



## ***CPSS Council Approves Policy on Physician-Assisted Dying***

SASKATOON, November 20, 2015 – During its regular meeting today, the Council of the College adopted a new policy on Physician-Assisted Dying. Physician-assisted dying is defined in the Supreme Court’s decision in Carter v. Canada as, “the situation where a physician provides or administers medication that intentionally brings about the patient’s death, at the request of the patient.”

The new policy was developed in preparation for February 2016, when the current federal law against Physician-Assisted Dying is expected to cease being in effect, following the February 2015 decision by the Supreme Court of Canada to strike it down. The effect of this decision is that, unless a further extension is granted by the Supreme Court, after February 6, 2016, it will not be illegal for a physician to assist a patient to die if:

- 1) The patient consents;
- 2) The patient has a grievous medical condition;
- 3) The condition is not remediable using treatments that the patient is willing to accept; and,
- 4) The patient’s suffering is intolerable to the patient.

Council’s decision is based upon the recommendations of the Advisory Group on Physician-Assisted Dying that was struck by the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities (FMRAC) as well as upon a draft framework from the Canadian Medical Association (CMA). It follows a process of deliberation over several months by a dedicated CPSS committee, and has been the object of consultations with physicians, members of the public, national medical organizations, and several discussions by Council.

The policy outlines in detail the **requirements for access to physician-assisted dying**. The policy further specifies that, “the attending physician must be available to care for the patient until the patient’s death, if the patient so requests.”

“The College must uphold the law and take the leadership for physicians in developing regulations and recommendations in preparation for the upcoming legal changes on physician responsibility pertaining to Physician-Assisted Dying. Council feels that a balanced decision has been achieved by giving thoughtful consideration to all perspectives.” said Dr. Grant Stoneham, president of the Council.

The policy comes into effect immediately and the full text will be made available early next week on the College website at [www.cps.sk.ca](http://www.cps.sk.ca).

*The mission of the **College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan** is to serve the public by regulating the practice of medicine and guiding the profession to achieve the highest standards of care. It currently issues licenses to more than 2,500 physicians and surgeons in the province, as well as over 1,400 corporate permits.*

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