

Death with Dignity Act

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Approvals

- Signature: Ettore G Palazzo, MD, Chief Executive Officer signed on 1/3/2024, 5:47:00 PM
 - Signature: David J Likosky, MD, Exec Medical Director signed on 1/4/2024, 11:32:10 AM
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Revision Insight

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Revision Note:
Align with Department of Health changes made in July 2023

Policy : Death with Dignity Act

1. **POLICY:**
2. **General Statement:**
 - a. King County Public Hospital District #2 d/b/a EvergreenHealth will allow its health care providers to participate in the process set forth in RCW 70.245 (the "Death with Dignity Act," herein referred to as the "Act") if they so choose, subject to the provisions of this and any other applicable hospital policies. This means that health care providers (as defined by the Act) who are employed and properly credentialed by EvergreenHealth may, as otherwise allowed:
 - b. Perform the duties of an attending provider;
 - c. Perform the duties of a consulting provider;
 - d. Prescribe a life-ending dose of medication;
 - e. Dispense a prescription for a life-ending dose of medication;
 - f. Provide counseling in connection with the provision of a life-ending dose of medication; and/or
 - g. Perform other duties as provided for in the Act.
3. **Ingestion of a Lethal Dose of Medication:**
 - a. Patients may not ingest a lethal dose of medication while on the premises of any EvergreenHealth Facility. "Facility" here means the Evergreen Hospital Medical Center, the Gene and Irene Wockner Hospice, and EvergreenHealth's medical clinics which include, but are not necessarily limited to, the EvergreenHealth Medical Group and EvergreenHealth Geriatric Care.
4. **Notification:**
 - a. If any EvergreenHealth health care provider participates in the process allowed by the Act, that person must immediately notify the EvergreenHealth Chief Medical Officer or his/her authorized designee.
5. **Documentation and Reporting:**
 - a. It is the health care provider's responsibility to comply with all procedures and requirements of the Act and applicable EvergreenHealth policies. This includes, but is not limited to, preparing and completing all documentation required by and in accordance with the Act and applicable EvergreenHealth policies.
 - b. EvergreenHealth administration may, as deemed necessary and appropriate in its judgment, provide oversight and review records to determine whether all safeguards of the Act have been followed and that the required documentation is completed correctly and submitted to the Department of Health.
6. **Health Care Provider Participation:**
 - a. EvergreenHealth does not and shall not require or encourage any health care provider, whether an employee of or credentialed by an entity of EvergreenHealth, to participate in the process allowed by the Act. Only those health care providers who are willing to and desire to participate in the process should do so.
 - b. Any provider who agrees to serve as the Attending Provider may obtain consultation from any provider who agrees to serve as a Consulting Provider. Attending Providers are encouraged to consult with the EvergreenHealth Palliative Medicine Consultation Service. Provider(s) who are part of the Evergreen Palliative Care Consultation Service may serve as a Consulting Provider under the Act.
 - c. EvergreenHealth does not and shall not require that any EvergreenHealth employee caring for patients in any setting, including but not limited to private homes, adult family homes, assisted living facilities, or skilled nursing facilities, be present for patient self-administration of a life-ending dose of medication. If a patient requests the presence of an EvergreenHealth employee during self-administration of a life-ending dose of medication under the Act and at a place other than an EvergreenHealth Facility, and such employee is willing to be present, then such employee may be present.
 - d. EvergreenHealth health care providers must always comply with the appropriate and applicable standard of care, including that which may apply to the process under the Act. All health care providers at EvergreenHealth are expected to appropriately respond to any patient's query about life-ending dosages of medication with clarity and compassion. EvergreenHealth believes that its health care providers have an obligation to openly discuss each patient's concerns, needs, feelings, and desires about the dying process. Health care providers should seek to learn the meaning behind a patient's questions and to help the patient understand the range of available options in end-of-life care, including but not limited to, aggressive management of pain and non-pain symptoms, voluntary cessation of nutrition and hydration, and palliative sedation. Hospice care should be considered and offered to any patient who is terminally ill. Ultimately, EvergreenHealth's goal is to help patients make informed decisions about end-of-life care in the context of a provider-patient relationship in which the privacy and dignity of each patient is accorded the highest regard.
7. **Laws/Regulations:**
 - a. [WAC 246-978 Death with Dignity Act Requirements](#)
 - b. [RCW 70.245 The Washington Death with Dignity Act](#)
8. **Reference Materials:**
 - a. [Frequently Asked Questions About Death With Dignity | Washington State Department of Health](#)
 - b. **Death with Dignity Act Forms**
 - a. [Request for Medication to End My Life in a Humane and Dignified Manner](#)

- b. Attending provider's Compliance Form
- c. Consulting provider's Compliance Form
- d. Psychiatric/Psychological Consultant's Compliance Form
- e. Pharmacy Dispensing Record
- f. Attending provider's After Death Reporting Form

Document ID
Document Department
Document Owner
Original Effective Date
Revised
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16679
District
Gablehouse, Monique B
03/19/2009
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[12/30/2011 Rev. 0], [10/12/2016 Rev. 0]

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Document Department Manager
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Official
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Attachments:
(REFERENCED BY THIS DOCUMENT)

Washington State Department of Health Frequently Asked Questions
Attending provider's After Death Reporting Form
WAC 246-978 Death with Dignity Act Requirements?
Consulting provider's Compliance Form
Attending provider's Compliance Form
Pharmacy Dispensing Record
WAC 246-978 Death with Dignity Act Requirements
Psychiatric/Psychological Consultant's Compliance Form
Frequently Asked Questions About Death With Dignity | Washington State Department of Health
RCW 70.245 The Washington Death with Dignity Act
Request for Medication to End My Life in a Humane and Dignified Manner
RCW 70.245 The Washington Death with Dignity Act
Death with Dignity Act - Pharmacy Policy, Dispensing and Reporting Requirements
Response to Suicide Threat

Other Documents:
(WHICH REFERENCE THIS DOCUMENT)

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<http://lucidocweb.evergreenhealthcare.org/?returnto=%2Fcgi%2Fdoc-gw.pl%3Fref%3Deverg5%3A16679%241>.