



Canadian Psychiatric Association  
*Dedicated to quality care*  
Association des psychiatres du Canada  
*Dévouée aux soins de qualité*

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Mr. Anthony Housefather, MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights  
131 Queen Street, 6-07  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Housefather,

Thank you for your invitation to submit a brief to the committee regarding bill C-14. We understand the committee is specifically asking for any proposed recommendations for changes to the text of bill C-14.

The Canadian Psychiatric Association (CPA) is the national voice for Canada's 4,700 psychiatrists and more than 900 psychiatric residents. Founded in 1951, the association is dedicated to promoting an environment that fosters excellence in clinical care, education and research.

As you may be aware, CPA presented to both the Special Joint Committee and the External Panel on issues relevant to mental illness and physician-assisted death/medical assistance in dying (PAD/MAID), and further corresponded with the ministers of justice and of health on the issue (we are happy to forward you any of that correspondence if you do not already have copies of it).

CPA does not have any specific recommendations for changes to the proposed text of bill C-14. As outlined in our prior submissions, there are key issues particular to mental illness that need to be considered. We are pleased the preamble to bill C-14 commits to develop non-legislative measures to explore issues requiring further study, specifically including where mental illness is the sole underlying medical condition. The CPA understands such study is intended to occur without prejudgement or presupposition of outcomes.

This aligns well with the recommendations CPA made in correspondence to Justice Minister Wilson-Raybould and Health Minister Philpott, in which we pointed out that "there is no established standard of care in Canada, or as far as CPA is aware of in the world, for defining the threshold when typical psychiatric conditions should be considered irremediable," and suggested additional time was required to further explore the relationship between psychiatric illnesses (when they are the sole underlying medical condition) and the PAD/MAID framework. As outlined in our prior submissions to the Special Joint Committee and the External Panel, there are key issues particular to mental illness that need to be considered to ensure they are properly addressed in any PAD/MAID framework, which is why CPA supports further study of these issues without presupposing the outcome.

Given that we do not have any specific suggestions for changes to the text of bill C-14, CPA is not requesting a time to appear before the committee during its hearings this week. Thank you for seeking our input, I hope our comments above are helpful during your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

K. Sonu Gaid, MD, FRCPC, FCPA  
President