

Mike MacPherson
Committee Clerk,
Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights
House of Commons
131 Queen Street, 6-07
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

April 29th, 2016

Dear Mr. MacPherson,

We thank you for the opportunity to provide our concerns and input on the issues raised by Bill C-14.

Concerns

Our concerns include the following:

- Lack of accessibility and availability of hospice palliative care that would ensure excellence in quality end-of-life-care for all Canadians.
- Lack of conscience rights for health care professionals fails to support our rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- The obligation for all health care institutions to provide medical-aid-in-dying, again ignores Charter Rights.

Input/Suggestions

1. Support further development and education for hospice/palliative care in Canada.
2. Ensure that conscience rights for health care professionals are guarded and protected.
3. Ensure 'safe places' for the many who actually 'fear' admission to acute, long-term (nursing and residential), and hospice/palliative care facilities where MAID is available. They (particularly the elderly and those with multiple and complex health issues) fear they will be subtly encouraged to take this option.
4. The conscience issue could be resolved by removing MAID from our health care system and establishing a separate funded system implemented by an interprofessional team of doctors and nurse practitioners with special training, licensure and regulations who actually choose to provide MAID. There must be strict judicial oversight of each step in the process to protect the vulnerable and to maintain strict criteria for selection of persons who qualify. Accessibility for

outlying and remote areas could be ensured through the provision of MAID by mobile units. Assessments could be done by video conference as necessary.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns and input.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Jane Pritchard, MD, CCFP, FCFP

D. Jean Echlin, MScN, RN