

## Information for the Contact Person

Under the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019* (the Act), an eligible person can legally access medication that will cause their death. This medication is called the voluntary assisted dying substance. The person may choose to take the voluntary assisted dying substance themselves (known as self-administration) or may have the substance administered to them by an eligible medical practitioner or nurse practitioner (known as practitioner administration).

Under the Act, a person who intends to self-administer the voluntary assisted dying substance must appoint someone to be their Contact Person. The Contact Person has a special role and associated responsibilities under the Act. You have received this information sheet because you are the appointed Contact Person for someone who is currently in the process of accessing voluntary assisted dying. This information sheet will help you understand your role and responsibilities under the Act.

If you are not aware or disagree that you are the Contact Person for someone seeking voluntary assisted dying, please contact the [Voluntary Assisted Dying Board Secretariat](#) immediately. The Voluntary Assisted Dying Board Secretariat can be contacted by email and phone during normal work hours.

Email: [VADBoard@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:VADBoard@health.wa.gov.au)

Phone: (08) 9222 4222 during business hours  
(and ask to be put through to the Voluntary Assisted Dying Board Secretariat)

### People who can help and support you

The WA VAD Statewide Care Navigator Service is available to support you and provide you with information. The service is nurse-led and staffed by Care Navigators who are experienced health professionals familiar with the legal and practical aspects of voluntary assisted dying in WA. The Care Navigators can explain your responsibilities as the Contact Person and also answer any questions you may have about the voluntary assisted dying process in general.

The WA VAD Statewide Care Navigator Service can be contacted by email and phone during normal work hours.

Email: [VADcarenavigator@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:VADcarenavigator@health.wa.gov.au)

Phone: (08) 9431 2755 during business hours

### WA VAD Statewide Pharmacy Service

The WA VAD Statewide Pharmacy Service (SWPS) is also able to support you and provide you with information.

Email: [StatewidePharmacy@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:StatewidePharmacy@health.wa.gov.au)

Phone: (08) 6383 3088 during business hours

## What am I allowed to do as the Contact Person?

The Act allows the Contact Person to:

- Receive the voluntary assisted dying substance from the Authorised Supplier and then supply it (hand it over) to the person who is accessing voluntary assisted dying. You must also give the person the written information that accompanies the substance.
- Give any unused or remaining voluntary assisted dying substance to an Authorised Disposer for safe disposal.

The Authorised Supplier is a pharmacist who is part of SWPS and is legally allowed to supply the voluntary assisted dying substance.

An Authorised Disposer is any of several pharmacists at registered pharmacies and hospitals throughout Western Australia who can legally dispose of the voluntary assisted dying substance.

## What are my 'obligations' as the Contact Person?

Obligations are things that you **must** do under the Act, if they apply to your situation. As the Contact Person, you are obligated to:

1. Inform the Coordinating Practitioner if the person accessing voluntary assisted dying dies.

This should be done if the person dies from taking the voluntary assisted dying substance or if they die from another cause (e.g. their underlying illness, disease or medical condition). The Coordinating Practitioner is responsible for organising the voluntary assisted dying process for the person and it is important that they are informed of the person's death as soon as possible.

2. Give any unused or remaining voluntary assisted dying substance to an Authorised Disposer for safe disposal.

Given the lethal nature of the voluntary assisted dying substance, it is important that you give any unused or remaining substance to an Authorised Disposer as soon as possible (and definitely within 14 days after the day on which the person dies or decides not to use the substance). If you fail to do this, you could face a 12-month prison sentence under the Act.

## What exactly do I need to do to meet my obligations as the Contact Person?

The voluntary assisted dying substance is carefully measured. It is very unlikely that a person who self-administers the substance will leave any remaining. However, if the Contact Person knows that this has happened, the remaining voluntary assisted dying substance must be given to an Authorised Disposer by the Contact Person within the required timeframe.

People who choose to access voluntary assisted dying are often very sick and their circumstances may change quickly. If someone dies before they can self-administer the voluntary assisted dying substance, or if they change their mind about self-administering the substance, the unused substance must be given to an Authorised Disposer by the Contact Person within the required timeframe.

There are three potential situations in which you, as the Contact Person, will need to ensure you meet your obligations under the Act.

### **Situation 1 – The person has died by self-administration of the voluntary assisted dying substance**

If the person dies by self-administration of the voluntary assisted dying substance, then you, as the Contact Person, must:

1. inform the person's Coordinating Practitioner that they have died; and

2. if you know there is any remaining substance, you must give it to an Authorised Disposer. This should be done as soon as possible but **must be done within 14 days** of the person's death.

### **Situation 2 – The person has died without self-administering the voluntary assisted dying substance**

If the person already has the voluntary assisted dying substance but dies before self-administering it, then you, as the Contact Person, must:

1. inform the person's Coordinating Practitioner that they have died; and
2. if you know there is any unused substance, you must give it to an Authorised Disposer. This should be done as soon as possible but **must be done within 14 days** of the person's death.

### **Situation 3 – The person has revoked their self-administration decision**

This describes a situation where the person has changed their mind about self-administering the voluntary assisted dying substance, and they have informed their Coordinating Practitioner of their decision.

If the person already has the voluntary assisted dying substance then you, as the Contact Person, must:

1. give the unused substance to an Authorised Disposer. This should be done as soon as possible but **must be done within 14 days** of the person revoking their decision.

If the person has revoked their self-administration decision, they may choose to have a practitioner administer the voluntary assisted dying substance. In this case, SWPS will supply the medical doctor or nurse practitioner responsible with new voluntary assisted dying substance.

### **Will I know if the person has been supplied with the voluntary assisted dying substance?**

If you are the Contact Person for someone accessing voluntary assisted dying you are probably in close contact with them. Depending on your situation, they may have told you directly that they have the voluntary assisted dying substance, or you may have received the substance from SWPS on the person's behalf.

When completing the form to become the Contact Person, both you and the person accessing voluntary assisted dying are asked for permission for the Board to inform you that the substance has been supplied. If you have both agreed, then when SWPS supplies the substance, the Board will let you know.

### **Where can I find an Authorised Disposer?**

Attached is a list of Authorised Disposers. This information is also available on the website of the Department of Health [www2.health.wa.gov.au/-/media/Corp/Documents/Health-for/Voluntary-assisted-dying/Authorised-disposer-list.pdf](http://www2.health.wa.gov.au/-/media/Corp/Documents/Health-for/Voluntary-assisted-dying/Authorised-disposer-list.pdf).

You must only return any unused or remaining substance to an Authorised Disposer as per this list. It may be a good idea to confirm that an Authorised Disposer will be available ahead of time. Please contact an Authorised Disposer directly with any questions about opening hours or availability. You will need to give your name, address and contact details to the Authorised Disposer when you give them the substance.

### **What should I do if I cannot get to an Authorised Disposer within 14 days?**

If you are concerned that you will not be able to return the substance within the required 14 days, contact SWPS as soon as possible. SWPS is available by email and phone during normal work hours.

Email: [StatewidePharmacy@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:StatewidePharmacy@health.wa.gov.au)

Phone: (08) 6383 3088 during business hours

## What should I do if I do not want to be the Contact Person anymore?

If you have changed your mind about being the Contact Person for someone accessing voluntary assisted dying, you can withdraw from this role.

You must inform the person of your decision. Once you have done this you are no longer the Contact Person and they will need to appoint someone else to the role.

Should this situation arise, it is recommended that you also inform the person's Coordinating Practitioner that you are no longer their Contact Person.

## WA VAD Statewide Care Navigator Service

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Phone: (08) 9431 2755 during business hours

## Other information

General information on voluntary assisted dying in Western Australia is available on the Department of Health website [ww2.health.wa.gov.au/voluntaryassisteddying](http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/voluntaryassisteddying)

## Key contact information

It is recommended that you let the Coordinating Practitioner know that you have accepted the role of Contact Person.

## Coordinating Practitioner

Name: .....

Work address: .....

Phone: .....

Email: .....

## Published list of Authorised Disposers

Registered health practitioners who belong to the class of pharmacy listed below are Authorised Disposers for the purposes of the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019*.

Specified/Employed role	Specified service
Pharmacist <sup>1</sup> with overall responsibility <sup>2</sup>	Registered Pharmacy <sup>3,4</sup>
Pharmacist <sup>1</sup> -in-Charge (or Pharmacist Manager)	Registered Pharmacy <sup>3,4</sup>
Chief Pharmacist <sup>1</sup> or role listed below where Chief Pharmacist is unavailable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Pharmacy (hospital pharmacy department)</li> <li>• Head of Department (Pharmacy)</li> <li>• Coordinator of Pharmacy</li> <li>• Regional Chief Pharmacist</li> <li>• Deputy Director of Pharmacy (hospital pharmacy department)</li> <li>• Deputy Chief Pharmacist</li> <li>• Supervisor Pharmacist</li> <li>• Senior Regional Clinical Pharmacist</li> <li>• Co-ordinator of Inpatient Pharmacy (Pharmacist)</li> <li>• Co-ordinator of Outpatient Pharmacy (Pharmacist)</li> <li>• Pharmacy Department Dispensary Manager (Pharmacist) (or Pharmacy Dispensary Manager (Pharmacist))</li> </ul>	A hospital service <sup>5</sup>
Senior Pharmacist (Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service)	Western Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service
Deputy Head of Department (Pharmacy)	Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, North Metropolitan Health Service

1 A pharmacist is a registered health practitioner in the class of pharmacy as defined under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Western Australia) 2010*

2 As described in section 56 of the *Pharmacy Act 2010* (WA)

3 As defined in the *Pharmacy Act 2010* (WA) as meaning a premises registered as a pharmacy under Part 4 Division 1 of that Act.

4 The register is described in Part 4 Division 2 of the *Pharmacy Act 2010* (WA). Information about all Registered Pharmacies in WA is as per the register publicly available on the Pharmacy Board website: [https://www.pharmacyboardwa.com.au/index.php?page=premises\\_register](https://www.pharmacyboardwa.com.au/index.php?page=premises_register)

5 Where hospital has the meaning given in section 8 of the *Health Services Act 2016*

### Registered pharmacies

A list of pharmacies is available here:

[https://www.pharmacyboardwa.com.au/index.php?page=premises\\_register](https://www.pharmacyboardwa.com.au/index.php?page=premises_register)

### Hospital

Hospitals that have either a hospital pharmacy service or a registered pharmacy on premises include:

- Albany Hospital
- Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital
- Broome Hospital
- Bunbury Hospital
- Busselton Hospital
- Fiona Stanley Hospital
- Fremantle Hospital
- Geraldton Hospital
- Hollywood Private Hospital (Epic Pharmacy Hollywood)
- Hedland Hospital
- Joondalup Health Campus (Joondalup Hospital Pharmacy and Joondalup Hospital Pharmacy – Oncology)
- Kalgoorlie Hospital
- Karratha Health Campus
- King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women
- Kununurra Hospital
- Narrogin Hospital
- Northam Hospital
- Osborne Park Hospital
- Perth Children's Hospital
- QEII Medical Centre (Medical Centre Chemist)
- Rockingham General Hospital
- Royal Perth Hospital
- Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
- St John of God Hospital Bunbury (Southwest Hospital Pharmacy)
- St John of God Hospital Midland (HPS Pharmacies Midland)
- St John of God Hospital Mt Lawley (Epic Pharmacy Mt Lawley)
- St John of God Hospital Subiaco

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