

WHO CAN RECEIVE MEDICAL AID IN DYING?

The Act lays down the conditions patients must meet to receive medical aid in dying:

- Be insured according to the *Health Insurance Act*;
- Be at least 18 years of age;
- Be capable of giving consent to care, which means the person must be able to understand the situation and the information given by health professionals as well as make decisions;
- Suffer from a serious, incurable disease;
- Be in an advanced state of irreversible decline in capacity;
- Experience constant and unbearable physical or psychological suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner the person deems tolerable.

Throughout the procedure, **doctors or nurse practitioners (NP) must evaluate if the patient meets all the conditions.**

If any of the conditions are not met, the request is rejected. If the patient's situation changes, another request can be made. In the meantime, quality care appropriate to patient's needs is given.

USEFUL RESOURCES

For more information about the *Act Respecting End-of-Life Care* (requirements, your rights, and the process), go to sante.gouv.qc.ca/en, then click on *Assistance Measures and Programs > Medical aid in dying*.

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

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Reference

Document drawn from the CHUM folder (2017 version): Medical Aid in Dying, Steps Involved.

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-system-and-services/end-of-life-care/medical-aid-in-dying/requirements>

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Une version française est disponible sur demande.

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Québec 

Information
for Patients and
Their Loved Ones



MEDICAL AID IN DYING

Better understanding
this type of care

Québec 

End-of-life care now includes a new care alternative for end-of-life patients whose suffering persists in spite of all treatment: medical aid in dying.

WHAT IS MEDICAL AID IN DYING?

In Quebec, it is a medical act governed by the Act respecting end-of-life care, which authorizes “the administration of medications to patients, at their request, in order to relieve their suffering by hastening death.”

WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO FOLLOW TO REQUEST MEDICAL AID IN DYING?

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

You may address a member of your healthcare team (doctor, nurse, social worker, psychologist, or occupational therapist) who can answer your questions about the process. They will also inform you about the options available to you for care and services. Members of your healthcare team are always available to answer your questions and provide support.

This first step provides information and helps clarify your wishes. **It does not commit you in any way.** In fact, this type of care is confidential: You are free to inform or not to inform your loved ones of your initiative.

WRITTEN REQUEST

If you choose to make an official request, you must fill out and complete a form. You must date and sign the form in the presence of a doctor or other health professional. An independent witness (i.e., someone who has no interest or benefit related to your death) must also countersign it.

You must make the request yourself, in a **free and informed manner**. This means:

- without pressure from staff or people around you; and
- after being given all the information needed to make a decision.

MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

Within a few days of signing your request, you will see two doctors or nurse practitioners (NP). Each of them must confirm that you qualify for medical aid in dying, in line with the conditions stated in the Act. Please note that under some circumstances, there is a mandatory 90-day period before processing. For any questions or to voice your concerns, please contact the doctor or the NP.



You can stop your request for medical aid in dying at any time during the process.

REPARATION

If your request for medical aid in dying is accepted, a doctor will meet with you to confirm:

- your decision;
- that you still qualify for medical aid in dying, in line with the conditions stated in the Act; and
- the location where you wish to receive the care.

If you want to pursue the process, you can then plan how you would like things to go. For example, you can determine the date and where it will happen, the people you want by your side and, if you wish, the rituals performed.

Your healthcare team can help you prepare.

ON THE DAY

You will receive your care in the presence of a doctor or a nurse practitioner (NP), a nurse, and other professionals according to your needs. The doctor or the NP will ask you one last time to confirm that you want to receive medical aid in dying. Once you have given your consent, the doctor will give you medications that will put you to sleep. The healthcare team will stay with you until you die; your loved ones can also stay with you, if you wish.