

Reference#	19009
Effective:	08/10/2020
Last Revised:	08/31/2023

DEATH WITH DIGNITY/MEDICAL AID IN DYING ACT POLICY

PURPOSE:

To respect the patient's wishes about his/her end-of-life care, treatment and services in accordance with usual and acceptable standards of practice, ethics and applicable state and federal law, including state specific "Death with Dignity," or Medical Aid in Dying [MAID] acts.

POLICY:

1. Eden Health recognizes applicable state laws *and judgments* that recognize a qualified person's right to end his or her life through the voluntary self-administration of lethal medications prescribed by a qualified medical provider (MD/DO, ARNP, or PA) for that purpose.
2. A qualified person is defined by individual states' Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity Acts or judicial findings.
3. If a patient elects to pursue the option of Medical Aid in Dying, Eden Health employees may discuss Death with Dignity as a treatment option for terminally ill patients and provide resources about dispensing pharmacies and participating providers.
4. Members of the Medical Staffs of Eden Health, and other providers employed by Eden Health, may counsel patients and serve in the role of Attending Provider and/or Consulting Provider as defined by and in accordance with the Act. Providers employed by Eden Health who choose to participate in "the Act" should be familiar with the reporting and documentation requirements.
5. Eden Health personnel may, at their option, serve as witnesses for patients who elect Death with Dignity.
6. Eden Health personnel may not assist patients in ingesting Life Ending Medications.
7. In keeping with Eden Health policy regarding Medication Administration and Documentation, Eden Health nurses and physicians may prepare, mix or assist in the preparation of MAID medication at the patient's request in order to assure family safety and appropriate preparation.
8. Eden Health employees may be present during, but not assist in any way, in ingestion or self-administration of MAID medication at the patient's or family's request.

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9. Eden Health respects individual employees' right to decline to provide education and/or care to any patient choosing Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity, whether for religious or other reasons. Employees will be expected to refer such declined cases to willing providers as identified by individual agencies.
 - a. A nurse on-call may need to respond to a patient's immediate needs for care if there is no other nurse immediately available.

10. Eden Health does not take any disciplinary or discriminatory action against health care providers for providing to their patients medically accurate information within scope as described, or information relating to Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity.

PROCEDURE:

1. Should a patient request information regarding the Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity Act:
 - a. Eden Health employees will provide medically accurate information within their scope and refer the patient to the patient's attending provider and/or appropriate community resources.
 - b. Eden Health employees and volunteers will continue to provide care within the scope of services the patient has elected.

2. Should a patient make it known that he or she has requested participation or is a participant in the Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity Act:
 - a. Eden Health employees and volunteers will continue to provide care within the scope of his or her professional role and consistent with the services the patient has elected.
 - b. Any questions or discussion specific to Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity shall be referred to the patient's attending provider and/or clinical personnel with appropriate experience.
 - c. Hospice providers employed or contracted under Eden Hospice may choose to act as the consulting and/or attending provider to document terminal prognosis and decisional capacity.

3. If a patient resides in a facility, Eden Health employees will coordinate with the patient and facility to honor the facility policy regarding MAID.
 - a. If the patient must change their place of residence relating to MAID, Eden Health employees and volunteers will continue to provide care within the scope of their professional role and consistent with the services the patient has elected.

4. If a patient should choose to stop eating or drinking or taking medication with an intended outcome similar to that under the Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity, Eden Health employees and volunteers will continue to provide care and support

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consistent with services, but may not provide, administer, or assist with administering any medication to hasten the patient's death nor knowingly participate in any activity hastening the patient's death.

5. If a patient states an intention to participate in the Medical Aid in Dying/Death with Dignity Act, any Eden Health employee or volunteer morally opposed to The Act will have the option of transferring care responsibilities of the patient to another staff member per the *Staff Rights and Ethical Dilemmas in Patient Care Policy*.
 - a. A nurse on-call may need to respond to a patient's immediate needs for care if there is no other nurse immediately available.

6. If an Eden Health employee or volunteer is contacted by a patient's family/ caregiver or arrives after a patient has taken MAID medication, the employee or volunteer will provide care and/or notify his or her direct supervisor as appropriate to the employee or volunteer's role.
 - a. No additional medications will be administered by the employee without express direction from the patient's attending provider or medical director.

7. All care provided to the patient will be documented within the clinical record.

8. For patients receiving hospice services, bereavement care will continue to be provided for the bereaved as identified by the bereavement plan of care and consistent with hospice services. Bereavement services will also be offered to employees/volunteers and consistent with hospice support services.