

Hello there,

While I am opposed to any form of euthanasia, I understand that the province will be developing legislation to regulate assisted death in the near future. I am very concerned about the protection of conscience rights for health care workers and healthcare facilities who cannot participate because of their moral or ethical convictions.

Provincial legislation must have conscience protections for health care workers and facilities like hospitals, nursing homes, or hospices. This legislation must protect health care workers from being forced to perform or refer for these procedures or being discriminated against because of their conscientious objection. In the same way, facilities must not be required to provide euthanasia on their premises.

No foreign jurisdiction that allows euthanasia requires physicians to refer or facilities to provide it. For example, California's law says that participation in any activities related to assisted suicide is voluntary.

Objecting health care workers and facilities are not able to participate in euthanasia for reasons of conscience, ethics, organizational values, religious convictions or the Hippocratic Oath. Many are members of religious traditions that consider referral of any kind, or allowing assisted death on facility premises, as forms of participation in euthanasia.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* protects Canadian citizens against being forced by the state to do things against their conscience or religious convictions. There are ways to respect patient decision making while also respecting the rights of caregivers and facilities not to be involved.

Objecting caregivers and facilities are motivated by their concern for the well being of the patient. I would like to go to one of these doctors or be cared for in one of these facilities. If they are forced out of Canadian healthcare, I will not have this option. This restricts my freedom of choice. I would also like to see increased funding for palliative care, mental health and support for people with disabilities. People who are desperate need to have supports in place so that they have an alternative to assisted death.

Sincerely,  
AJ (Andrew) Donauer