

Bill C 14 is of great importance to all Canadians and in this regard, I write to request that the following points be considered with respect to amendments to Bill C 14:

Because of the serious consequences of error or abuse and due to the relative facility for exploitation of the elderly and vulnerable, a court order should be required to ensure a fair and comprehensive review of the facts in each case including the presence of informed consent, the absence of external pressure and that the medical condition meets the criteria as defined by the Criminal Code. A court order is also the best way to ensure the independence of medical and nurse practitioners. Court review is particularly important in cases where the patient is unable to sign his or her consent.

The category of eligible patients should exclude any person under the age of 18 years and no persons should have the right to make such a decision on behalf of another.

There should be independent monitoring of the administration of drugs to ensure consent.

Freedom of conscience for pharmacists and health care workers must be respected and include the right to refuse to participate in or to refer a patient for assisted suicide. Likewise, no institution should be penalized in any way for refusing to participate in or refer a patient for assisted suicide.

Sincerely,
Kim Thorpe