

Need More Information?

For more information on palliative and end-of-life care, talk to your doctor or a member of your health and social services professional. These professionals will answer your questions and give you more detail about the process.

Any discussion surrounding a request for medical aid in dying is important. The doctor and other professionals will therefore carry a special attention.

This step is intended to inform you and clarify your wishes. It does not commit you to anything, and you can change your decisions at any time.

Information

CHU de Québec - Université Laval
www.chudequebec.ca

CIUSSS de la Capitale-Nationale
www.ciusss-capitalenationale.gouv.qc.ca

Institut universitaire de cardiologie et de pneumologie de Québec
www.iucpq.qc.ca/en

Users' Committee

*Centre intégré
universitaire de santé
et de services sociaux
de la Capitale-Nationale*

Québec 

**CHU
de Québec**
Université Laval



**INSTITUT UNIVERSITAIRE
DE CARDIOLOGIE
ET DE PNEUMOLOGIE
DE QUÉBEC**
UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL

Guide for Users and their Families

Palliative and End-of-Life Care

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Québec 

The law specifies the rights of a person regarding end-of-life care as well as the organization and supervision of care, in particular:

- Palliative care;
- Advance medical directives;
- Continuous palliative sedation therapy;
- Medical assistance in dying.

The palliative care

It is the care provided by health professionals to a person with a serious and life-threatening illness. The aim is to provide the best possible quality of life without hastening or delaying death. This care can last from a few weeks to several months, depending on each person's condition.

The objectives of palliative care are:

- Prevent and relieve suffering;
- Increase physical and psychological comfort;
- Provide the necessary support to the person and their relatives.

Palliative and end-of-life care support

Palliative and end-of-life care are provided at home and in all care and residential facilities in the Capitale-Nationale region health network. All staff are trained in palliative and end-of-life care and work in collaboration with various health professionals.

The team can be made up of different health professionals:

- Nurses
- Specialized nurse practitioners
- Auxiliary nurses
- Social workers

- Auxiliaries to health and social services/orderlies
- Occupational therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Nutritionists
- Doctors
- Pharmacists
- Palliative care providers

Continuous Palliative Sedation

This care refers to the administration of medication when usual treatments fail to relieve suffering at the end of life. In continuous palliative sedation, medication continuously lower the person's level of consciousness until death. The person is in a state of unconsciousness that looks like sleep until she dies of natural causes.

Medical Aid in Dying

Medical aid in dying is care offered to people living with a serious and incurable illness (which cannot be cured) or with a serious physical disability and for whom palliative care is unable to satisfactorily relieve certain suffering. It consists of administering medication that relieve suffering and leads to death.

Medical aid in dying is possible for people for whom:

- All therapeutic, curative, and palliative options have been deemed unsatisfactory;
- And who prefer to die rather than continue to suffer.

This medical procedure is performed by a doctor or a specialized nurse practitioner at the person's request.

The laws

Medical aid in dying is governed by the Act respecting end-of-life care and the Criminal Code. These laws indicate the conditions that must be met for a person to receive medical aid in dying.

There are two types of requests for medical aid in dying: contemporaneous request and advance request.

Contemporaneous request for medical aid in dying

The contemporaneous request for medical aid in dying is formulated with a view to its short-term management.

For more information about contemporaneous request for medical aid in dying, you can refer to the guide *Aide médicale à mourir – Pour en savoir plus*.

Advance request for medical aid in dying

The advance request for medical aid in dying is made when the person wishes to receive care once they have become unable to consent to the care.

This is only possible if:

- The person suffers from a serious and incurable illness (one that cannot be cured)

and

- This illness leads to incapacity to consent to care (the person is no longer able to understand the situation and make decisions).

For more information about advance request for medical aid in dying, consult the [Guide for the person and their loved ones - Advance request for medical aid in dying](#).

What are your rights at the end of life?

The respect for a person at the end of life and the recognition of his or her rights and freedoms must inspire every action.

Here are your rights:

- Right to receive end-of-life care
- Right to refuse or stop treatment
- Right to be represented
- Right to express your wishes

For more information on your rights, you can contact your establishment's Users Committee.

The Expression of Your Wishes Through Advance Medical Directives

Advance medical directives allow you to express your wishes in advance regarding the following care in the event that you are no longer able to communicate them:

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- Ventilator-assisted respiration (use of a device to provide respiration to a person who has become incapable of breathing)
- Renal dialysis (medical intervention to clean the blood when the kidneys can no longer do so)
- Force-feeding and hydration (feeding and hydrating a person against their will)
- Artificial feeding and hydration (feeding and hydration of a person who can no longer feed themselves or drink using a tube passed into the stomach or by a catheter introduced into a vein)

Advance medical directives have legal value and take precedence over any other document.

For more information on advance medical directives:



Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec :
ramq.gouv.qc.ca



Québec Region: 418 646-4636
Montreal Region: 514 864-3411
Elsewhere in Québec: 1 800 561-9749
(free of charge)

You can write or cancel your advance medical directives at any time.

We recommend that you keep a copy of your advance medical directives (AMD) and give one to a trusted person so that they can give it to a healthcare professional if necessary.