

Medical Assistance in Dying: Ethical Concerns

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Most Significant Ethical Concern?

- Ethical concerns as an individual (personal), as a physician within my professional "I"
 - Autonomy recognized and respected
 - Informed Access
 - Protecting the vulnerable
 - Conscientious objection
- Ethical concerns as part of a group (citizen), health care provider "We"
 - Providing Equal Access, providing equal understanding
 - Respecting individual Autonomy, Understanding the person who is the patient
 - Protection of the vulnerable and respect conscientious objection

Conversation Surprises: personal and professional

- The moral debate regarding whether Medical Assistance in dying "should" be provided as changed to "how it should" be provided.
- General public acceptance of Medical Assistance in Dying
- General public and professional misconceptions regarding the process of providing Medical Assistance in Dying
- Within the medical profession, the fear of being publically identified as a provider of Medical Assistance in Dying

Approach to ethical deliberation

- Personal
 - What is my personal moral standard
 - Personal reflection
 - What are my personal thoughts and concerns
 - What is my view on the value and meaning of life and death
 - What is my view on the nature of suffering and the nature of self
 - Where do I stand on the moral continuum of respect for autonomy and the sanctity of life
 - Where do I stand on the moral continuum of quality of life and sanctity of life
 - How do I understand and demonstrate the principles of beneficence and patient autonomy
 - Does my moral standard include respect for other moral perspectives
 - Canadian Medical Association Self-led Online Module on Medical assistance in dying
 - Moral Considerations

Ethical Deliberations

- Professional
 - When Darkness Comes: A values clarification guide on euthanasia and assisted suicide for health care professionals
 - Understanding perspectives from the patient, the family, the caregivers and the health care team.
 - Reflecting on
 - personal and professional death and dying experiences,
 - patient autonomy and decision making,
 - competency and comfort with end of life conversations,
 - team functioning,
 - familial influences on values
 - How have my personal and professional experiences changed my perspectives on death and dying
 - what is my understanding of unbearable suffering
 - College of Physicians & Surgeons of Nova Scotia, Professional Standard Regarding Medical Assistance in Dying (2016) www.cpsns.ns.ca
 - "the minimum professional and ethical behaviour, conduct or practice expected of physicians licensed with the College"
