

Physician Assisted Suicide – Inpatient/Hospital

It is the policy of PeaceHealth that its facilities, caregivers and volunteers (“caregivers”) must not be involved in Physician-Assisted Suicide.

PeaceHealth respects the rights of patients and physicians to discuss and explore all such treatment options, but fully expects that patients and physicians respect and adhere to PeaceHealth's position as set forth in its policy while undergoing and providing treatment in its facilities, programs, and services.

As a Catholic health care ministry, PeaceHealth's position and policy are based on its fundamental values of respect for the sacredness of life, compassionate care of dying and vulnerable persons, and respect for the integrity of the medical, nursing, and allied health professions. PeaceHealth believes that while individuals are stewards of their own lives, they may not unduly prolong nor hasten the natural process of dying.

PeaceHealth reasserts its commitment to provide appropriate support for dying persons and their families through the final stages of life including:

- Providing and supporting patient self-determination through the use of advance directives;
- Offering hospice, mental health support and other supportive care to patients and families;
- Effective pain and symptom management even if it shortens the patient's life; and
- Other social, spiritual, and spiritual care support and services.

PeaceHealth encourages physicians and patients to engage in conversations regarding the patient's treatment options at the end of life and actively supports the provision of quality palliative care. When, after discussion with the attending physician, the patient's desire and intent is to pursue Physician-Assisted Suicide, the patient is informed:

- That this service is not provided in a PeaceHealth facility;
- That PeaceHealth caregivers and volunteers do not provide, deliver, administer or assist the patient with the lethal prescription while the patient is participating in PeaceHealth hospice services, or is a resident of a PeaceHealth Hospice House;
- That employed physicians do not provide direct provider to provider referral for prescribing a lethal dose of medication;
- Of the options for meeting the patient's care needs including palliative and hospice services for comfort and supportive care as appropriate; and
- That the patient can choose to remain in the hospital and receive treatment recommended by the physician, or choose to be discharged.

Nursing and appropriate ancillary caregivers (e.g., Spiritual Care, Social Services, etc.) provide the patient with effective pain and symptom management in accordance with regional policies and procedures, and offer emotional and spiritual support, as needed. Emotional and spiritual support is offered to family members/significant others, as needed. Nursing and ancillary caregivers do not provide, deliver, administer or assist the patient with lethal doses of medication in pursuit of PAS.

PeaceHealth provides information to individuals requesting information on its policy related to Physician-Assisted Suicide. PeaceHealth caregivers must not provide referral information to patients or families about organizations that actively participate in the arrangement of Physician Assisted Suicide, however, PeaceHealth does not prevent patients from seeking information on Physician Assisted Suicide from available community resources.