End-of-Life Options and Medical Aid in Dying

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I. Compassion & Choices Vision, Mission & Values
II. Start the Conversation
III. Understand Medical Aid in Dying
IV. Your State
V. Take Action
PART I:
C&C, Our Vision, Mission and Values
About Compassion & Choices

Compassion & Choices is the nation’s oldest, largest and most active nonprofit organization committed to empowering everyone to chart their end of life journey.

We support, empower, advocate and defend
A society that affirms life and accepts the inevitability of death, embraces expanded options for compassionate dying, and empowers everyone to choose end-of-life care that reflects their values, priorities and beliefs.
Compassion & Choices Values

Compassionate
Courageous
Credible
Respectful
Resilient
PART II:
Start the Conversation
We are the authors of our lives

Don’t we all want to write the final chapter?
How People Want Their Lives to End

- Peacefully, at home, with friends and family
- With their pain and suffering minimized
- Having their spiritual values respected
The Downside to Our Changing End-of-Life Healthcare System ...
PART III: Medical Aid in Dying
What is Medical Aid in Dying?

Medical aid in dying is a practice in which a mentally capable adult with a prognosis of six months or less to live requests from their doctor, a prescription for medication that they may self-ingest to bring about a peaceful death.
"I do not know what I would do if I were dying in prolonged and excruciating pain. I am certain, however, that it would be a comfort to be able to consider the options afforded by this bill. And I wouldn’t deny that right to others."

– Governor Jerry Brown
“I’m doing everything I can to extend my life. But no one has the right to prolong my death.”

– Jennifer Glass
The Standard of Care for Medical Aid in Dying Includes Four Core Eligibility Requirements

1. An adult, 18 years or older
2. Terminal illness with prognosis of six months or less to live
3. Mentally capable of making their own healthcare decisions and acting voluntarily
   and
4. Able to self-ingest the medication
Core Guidelines

To meet the standard of care, two doctors must confirm that the patient has six months or less to live — due to terminal illness, not because of age or disability. The primary and consulting physicians must also both confirm that no coercion exists. Further, coercion is subject to criminal prosecution.
Medical Aid in Dying has been Compassionately Practiced in Numerous Authorized Jurisdictions with No Cases of abuse.

Not a single case of abuse or coercion nor any criminal or disciplinary charges have been filed. Not one.
Medical Aid in Dying Gives Patients Autonomy

The patient is in charge. They request the medication. They take it. And they can change their mind at any time.
Medical Aid in Dying Improves End-of-Life Care

Studies show palliative care improve for patients and families in states with medical aid in dying.
Medical Aid in Dying Helps Far More People Than Those Who Choose to Use it

Studies show just having medical aid in dying as an option relieves fear and anxiety — even for those who never choose the option.
Medical Aid in Dying is optional for patients and optional for doctors. No person is required to use it. No one can force a patient to use it. No doctor is mandated to write a prescription.
National Medical Organizations are Neutral or Supportive of Medical Aid in Dying
State Organizations/Associations that are Neutral or Supportive of Medical Aid in Dying

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State Medical Organizations Drop Opposition to Medical Aid in Dying
Medical Aid in Dying is Currently Authorized in Ten Jurisdictions

- Oregon (1994) - ballot initiative
- Washington (2008) - ballot initiative
- Montana (2009) - state supreme court
- Vermont (2013) - legislation
- California (2015) - legislation
- Colorado (2016) - ballot initiative
- Washington DC (2016) - legislation
- Hawai‘i (2018) - legislation
- New Jersey (2019) - legislation
- Maine (2019) - legislation
PART IV:  
YOUR STATE Strategy
Massachusetts History:

- 2012 Ballot initiative lost 51%-49%
- 2017 Mass. Medical Society drops their opposition and goes neutral
- 2019 Current Bill: An Act Relative to End of Life Options, H.1926 and S.1208
- Bill Sponsor: Rep. Louis Kafka (D-8th Norfolk)
  Sen. Will Brownsberger (D-Second Suffolk and Middlesex)
- Hearing held by the Joint Committee on Public Health June 25, 2019
Massachusetts Now:

- Our bill is currently in the Joint Committee on Public Health
- We are working on meeting with legislators and securing a veto proof majority to pass the legislation
  
  Needham 2012 ballot initiative 8,573 – 7,595 in favor of Question 2

  Your Local Reps on H.1926/S.1208:
  
  Rep. Denise Garlick – Undecided
  Sen. Rebecca Rausch – Yes
  Sen. Michael Rush – Undecided

- We will continue to work with our internal/external stakeholders to identify additional supporters.
- The Legislature will go on recess Nov 20th. After recess we will continue to meet with lawmakers and prepare for a bill vote.

  The timing of the vote still to be determined by the bill sponsor, Committee Chair and Speaker.

- Where is Governor Charlie Baker? The Governor has not taken a position on this bill.
PART V:
Take Action!
You Can Help! Specific activities

- Contact your representatives: For Needham:
  - Representative Denise Garlick, Undecided
  - Senator Michael Rush, Undecided

- Our volunteers will help you find/contact your representative for those in cities/towns other than Needham; see us for information on how to contact them

- Thank those who support the legislation and urge them to contact their colleagues in House & Senate
You Can Help - Media Activities

- Share your story
- Call in to a radio show
- Write a letter to the editor
- Educate your network by regularly sending and sharing our news, links and posts
- Become a community public speaker
- Stay informed, on message
Compassion & Choices Resources

End-of-Life Information Center
www.compassionandchoices.org/information

Volunteer Resource Center
www.compassionandchoices.org/Volunteer

Doc2Doc consultation service for physicians
www.compassionandchoices.org/doc2doc
Compassion & Choices is funded almost exclusively by individual donors like you.

With sufficient resources we can realize end-of-life options in every state.

Every donation — of any amount — makes a difference.

Please consider making a donation today.

CompassionAndChoices.org/donate
THANK YOU
VOLUNTEERS MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN!
Care and Choice at the End of Life

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