

Key Messages: End of Life Care and Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) February 2020

Background

In June 2016, the Parliament of Canada passed federal legislation that allows eligible Canadian adults to request and receive an assisted death, adopting the term medical assistance in dying (MAiD).

The Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Providers (CAMAP) was established in 2017 to provide peer support, research and advocacy for all professionals involved in medical assistance in dying. Our mission is to:

- Support MAiD assessors and providers in their work
- Educate the health care community and the public about MAiD
- Provide leadership on determining standards and guidelines in MAiD provision

This document states CAMAP's position on end of life care, including the option of MAiD.

Key Messages

1. High-quality palliative care should be available to all patients who desire it at the end of life. CAMAP strongly supports the development, extension and proper funding of excellent palliative care services in all communities across Canada. This includes ensuring support for all clinicians who provide these services for their patients.
2. All clinicians participating in MAiD work should be knowledgeable about palliative care options and other potential supports available to the patient. All clinicians who provide end of life care, including palliative care clinicians, should be knowledgeable about MAiD and the resources available in their locality for patients seeking information about and/or referral for MAiD.
3. Respect for patient autonomy should be the foundation of all end of life care; there should be a clear understanding of and respect for the patient's goals of care. Should a patient choose to pursue MAiD, they should be supported in their decision. All medical care, including palliative care if involved, should be continued.

4. MAiD should be included as an option in all end of life goals of care conversations with potentially eligible patients.
5. For patients wishing to pursue MAiD, CAMAP strongly supports full access to all MAiD services regardless of geography, facility or institution.
6. All health care providers who wish to participate in MAiD should have access to training and be respected, permitted and supported in the work of assisted dying.
7. All health care providers who do not wish to participate in MAiD should be respected and supported in their decision.
8. Conscience-based objection should not impair patient care. If a clinician objects to MAiD on the basis of conscience and is unwilling to carry out a MAiD assessment, CAMAP strongly supports the professional requirement of an effective referral to a clinician known to provide MAiD or to a local or provincial MAiD coordination service.
9. Recognizing the primacy of patient-centred care and outcomes, CAMAP acknowledges and appreciates the value of inter-professional teams and especially encourages the integration of palliative care and MAiD.