

26 February 2021



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Health**

# ***Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019***

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## **Implementation Update**

### **Implementation Leadership Team - Communique February 2021**

#### ***Message from the Chair, Dr Scott Blackwell***

*The Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Leadership Team (ILT) has commenced 2021 with the realisation that the direction of its work is subtly changing. Having spent the last eight or nine months gathering information and intelligence from across the country and across the world to properly inform the implementation process here in Western Australia (WA), the ILT is now seeing the building blocks that will support voluntary assisted dying becoming a reality. We are aware that while we have reached this point, as an advisory group we now enter a time of increasing engagement with those who will be part of and affected by the implementation of voluntary assisted dying.*

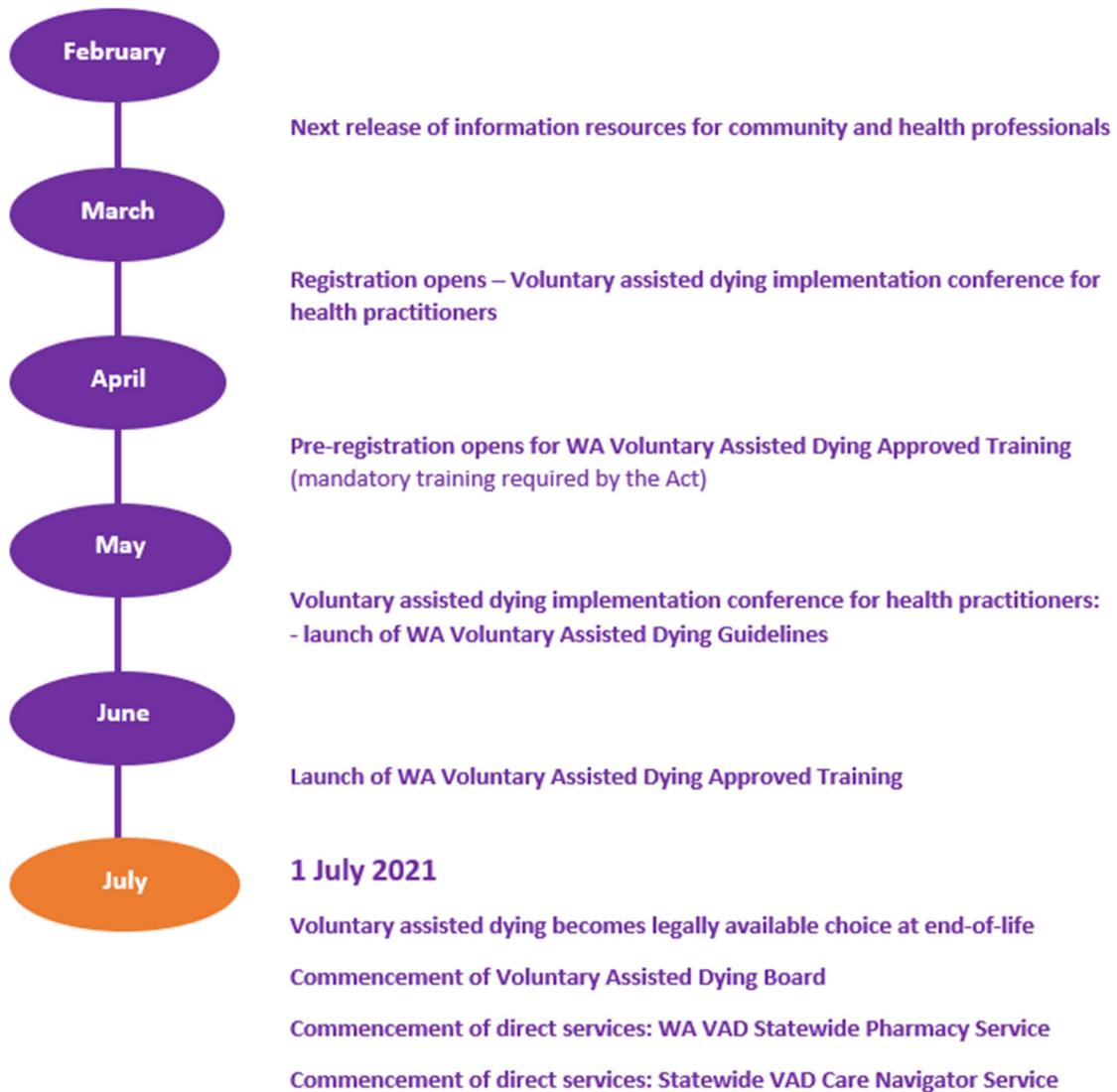
*Voluntary assisted dying in WA is not a new service but rather a new choice in end of life care for Western Australians who have a terminal illness and who are suffering in an unacceptable manner. To enable voluntary assisted dying to be both accessible and safe has been the constant focus of the ILT. This communique is a further update on developments in the voluntary assisted dying implementation process.*

*We are mindful that while the important elements to support voluntary assisted dying are emerging, health services both public and private are at various stages of preparation for its implementation in July this year. As the work of each of our eight workstreams continues to deliver their outcomes we will keep informing these preparations so that services, organisations and individual people are ready for the July implementation.*

***Dr Scott Blackwell***

***Chair, Implementation Leadership Team***

## 2021 Implementation Timeline - key dates



### Hosting of services confirmed

From 1 July 2021, Western Australians will have access to the WA Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service and the Statewide Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) Care Navigator Service.

#### ***WA Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service***

The WA Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service (SWPS) will be based at a metropolitan tertiary hospital. The SWPS has been established to ensure the voluntary assisted dying substance is provided in a safe, equitable, and patient-centred manner. An information

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sheet on the SWPS is available [here](#) and more information will be made available prior to 1 July 2021.

### ***Statewide Voluntary Assisted Dying Care Navigator Service***

The Statewide VAD Care Navigator Service will also be based with a metropolitan health service. The Statewide Care Navigator Service has been established to support anyone involved with voluntary assisted dying in WA. An information sheet on the Service is available [here](#) and more information will be made available prior to 1 July 2021.

### ***Care Navigator positions advertised***

Applications for the Care Navigator positions are currently open. Nurses and allied health professionals can apply. Follow the link [here](#) to apply. Applications close at 4pm on 2 March 2021.

### **New information resources available**

On 26 February, several resources were released to the public and are now available to be accessed on the [WA Health voluntary assisted dying website](#). These resources have been developed by the Implementation Leadership Team in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Links to information resources are below:

- [Who is eligible](#)
  - [Overview of the process](#)
  - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [Glossary of terms](#)
  - [Statewide Voluntary Assisted Dying Care Navigator Service](#)
  - [WA Statewide Voluntary Assisted Dying Pharmacy Service](#)
  - [Making the first request](#)
  - [Assistance with communication](#)
  - [Review of certain decisions](#)
  - [Completing the written declaration](#)
  - [Choosing the Contact Person](#)
  - [Considerations at end-of-life](#)
  - [Being the Contact Person](#)
  - [Supporting someone through the process](#)
  - [Considerations for an assisted death](#)
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- [Health professional participation](#)
- [FAQs for health professionals](#)
  
- [Information for interpreters](#)
- [Information for first responders](#)

Another release of information is scheduled for 1 July 2021. This will include information sheets in other languages and alternative formats and will include contact details for the SWPS and the Statewide VAD Care Navigator Service.

## **Save the date! Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Conference 22-23 May 2021**

An implementation conference for health practitioners will be held on **Saturday the 22nd and Sunday the 23rd of May 2021**. Details of the conference (including how to register) will be released closer to the time.

Subscribe for updates [here](#) to be kept informed about details of the voluntary assisted dying implementation conference.

## **Subscribe now and further information**

Further resources can be accessed on the WA Department of Health website on voluntary assisted dying (link [here](#)).

To continue to be updated on implementation of voluntary assisted dying in WA, please subscribe [here](#).

## **Support Services**

Some people may find issues relating to end of life care distressing. If reading the material in this communicate or thinking about end of life care has raised some issues regarding grief or bereavement or personal crisis, there are helplines and services available to provide support and counselling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **Lifeline:** Ring 13 11 14 for telephone support and counselling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also visit Lifeline's crisis support chat online, 7pm to midnight, 7 days a week
  - **Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement:** Ring (03) 9265 2100 or 1800 642 066 (free call, Australia-wide) for information about bereavement services and support
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- **Palliative Care WA:** Ring 1800 573 299 (free call, WA) 9am to 5pm, 7 days a week for information and support on advance care planning, palliative care, and grief and loss.



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