

Lífsvirðing  
- mitt líf, mitt val

**HOW ARE WE PROGRESSING IN  
ICELAND?**

**TORONTO,  
3 NOVEMBER 2022**

# REPORT FROM ICELAND

Founded in 2017

190 members

3.900 Facebook followers

Nordic cooperation

[www.lifsvirding.is](http://www.lifsvirding.is)

# WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN ICELAND SINCE 2017?

Terminology

Meetings and conferences

Numerous articles and interviews

Meetings with politicians, association of nurses and physicians, clergy association, disability alliance etc.

Parliamentary resolutions

Opposition: physicians, palliative care, representatives of the church, disabled people

Survey among physicians and nurses (2021)

Surveys on assisted dying (2019 and 2022)

# SURVEY AMONG PHYSICIANS AND NURSES

B.S. DISSERTATION OF  
BRYNHILDUR K.  
ÁSGEIRSDÓTTIR

- Over 54% of physicians and 71% of nurses are positive towards assisted dying
  - Resp. 18% and 20% in 2010
- Greater support among general practitioners than specialists
- Only 18% not in favour of assisted death of any kind
- Only for the dying (51%)
- Also for people experiencing unbearable existential agony (54%)

# SURVEY AMONG PHYSICIANS AND NURSES

## WHY ARE YOU AGAINST ASSISTED DYING?

- Dying people in existential agony should receive the best palliative care available. That way, medical professionals can best help them (70%)
- Killing people is not in line with the goals of nursing or medicine (60%)
- People will feel compelled to ask for assisted dying because of difficult circumstances or pressure from others/society (56%)
- It can never morally become the patient's right (and the doctor's duty) to receive aid in dying before natural death occurs (42%)
- Death is final, and potentially wrongly decided assisted death cannot be reversed. It is too high a price to pay (40%)
- The sanctity of life is indisputable; no one should shorten another person's life (9%)

# SURVEY AMONG PHYSICIANS AND NURSES

## WHY ARE YOU FOR ASSISTED DYING?

- Dying people in existential agony and unbearable conditions should be able to choose between palliative care or assisted dying within a safe framework (58%)
- Autonomy over one's life until the end is every individual's most important moral value. A request for assisted dying is a request for help in dying on your terms, with dignity, and at your time (56%)
- Life is the ultimate value of people, and in the face of death and unbearable suffering, assisted dying may be the last good thing that an individual asks for from the health care system (44%)
- Helping someone die is not the goal of physicians or nurses, but assisted dying is at the request of the person dying and never advised by health professionals. In the eyes of the person dying, it is a good deed, not wrongdoing (37%)

# SURVEY AMONG PHYSICIANS AND NURSES

## METHODS

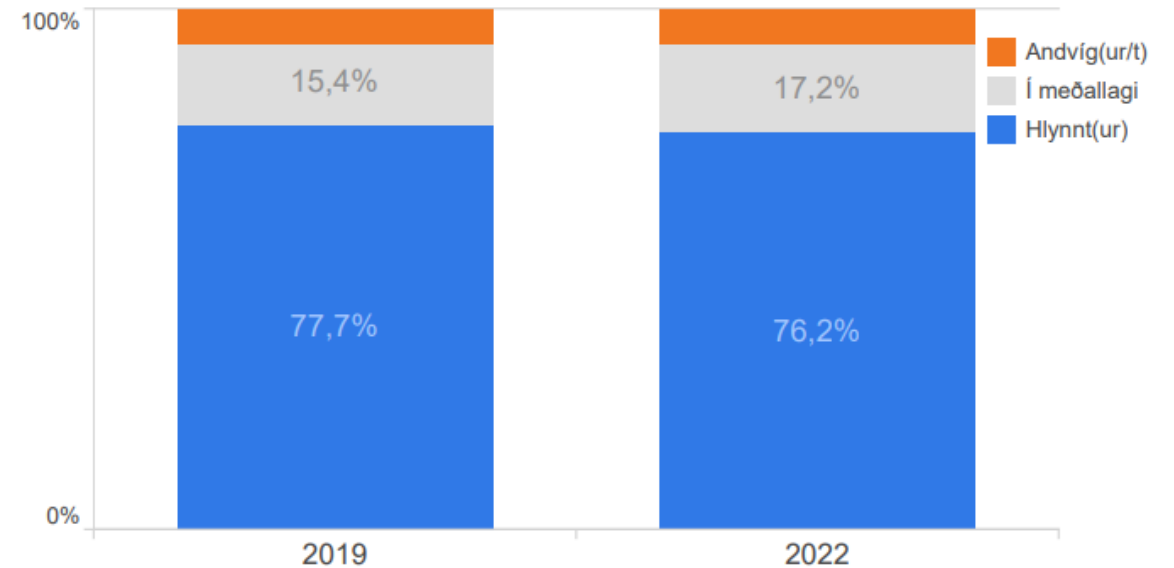
A physician administers an intravenous injection to the individual (13,5%)

The individual self-administers the drug provided by a physician (20%)

A physician either gives the injection or writes a prescription which the individual collects at a pharmacy and administers himself (40%)

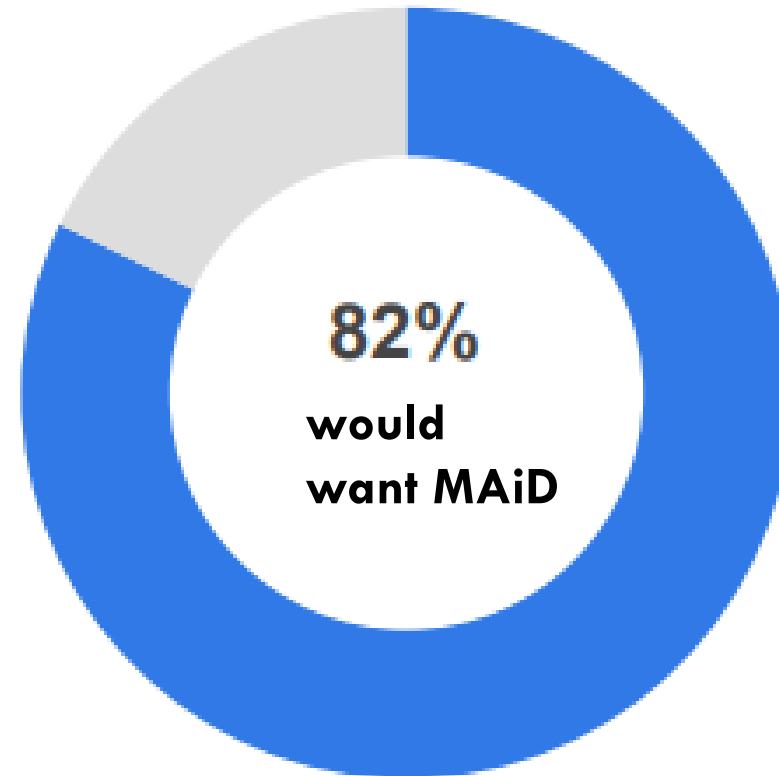
# SURVEY 2022

1. ARE YOU IN FAVOR OR AGAINST A PERSON RECEIVING AID TO END HIS LIFE (ASSISTED DYING) IF HE HAS A DISEASE OR CONDITION THAT HE FINDS UNBEARABLE AND HAS BEEN DECLARED INCURABLE?





2. WOULD YOU WANT TO BE ABLE TO GET THE ASSISTANCE OF A PHYSICIAN IN ICELAND TO END YOUR LIFE (ASSISTED DYING) IF YOU HAD A DISEASE OR CONDITION THAT YOU FOUND UNBEARABLE AND HAD BEEN DECLARED INCURABLE, OR WOULD YOU NOT WANT TO?



### 3. WHY ARE YOU AGAINST ASSISTED DYING?

**Risk of abuse (46,9%)**

**Assisted dying is against my moral values  
(21,9%)**

**Palliative care is sufficient to alleviate  
suffering (11,6%)**

**Assisted dying is against the ethical  
obligations of physicians (12,0%)**

**Assisted dying is against the professional  
obligations of physicians (6,3%)**

**For religious reasons (1,3%)**

**4. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS OF ASSISTED DYING DO YOU THINK ICELANDERS SHOULD ADOPT IF ASSISTED DYING WERE TO BE LEGALIZED?**

**The physician administers an intravenous injection to the individual (48,4%)**

**The individual self-administers the drug at a premises provided by an association that supplies the drug through a physician (19,6%)**

**The physician writes a prescription which the individual collects at a pharmacy and administers himself (6,7%)**

**I don't want to answer (25,3%)**