying, without pressure or influence from anyone else; and
- Give informed consent throughout the process, including at the final moment when medical assistance in dying is to be provided.

### Other End-of-Life Care Options

Other end-of-life care options include pain and symptom management as well as palliative or end-of-life care to control symptoms and focus on comfort, quality of life, respect for personal health care treatment decisions, support for family, and support for psychological and spiritual concerns for patients who are dying and their families.

You have many choices when it comes to end-of-life care. This might include support in your home, a hospital, or care facility. Talk to your practitioner to find out more about what options might be best for you and your family.



## Deciding to Move Forward

If you have discussed your end-of-life care options with your practitioner and think medical assistance in dying might be the right choice for you, you can ask your practitioner to help you make a formal written request. After you make a request, you will:

- Be assessed by two different practitioners to determine your eligibility; and
- Observe a waiting period to give you time to think about your decision.

If you decide to go ahead with medical assistance in dying, you can stop the process at any time. You can also decide to change your current treatment plan and make sure any pain or other symptoms are being managed.

## Where to get more information

Talk to your practitioner about your options for treatment or care. If there is no practitioner in your community, you can discuss your options with a practitioner by distance, such as telehealth.

If you need to find a practitioner who can answer your questions, assess your eligibility, or provide medical assistance in dying, please call the Central Coordinating Service.

More information on medical assistance in dying, including a questions and answers document, is available on the Department of Health and Social Services' website:

[www.maidnwt.com](http://www.maidnwt.com)

## Central Coordinating Service

Your practitioner is required to provide you with the Central Coordinating Service's contact card when you ask for information on medical assistance in dying. The Central Coordinating Services is a single point of contact to link patients with a practitioner who can provide more information on medical assistance in dying, assess them for eligibility, and provide medical assistance in dying:

### **NWT Central Coordinating Service**

Toll-free at 1-855-846-9601

or direct at 1-867-767-9050 Ext. 49008

Monday - Friday: 8:30am - 5:00pm

If you would like this information in another official language, contact us at 1-855-846-9601. Si vous voulez ces renseignements dans une autre langue officielle, communiquez avec nous au 1-855-846-9601.

