

Addition to the code of Ethics in effect at the establishment

End-of-life care

The purpose of the following standards is to ensure that end-of-life persons receive care that is respectful of their dignity and autonomy. In this context it is important first and foremost to identify and recognize certain human rights:

- Every person whose condition requires it has the right receive to end-of-life care;
- A person of full age who is capable of giving consent to care may, at any time, refuse to receive life-sustaining care or to withdraw consent to such care. To the extent provided by the Civil Code, a minor of 14 years of age or over, or in the case of a minor or a person of full age who is incapable of giving consent, the person who may give consent to care on their behalf may also make such a decision. The refusal of care or withdrawal of consent to care may be expressed by any means;
- A person may not be denied end-of-life care for previously having refused to receive certain care or having withdrawn consent to certain care;
- A person of full age who is capable of giving consent may, by means of advance medical directives, specify whether or not they consent to care that may be required by their state of health in the event they become incapable of giving consent. However, in such directives the person may not request medical aid in dying.

With respect to these rights, the provision of end-of-life care is to be guided by the following principles:

- Respect for end-of-life patients and recognition of their rights and freedoms must inspire every act performed in their regard;
- End-of-life patients must be treated, at all times, with understanding, compassion, courtesy and fairness, and with respect for their dignity, autonomy, needs and safety; and
- The healthcare team providing care to end-of-life patients must establish and maintain open and transparent communication with them.

Considering the aforementioned principles, the provision of end-of-life by healthcare professionals must reflect all rights and obligations with respect to citizens:

- Care workers must ensure that the person's death occurs in dignity and while upholding his or her rights;
- A physician may refuse to administer medical aid in dying due to personal beliefs, and a healthcare professional may refuse to participate in its administration for the same reason;
- Such a physician or professional must nonetheless ensure the continuum of care offered to the person in accordance with the code of ethics in effect and the person's wishes.

REFERENCES

- An Act Respecting End-of-Life Care (L.R.Q. S-32)
- An Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services (L.R.Q. S-4.2)