



## 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 in the presence of a practitioner.

### 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;
- 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 to receive medical assistance in dying after you have been informed of other options to help your suffering.

### 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.



## 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 at least two different practitioners to determine your eligibility. If your practitioner believes that you will not die of natural causes reasonably soon, you will also be required to observe a waiting period to make sure you and your Practitioner take the time to explore all aspects of your situation.

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 have questions about medical assistance in dying or need to find a practitioner who can assess your eligibility and provide medical assistance in dying, please call the Central Coordinating Service. Your health care provider, or any other person, can also contact the Central Coordinating Service on your behalf.

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

<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/medical-assistance-dying-maid>

## 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 Service is a main point of contact for individuals and families who have inquiries related to medical assistance in dying. The Central Coordinating Service can answer questions, provide resources, and facilitate access to practitioners who are willing to assess, and if applicable, provide medical assistance in dying.

### **NWT Central Coordinating Service**

Toll-free at 1-833-492-0131

Monday - Friday: 9:00am - 5:00pm

Email: [maid\\_careteam@gov.nt.ca](mailto:maid_careteam@gov.nt.ca)

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.

