

## Proposals from Working Group Advocacy to the General Assembly on Advocacy Activities for the World Federation of Right to Die Societies.

The World Federation of Right to Die Societies (WF) called on members to suggest participants for a Working Group Advocacy to discuss whether the WF should be participating in international, regional and/or national advocacy efforts and if so, how.

The participants included: Susan DesJardins as chair (Canada), Sten Niklasson (Sweden), Monica Castano (Colombia), Juha Hanninen (Finland), Erika Preisig (Switzerland), Anais Weinberger (Austria), Steve Walker (Australia), Tung Lam (Hong Kong). After our second meeting it was proposed that we should ask David Grube (Compassion and Choices, Oregon) to join our group as his organization has been instrumental in expanding legislation from Oregon to other states and this might inform our advocacy activity proposals and he kindly accepted.

The working group were given the following four questions to answer:

1. Can there be a time schedule international advocacy efforts for the next 5 years?
2. Is it desirable to develop special training and or mentoring programs to be used at all levels?
3. Is creating a Facebook (or any other social medium) community an asset for supporting (inter) national advocacy?
4. Etc.

The committee has met virtually five times to discuss these questions and below are our proposals of advocacy activities that the WF should undertake. It should be noted that it was considered valuable by all that the WF should engage in advocacy activities on the international, regional and national level. The international level is necessary in order to support grassroots efforts by members as international/regional recognition would help the public and national policy makers to acknowledge the positive stance to MAiD at these higher levels. Though there are cultural differences between jurisdictions that will determine the form in which assisted dying takes place, this does not preclude the development of right-to-die legislation nor the recognition of this right at the international/regional level.

The proposals below comprise a collection of activities to support national bottom-up efforts by members, but also seek recognition of MAiD by international and regional bodies. It is up to the General Assembly to decide how resources could be allocated, be it staff, volunteers with specific skills such as research/analysis, funding) to support this work. For several of the proposals below, the WG Advocacy is willing to, together with the allocated resources, examine the best way to move forward should the GA suggest that this is a priority.

### 1. Can there be a time schedule of international advocacy efforts over the next five years?

3-5 Years

1. Achieve NGO status with ECOSOC within UN. Steps to doing so:
  - a) Apply for NGO status. We noted that the process is long and arduous, but it is an undertaking that could be very beneficial to having the right to die recognized at the international level. Also, the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition has NGO status with ECOSOC, so the UN should accept WFRTDS as a counterweight.
  - b) Contact current NGOs that have NGO status and might be willing to assist us in achieving this status and might be willing to partner us in making sure that we get invited to participate if there is a call for NGO participation in which we could be beneficial.
2. WF should encourage WHO to make a statement about MAiD. Keep abreast of the open calls within WHO to ensure WF participates at this level.
3. WF should proactively seek to intervene on national/regional court cases using pro bono legal firms to encourage MAiD legislation at these levels.

#### 1-2 years

1. WF should Fund a study of the fundamental aspects characterizing access to assisted dying. The goal is to advance access to assisted dying in other jurisdictions. WF raises \$15,000 to fund this research, possibly through crowdfunding among members, to hire a researcher or university student to do this research. This should include a comparative table of terminologies & criteria/processes across jurisdictions necessary for policy makers in all countries to have an idea of what the options are and navigate in the forest of options. Many pressure groups don't use the same conceptual structure and by identifying the terminology and implications for legislation this could help a lot to further the narrative in many countries.
3. WF should provide an educational toolkit on the website that members can use to encourage understanding of MAiD among the public given that public support is essential to achieving legislation.
4. WF should provide an advocacy toolkit for members to select advocacy techniques that would assist them in attaining MAiD legislation.
5. Get WF as one of the top 2 sites for google searches on assisted dying

#### 2. Is it desirable to develop special training and or mentoring programs to be used at all levels?

- Absolutely, this in the form of an advocacy toolkit and educational toolkit that outlines steps that can be taken to advocate for assisted dying. (see above)
- Also support members to create medical training kits (ie: ensure this process is embedded within medical training of doctors) or mentoring programmes for medical practitioners to assist them in the process as it can be quite daunting. There are already models in the US as well as Canada's CAMAP (Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Providers) which offers much publicly available information and webinars on MAiD, for members and member clinicians.

<https://camapcanada.ca/publications/>

#### 3. Is creating a Facebook (or any other social medium) community an asset for supporting (inter) national advocacy?

- The searches WF has already established a Facebook page, though it has not “taken off” it has to start somewhere and there is some support. It is essential to share information and resources to help one another achieve legislation.
- WF should ensure that its own website become one of the top two sites seen when someone “international organization assisted dying” or equivalent terminology on google.