



## **Medical Assistance in Dying – Q&A**

### **Why would SickKids create this policy?**

SickKids has crafted a draft policy and [an academic paper](#) to address Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) that is only applicable to patients who are over the age of 18 and who meet the rigorous criteria for MAID outlined by the [Government of Canada in Bill C-14](#).

The draft policy was created out of a responsibility to address the change in legislation that legalized MAID. Any person experiencing grievous and irremediable suffering is profoundly tragic. When caring for patients in these circumstances, health-care organizations have a duty to be clear about their own obligations and to respect the evolving rights of patients.

### **Doesn't SickKids only treat youth under 18? Does the policy apply to them?**

In select circumstances, SickKids may treat young adults over the age of 18. The draft policy is only applicable to patients over the age of 18. SickKids is not currently providing MAID for anyone under 18, nor do we have any draft policies for this age group.

### **Are there situations in which MAID requests and administration would be kept secret from parents and other family members, for example, if a capable patient were to indicate that they do not want family members involved?**

SickKids embraces a model of patient and family-centered care, meaning health-care providers always strive to intimately involve families in medical decision-making and MAID would be no different.

In the hypothetical circumstance of a capable patient over the age of 18 explicitly indicating they do not want their family members involved, their clinical team would work to understand and address their concerns. The team would work with the patient, while upholding the Health Care Consent Act and respecting patient confidentiality. Typically, SickKids patients faced with end-of-life decisions want their family members involved.

### **Will SickKids ever facilitate MAID for patients under 18 years old? If so, would you administer MAID without parental consent?**

It is up to Parliament, not the hospital, to determine whether or not MAID will be extended to include youth under 18.

Should the law be extended to capable patients under 18, it is unknown whether Parliament will add any additional provisions, over and above the current requirements. Any changes to the law regarding MAID would be reflected in corresponding changes to a draft hospital policy.