

## FAQs for Primary Care Providers - What do I do when a patient asks about MAID?

### How many MAID cases & requests have there been in WWLHIN to date and how many do we project there will be moving forward?

Since MAID became legal in Canada in June 2016, there have been 548 cases completed in Ontario and 18 cases in Waterloo Wellington (as of June 30, 2017). Currently, requests for MAID aren't tracked in Waterloo Wellington but experiences in other jurisdictions where MAID is legal (Belgium & the Netherlands) suggest that 1 in 5 requests for 'Medical Assistance in Dying' are followed through.

To predict the number of cases that we expect in Waterloo Wellington, we again look to the experiences in other jurisdictions where MAID is legal - approximately 2-3% of deaths are hastened deaths. Therefore, if our experiences are similar, we can expect 106-159 MAID cases per year and 430-795 requests for MAID each year (based on the number of deaths in WW in 2014/15).

### Who is eligible for MAID?

To receive medical assistance in dying in Ontario, a patient must<sup>1</sup>:

- be eligible for publicly funded health care services in Canada
- be 18 years of age or older
- be capable of making health care decisions
- have a grievous and irremediable medical condition, which means the patient:
  - has a serious and incurable illness, disease or disability
  - is in an advanced state of irreversible decline in capability
  - is enduring physical or psychological suffering, caused by the medical condition or the state of decline, that is intolerable to the person
  - natural death has become reasonably foreseeable

Mature minors and those who are seeking MAID related to mental illness are not eligible. The legislation does not allow for advanced consent.

### What are my obligations if I receive a request for MAID?

The federal legislation does not compel physicians to provide or assist in providing medical assistance in dying. However, the CPSO policy states:

*"Where a physician declines to provide medical assistance in dying for reasons of conscience or religion, the physician must not abandon the patient. An effective referral must be provided. An effective referral means a referral made in good faith, to a non-objecting, available, and accessible physician, nurse practitioner or agency. The referral must be made in a timely manner to allow the patient to access medical assistance in dying. Patients must not be exposed to adverse clinical outcomes due to delayed referrals"*<sup>2</sup>

If a patient makes an enquiry about MAID, the clinician should discuss /explore the request with the patient and provides information on all available treatment and care options. If patient chooses to proceed with MAID, the clinician either:

Provides the patient with an overview of the MAID process & conducts an eligibility assessment for MAID

OR

If the clinician chooses not to participate in the provision of MAID due to religious or conscientious objections, the clinician will inform the patient that they are unable to provide MAID and will provide the patient with a referral<sup>3</sup> to a physician, nurse practitioner or agency that can support their request.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/page/medical-assistance-dying-and-end-life-decisions#section-2>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cpso.on.ca/Policies-Publications/Policy/Physician-Assisted-Death>

<sup>3</sup> An effective referral means a referral made in good faith, to a non-objecting, available, and accessible physician, nurse practitioner or agency. The referral must be made in a timely manner to allow the patient to access medical assistance in dying. Patients must not be exposed to adverse clinical outcomes due to delayed referrals (<http://www.cpso.on.ca/Policies-Publications/Policy/Physician-Assisted-Death>)

There are currently two options in Waterloo Wellington to support clinicians to make an effective referral:

- Regional MAID Central Point of Access (310-CCAC)  
**OR**
- the Provincial MAID Care Coordination Service (1.866.286.4023)<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, if the patient is a resident of Guelph, the clinician can refer to the Guelph MAID Resource Group ([maid@guelphft.com](mailto:maid@guelphft.com) or 519.837.4444). It is hoped that similar MAID Resource Groups will develop in other WWLHIN subRegions.

#### **How does the Provincial MAID Care Coordination Service Help Patients /Caregivers?**

Through the Ministry MAID Care Coordination Service, patients and their caregivers can receive information about MAID, request to be connected to a doctor or nurse practitioner who can provide medical assistance in dying services as well as receive information about end-of-life options, including information on hospice care, other palliative care options in their community and medical assistance in dying.

#### **How does the Provincial MAID Care Coordination Service (CCS) Help Clinicians?**

- A. Doctors or nurse practitioners who are unable or unwilling to provide medical assistance in dying can also contact the care coordination service to refer their patients to doctors or nurse practitioners who can provide these services.
- B. This service will also support doctors and nurse practitioners to connect with a clinician in their community:
  - Doctor or nurse practitioner who can provide the second assessment that is needed to confirm that a patient meets all the eligibility criteria as set out in the federal legislation.
  - Community pharmacist that will dispense the drugs needed for medical assistance in dying.
  - Doctor or nurse practitioner who will prescribe or administer the drugs required for medical assistance in dying, if needed.

A & B will be accomplished both by linking back into regionally developed structures/resources and by linking requesting providers with clinicians who have rostered with the Provincial MAID CCS.

#### **How can clinicians in Waterloo Wellington access information, education and training related to MAID?**

A number of options exist to support clinicians who are interested in learning more about MAID and/or providing MAID (eligibility assessments and/or the procedure itself):

- Review the materials on the [MAID page](#) of the [WWIHPC Regional Program website](#)
- Join the WW MAID Community of Practice – a group of clinicians who are interested in learning more about MAID, are interested in potentially supporting MAID, have supported a MAID request/case in the past and/or are currently supporting a MAID case that come together every other month via webinar/TCON.
- Education and mentorship opportunities are available to clinicians in Waterloo Wellington who are interested in supporting MAID eligibility assessments, including ministry-funded CMA MAID in-person and on-line training sessions

**If you are interested in more information about how you can support MAID in your community and about how to access education and mentoring opportunities related to MAID, please contact Emmi Perkins ([emmi.perkins@lhins.on.ca](mailto:emmi.perkins@lhins.on.ca))**

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<sup>4</sup> The care coordination service can be reached by calling toll free 1-866-286-4023 or TTY 844-953-3350. The service is available Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm EST, in English and French, and translation assistance in other languages can be requested. Beginning September 1, 2017, the information line will be made available 24/7.