

## Key Messages to Waterloo Wellington Health Service Providers from the Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) Working Group

- Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) is explicitly not a palliative care intervention.
- MAID and palliative care are distinct processes that may be accessed by patients concurrently.
- Access to MAID is distinct from access to palliative care. Existing system resources / structures may be used to support referrals/access to MAID.
- Recent experiences in Waterloo Wellington reveal that the patients who have pursued MAID, have not chosen palliative care OR MAID – they typically choose both.
- Currently, some hospice palliative care providers are receiving MAID requests. In the absence of a defined process, health care providers in all sectors are struggling to respond and support these requests. This is distressing and distracting these providers from delivering high quality hospice palliative care. These providers describe feeling “unsupported” and “alone”.
- Waterloo Wellington Integrated Hospice Palliative Care Regional Program is a key player in the development of a ‘Waterloo Wellington Regional MAID Framework’ to ensure that:
  - In all settings, the first next step after a request for hastened death is received is a comprehensive evaluation of the palliative care services that the patient has received to date.
  - High quality palliative care is provided to the patient and caregiver/family throughout the MAID/end-of life experience (especially in anticipation of potential complex grief, loss and psychosocial issues – hospice palliative care providers are experts in addressing these issues).

### The objective of this collaborative, time-limited working group is to develop:

1. A framework that supports coordinated access to MAID in Waterloo Wellington.
2. Recommendations to support equitable, timely and skilled access to MAID for all Waterloo Wellington residents that:
  - Optimizes and aligns existing regional resources to support MAID.
  - Leverages existing sub-region processes, policies, structures and relationships to ensure safe and trusting local processes.
  - Includes i) clinical and patient/caregiver tools and resources to support accurate understanding of local processes and supports ii) mechanisms to learn from local experiences to inform process improvements.

**The Centre for Effective Practice** has developed a tool to provide additional guidance to clinicians on MAID provision and process, including a full pathway for MAID. It can be accessed [here](https://thewellhealth.ca/maid/) (<https://thewellhealth.ca/maid/>).

**The Canadian College of Health Leaders**, Hamilton and Area Chapter, is offering a webinar on December 7, 2016 from 12:00 – 1:00pm, titled, “**Medical Assistance in Dying – Current Context in Ontario**”. Dr. Dirk Huyer, Chief Coroner for Ontario and Sean Court, Director, Strategic Policy, MOHLTC will provide an overview of the status of provincial legislation and describe the Ontario experience with MAID since June 2016. Register for the webinar [here](http://cchl-ccls.ca/viewEvent.html?productId=7112) (<http://cchl-ccls.ca/viewEvent.html?productId=7112>).

If you have any questions, please contact Emmi Perkins  
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