

IT'S YOUR LIFE. IT'S YOUR CHOICE.



**Dying With Dignity Canada believes all publicly funded health care facilities should be compelled to allow medical assistance in dying (MAID) onsite. Health care providers that receive public funds, and refuse to allow services they object to, serve only to prevent equitable access to British Columbia's health care system.**

We call on the Government of British Columbia to compel all publicly funded health care providers to allow medical assistance in dying at their facilities. We also encourage amendment of the Master Agreement between the provincial government and the Denominational Health Association (DHA) that allows denominational health care providers to refuse to allow MAID at their facilities.

- 89% of British Columbians support the Supreme Court's 2015 ruling that recognized Canadians' right to access medical assistance in dying.
- Three quarters of British Columbians (74%) believe all publicly funded health care facilities have an obligation to provide the full range of legal health care services.
- Example: St. Paul's Hospital, a facility of DHA Providence Health Care, will not allow MAID at its facilities because it objects to these services on religious grounds. It continues however to receive taxpayer funding, including \$1.2 billion toward the cost of the new St. Paul's Hospital, where MAID will also not be allowed onsite.
- Under the Canada Health Act and as affirmed by Supreme Court of Canada decisions, governments must offer equitable access to all medically necessary services funded by the government.
- A "forced transfer" occurs when a patient in a DHA facility which forbids MAID to occur onsite is obligated to transfer to a facility that does. Already suffering individuals endure a grueling, undignified transfer when their health is fragile. Such transfers remove patients from their community of care and place them in an alien setting, a situation which greatly undermines their mental and physical health. In some cases, a forced transfer delays, or even denies, MAID.
- DWDC agrees with legal experts who believe that the Supreme Court of Canada's jurisprudence to date on freedom of religion suggests that publicly funded hospitals would likely not qualify for any protection under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- The Government of British Columbia, through the Fraser Health Authority, has already shown its willingness to step in to protect equitable access to provincial health services by taking control of Irene Thomas Hospice in 2021 when the Delta Hospice Society refused to allow MAID services. It must do so again.
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