



Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019

Access Standard

This Access Standard is issued by the CEO of the Department of Health under section 156 of the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019* (the Act) and takes effect from the date of issue.

Purpose

This Access Standard sets out how the State intends to facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for persons ordinarily resident in Western Australia, including how the State intends to facilitate Western Australian residents' access to:

- a. the services of medical practitioners and other persons who carry out functions under the Act
- b. prescribed substances
- c. information about accessing voluntary assisted dying.

It also sets out how the State intends to facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for regional residents of Western Australia.

Access to services of medical practitioners and other persons who carry out functions under the Act

The State intends to facilitate WA residents' access to the services of medical practitioners and other persons who carry out functions under the Act by establishing a Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Care Navigator Service. This service will:

- provide information to enable a person to self-establish access to a medical practitioner for voluntary assisted dying
- assist a person to access a medical or nurse practitioner
- maintain a confidential list of medical and nurse practitioners held by the Service for the purpose of linking a person to a willing practitioner
- advise a person on how to access interpreter services for consultations (or how to request access via their practitioner)
- advise a person accessing voluntary assisted dying on the appointment of a contact person (where relevant)
- advise a person accessing voluntary assisted dying on the requirements for witnesses
- advise a person accessing voluntary assisted dying on how and when to contact the Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service (if required)
- administer access to support under the Regional Access Support Scheme for persons accessing voluntary assisted dying where relevant (refer to Access for regional residents).

Access to prescribed substances

The State intends to facilitate a WA residents' access to prescribed substances under the Act by establishing the Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service. This service will:

- establish a secure supply chain for Schedule 4 and/or Schedule 8 substances approved as voluntary assisted dying substances
- provide services as an Authorised Supplier under the Act (including to possess, prepare and supply the voluntary assisted dying substance)
- provide services statewide; either directly from the metropolitan service or via an Authorised Supplier network of regional spoke services depending on the circumstances surrounding appropriate and safe supply of the prescribed substance.

Access to information about voluntary assisted dying

The State intends to facilitate WA residents' access to information about voluntary assisted dying by:

- developing information resources on voluntary assisted dying
- establishing a website on voluntary assisted dying
- establishing a Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Care Navigator Service that will be a statewide point of contact for voluntary assisted dying information
- encouraging health providers and health services to be ready to receive enquiries for information from people and their families and be able to respond in a patient-centred manner.

Access for regional residents

The State intends to facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for regional residents by establishing a Regional Access Support Scheme that provides support for regional residents to facilitate their access to voluntary assisted dying. This will be managed by the Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Care Navigator Service.

The Regional Access Support Scheme will include provision for support for persons accessing voluntary assisted dying to travel to see a practitioner or support for a practitioner to travel to see the person. This includes travel for interpreter services where interpreting cannot be effectively or appropriately undertaken via telephone or audiovisual communication.

In addition to the Regional Access Support Scheme, it is intended that:

- the Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Care Navigator Service will include provision for regional residents to receive information and support face-to-face if required
- the State will provide clarity in relation to where telephone/email/audiovisual communication can be appropriately utilised (and where it cannot). This is particularly important for regional residents
- the State will continue to monitor any developments in relation to the Commonwealth *Criminal Code Act 1995* that may allow for future use of communication modalities that improve ease of access for regional residents
- The Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service will actively engage with regional residents to ensure safe, timely and appropriate supply of the voluntary assisted dying substance and provide support to regionally based Authorised Disposers to facilitate disposal that is as convenient as possible for regional residents.

This Access Standard is issued on 19 November 2020.



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