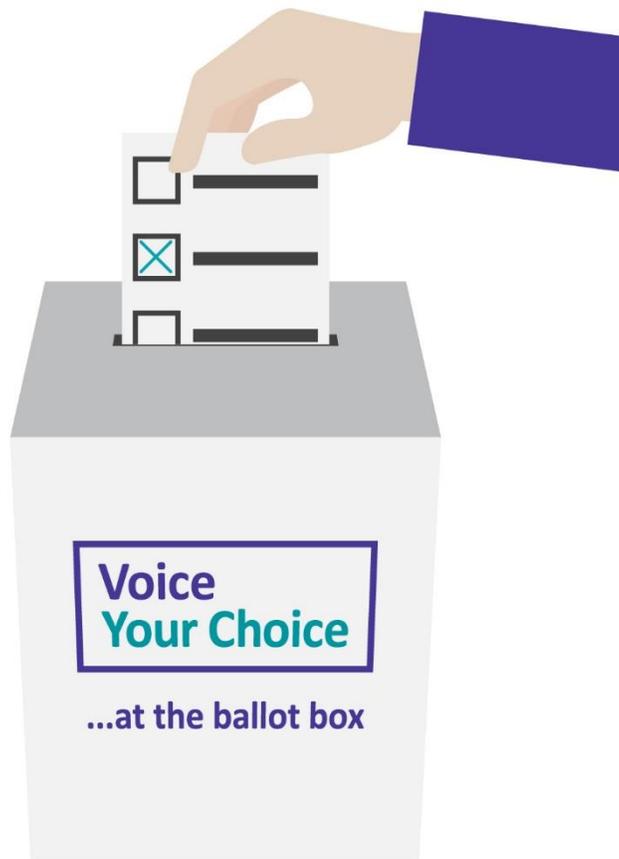


Voice
Your Choice

DWD Canada Pre-Election Action Kit 2015



In the months to come, all Canadians must unite to ensure the spirit of the Supreme Court of Canada's [Carter decision](#) is upheld and that Canadians have the option of a physician assisted death come Feb. 6, 2016.

With the federal election now underway, we are asking you, our supporters, to reach out to all candidates in your ridings. We have created this toolkit to help you identify the questions to ask, where to reach out and how to effectively engage with election candidates. Now is the time to **Voice Your Choice!**

In this toolkit you will find:

1. Questions to ask candidates in the 2015 federal election
2. How to meet your local candidates and help them complete a short questionnaire on assisted dying
3. How to send in questions about assisted dying to the Leaders Debates and local candidate debates
4. A Questionnaire for Political Candidates on Assisted Dying
5. How to engage with your candidates online through social media such as Twitter and Facebook

Community Engagement:

- Write letters to the editor of your local paper
- Talk to your family and friends about Physician Assisted Dying (PAD)
- Share links to DWD Canada's news and updates through Facebook, Twitter or emails to friends
- Organize a local event
- Submit a video or photo through DWD Canada's crowdsourcing campaign

In addition to direct engagement with candidates, continue to keep the conversation going in your community. As a supporter of DWD Canada, you can help by talking about why assisted dying matters to you, by sharing recent updates from DWD Canada or by letting others know what good legislation would look like.

Questions to Ask Your Federal Candidates

Top Questions:

1. **If you are elected as my Member of Parliament and there is a free vote in the House of Commons, will you support legislation that reflects letter and the spirit of the *Carter* decision for the right to die with dignity?**
2. **Are you willing to complete Dying With Dignity Canada's election questionnaire?**

Other Questions to Ask:

3. **Will you oppose any delay in implementing physician assisted dying (PAD) beyond February 6, 2016, regardless of whether legislation has been passed?**

Preferred Response: Yes, although legislation may not have been passed into law, it is important that on February 6, 2016, Canadians have access to PAD in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Supreme Court of Canada decision.

4. **The Supreme Court of Canada's decision allows for physician assisted dying by both: 1. Physician administration of life-ending medication 2. Providing prescription for life-ending medication. Will you ensure that both of these options are available to all Canadians?**

Preferred Response: Yes, both administration and prescription should be included in any written legislation. Some people will be unable to self-administer life-ending medication and others may simply prefer to have a doctor administer their medications directly.

5. **Will you support reasonable safeguards but oppose unreasonable barriers to access for physician assisted dying?**

Preferred Response: Yes. While it is essential that we ensure the vulnerable are protected, it is also vital that eligible Canadians who want an assisted death can receive one in a timely manner.

An example of a reasonable safeguard would be the involvement of a second physician, or a reasonable waiting period (say three weeks) for non-terminal patients.

Unreasonable safeguards would include excessive waiting periods, reviews by external bodies or requirements for approval from anyone other than the individual themselves.

6. **How will you ensure patient choice, patient care and equality of access?**

Preferred Response: All individuals who qualify for physician assisted dying should have timely access. If an individual's primary doctor chooses not to provide an assisted death, a duty to refer will be implemented. Eligible patients across Canada should be transferred into the care of a willing doctor in a timely manner, and they should not be required to travel in order to access PAD.

7. As you understand it, what are the core components that will be required legislatively to ensure the spirit of the Supreme Court of Canada decision in the Carter case?

Preferred Response: To uphold the spirit of the Carter decision, the following criteria must be met:

- access for competent Canadians with a grievous and irremediable medical condition (including an illness, disability or disease)
- the option for either the prescription or administration of life-ending medication
- physician and pharmacists are required to make effective referrals so patients are not abandoned
- reasonable, but not overly burdensome, safeguards

8. What are you prepared to do to ensure access to physician assisted dying?

Preferred Answer: (Open ended question. Look for assurances that the candidate is interested in promoting PAD.)

Arranging a Meeting with your Local Candidate

While candidates are busy during the election season, you may still be able to organize a meeting or speak with them over the phone. Candidates are also keen to have supporters organize coffee parties where they can meet constituents in their ridings. You can organize a coffee party and put assisted dying squarely on the agenda.

Identify Candidates in your Riding

- You will want to identify which riding you live in: [Find your electoral riding](#).
- For all the political parties, [please see this list](#).
- Identifying the candidates in your riding and accessing their contact information may require a bit of detective work as nominations don't close until September 28, 2015.
- Note that there is no one single source for all candidate contact information, such as email or phone number. You may need to try different sources.
- However here are some options that may be helpful:

- [The Pundits Guide to Canadian Elections](#)
- [Elections Canada](#)

You may have to visit more than once for the most up-to-date information.

Do you live in a potential swing riding and you want to let your candidates know that this issue may affect how you cast your ballot?

Check out ThreeHundredEight.com for their latest projections.

Schedule a Meeting

Call the office of the candidate and keep the following in mind:

- Be friendly and polite
- Communicate your main goal for the meeting (would like to discuss physician assisted dying).
- Be understanding if the candidate is unavailable to speak one-on-one. Inquire if there are public events that they will be attending that you might also attend.

Research

It may be helpful to research the candidate to see if they have spoken publically about assisted dying. If they have served as an MP in the past, see if you can find out how they have voted on related issues in the past. Politicians who served in 2010 [are on record](#) as to how they voted on private member's Bill C-384 introduced by the late Bloc MP Francine Lalonde.

Present the Election Questionnaire:

Bring along copies of Dying With Dignity Canada's Election Questionnaire (**see final page**).

If they complete the questionnaire (you can write down their answers), please scan it and email it to the Dying With Dignity Canada office here at: political@dyingwithdignity.ca. You can also mail it directly to our office, but **please send an email right away to let us know:**

55 Eglinton Avenue East
Suite 802
Toronto
ON M4P 1G8

We will add their name to our website and send out tweets thanking those candidates who have stepped up in support of enlightened and practical physician assisted dying.

Ask for Action

Express that you would like to hear how the candidate would address physician assisted dying, if elected. Ask them for a written statement outlining their views and let them know we will send out a press release to the media announcing their support.

Follow Up

Send a thank you email or letter and let the DWD Canada National Office know the results of your discussion. Email us at: political@dyingwithdignity.ca

Asking Questions in the Leaders Debate and in Local Riding Debates

During the election season, it is important to keep an eye on your local news for updates regarding debates in your riding. Frequently check your local newspaper and online resources to stay informed of any upcoming debates or events. Please try to attend as many as you can. After you attend, please email political@dyingwithdignity.ca and let us know how it went and if you were able to have your question answered.

For the leaders' debates, DWD Canada will update our supporters as soon as we become aware of the details of these debates. Although we will remain vigilant, these debates are occasionally announced a few days before they will take place. We will try to provide as much notice as we can when informing our supporters.

Scheduled Debates:

Thursday, September 17 - 8:00 PM ET

- Hosted by *The Globe and Mail*
- Broadcasted live on *The Globe and Mail's* [website](#) and [YouTube](#)
- Submit Questions using the hashtag #GlobeDebate on social media or by using the [online form](#)
- Follow the discussion on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

Monday, September 28 – 7:00 PM ET

- Hosted by the Aurea Foundation's regular Munk Debates

Wednesday, October 7 (French) — 8:00-10:00 PM ET

Thursday, October 8 (English) — 6:30-8:00 PM ET

- Consortium debate organized by CBC, CTV and Global
- Will air on television and online

**Engage with your Candidates Online through Social Media such as
Twitter and Facebook**

Most candidates are active on social media and often engage with their constituents through online platforms. You can track the election chatter on Twitter by following the **#elxn42** hashtag.

Most party websites provide a full list of candidates and include links to their social media accounts. Follow the links below to connect with your local candidates:

[Liberal Candidates](#)

[Green Candidates](#)

[NDP Candidates](#)

[Conservative Candidates](#)





Dying With Dignity Canada
It's your life. It's your choice.

Questionnaire for Candidates

Please present the following details to your candidate:

- The Supreme Court of Canada's *Carter* decision for the right to die with dignity presents a compassionate approach to physician assisted dying in Canada.
- The decision allows access to physician assisted dying for competent adult Canadians with a grievous and irremediable medical condition (including an illness, disability or disease) who are enduring intolerable suffering.
- The Supreme Court's decision allows physicians the option of either prescribing or administering life-ending medication.
- Reasonable safeguards should seek a balance between protecting against coercion while ensuring access for eligible Canadians who express an enduring wish for an assisted death.

Then ask your candidate the following questions:

1) *Will you support the implementation of physician assisted dying in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Carter decision for the right to die with dignity?*

YES _____

NO _____

2) *Will you oppose any delay in implementing physician assisted dying beyond the Supreme Court's deadline of February 6, 2016? No one who is suffering unbearably today should have to wait longer for a peaceful, compassionate death.*

YES _____

NO _____

Please fill out the details about the candidate:

Name of Candidate: _____

Party Affiliation: _____

Riding: _____

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Please returned to DWD Canada: political@dyingwithdignity.ca
Mail: DWD Canada, 55 Eglinton Ave E, # 802 Toronto, ON M4P 1G8