

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Physicians, the law and MAID

As the practice of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) continues to be applied in Canada, there are specific practice guidelines and other pertinent information that physicians must be aware of. The document, [Physicians, the Law & MAID](#) is a resource that focuses on assisting physicians in understanding the law and their responsibilities when a request for MAID arises.

As of August 2019, 833 people in Alberta have chosen MAID as the manner in which to end their lives. Health Canada reported that as of April 2019, 6,749 people have received MAID across Canada. These figures show that patients have continued to seek advice and engage MAID where appropriate. Alberta physicians must be prepared to answer questions patients may ask about engaging MAID.

Whether or not a physician personally supports the concept of MAID, the law is clear that if specific circumstances exist, an individual is entitled to engage MAID. Physicians must understand their obligations under the law and College Standards relating to the rights of these seeking MAID.

Are you ready to answer questions posed to you by terminally ill patients, mature minors, parents of minor children, the elderly to mention a few of the categories of persons wishing to explore the possibility of engaging MAID?

Editor's note: For an analysis of how the legislation has been applied in a recent court challenge, please read the [Health Law Update](#) column in the current issue of *Alberta Doctors' Digest*.

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