



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



# Overview and Update Voluntary Assisted Dying

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# Voluntary Assisted Dying

Clinical Senate  
November 2020





# Overview

- Introduction
- The *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019*
- Implementation Project
- Keeping informed





# Introduction

Dr Scott Blackwell

*Chair*

*Implementation Leadership Team*





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

- Principles
- Eligibility
- Aspects of the process
- Supporting services



Western Australia

## **Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019**

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No. 27 of 2019

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**An Act —**

- to provide for and regulate access to voluntary assisted dying;  
and
- to establish the Voluntary Assisted Dying Board; and
- to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

*[Assented to 19 December 2019]*



# Eligibility

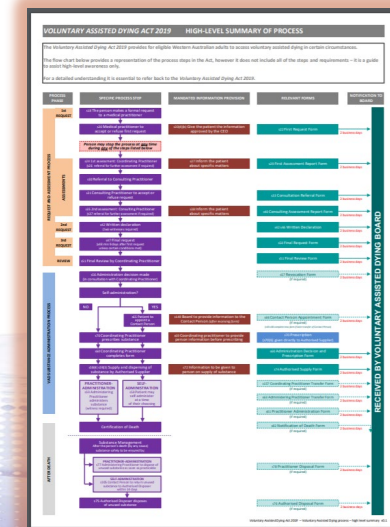
To be eligible for voluntary assisted dying, the person must meet **all** of the eligibility criteria. This includes that they:

- are aged 18 years or over
- are an Australian citizen or permanent resident who has been ordinarily resident in Western Australia for at least 12 months
- have been diagnosed with at least 1 disease, illness or medical condition that is advanced, progressive and will cause death; and, will, on the balance of probabilities cause death within a period of 6 months (or 12 months for neurodegenerative); and, is causing suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner that the person considers tolerable
- must have decision-making capacity in relation to voluntary assisted dying
- must be acting voluntarily and without coercion
- must have an enduring request for access to voluntary assisted dying



# Aspects of the Process

- Minimum of two independent assessments by eligible medical practitioners
- First request, a written declaration and a final request
- Administration decision – self-administration or practitioner administration
- The death certificate must not include any reference to voluntary assisted dying
- The person must be informed of many different aspects relating to voluntary assisted dying, as well as their treatment and palliative care options
- The person can withdraw or revoke their involvement at any stage
- Health practitioner may refuse to participate
- Restrictions on raising the topic of voluntary assisted dying





## Other aspects of the Act

- Offences
- Enforcement
- Protection from liability

## Organisation roles under the Act

### State Administrative Tribunal

Reviewable decisions: ordinarily resident in WA 12 months, decision-making capacity, acting voluntarily and without coercion

### The Voluntary Assisted Dying Board

Refer relevant matters to WA Police, Coroner's Court, AHPRA, HaDSCO, Registrar Births Deaths and Marriages, CEO (Dept of Health), CEO (Corrective Services)







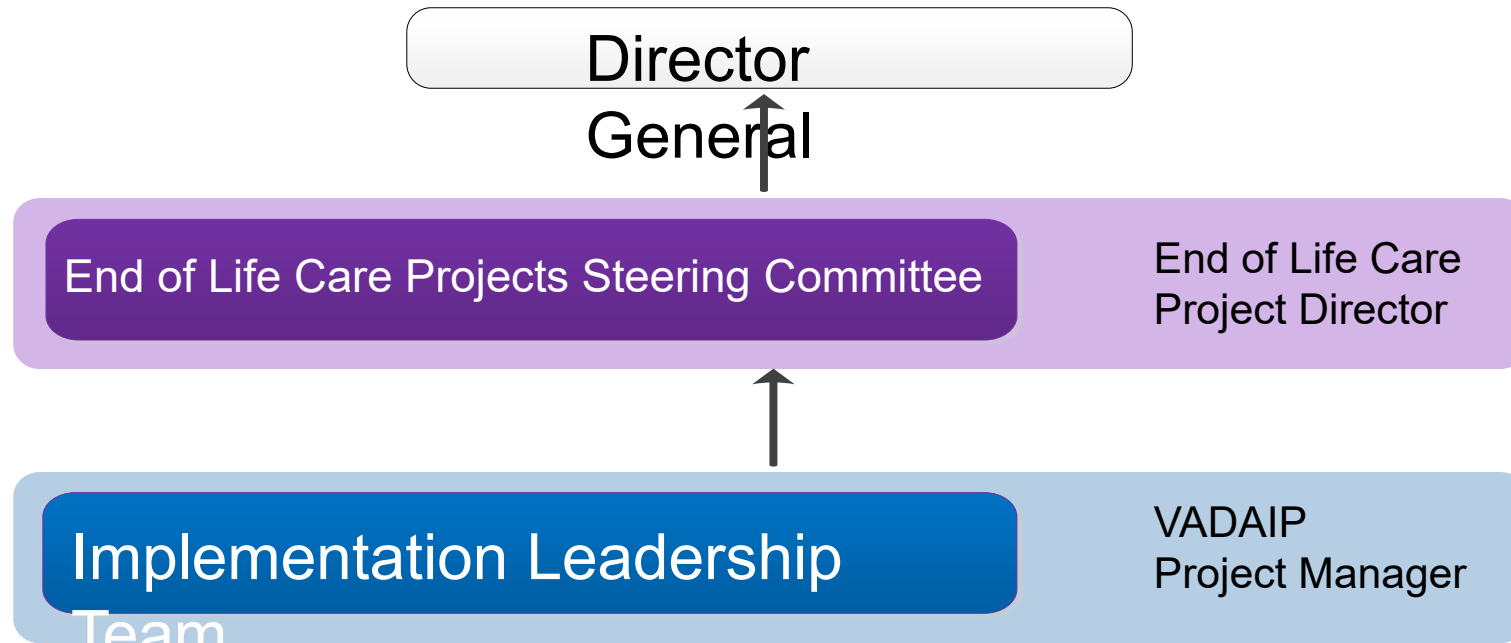
# VADAIP Project

1. Governance
2. Implementation Leadership Team
3. Workstreams





# 1. Governance





## 2. Implementation Leadership Team

- **Dr Scott Blackwell – Chair**
- **Dr Elissa Campbell**
- **Dr Peter Wallace**  
(rep RACGP)
- **Dr Andrew Miller**  
(rep AMA-WA)
- **Chris Kane**  
(rep WAPHA)
- **Hon Dr Sally Talbot MLC**
- **Noreen Fynn – Deputy Chair**
- **Assoc Prof Chris Etherton-Beer**
- **Stephanie Dowden**  
(rep Nurse Practitioners)
- **Amanda Collins-Clinch**  
(rep AHCWA)
- **Marg Denton**  
(rep WACHS)



## 3. Advisory Workstreams

- Each led by an ILT member
- With another 2 - 4 ILT members
- Supported by DOH project team
- Bring in additional expertise as required
- Work directly with stakeholders





### **Workstream 1**

Voluntary Assisted  
Dying Board

### **Workstream 2**

Clinical Guidelines &  
Service Framework

### **Workstream 3**

VAD Substance &  
Pharmacy Service

### **Workstream 4**

Care Navigator  
Service



### **Workstream 5**

Participating  
Practitioner  
Mandatory Training

### **Workstream 6**

Community,  
Consumer & Health  
Provider Information

### **Workstream 7**

Information  
Management:  
VAD Board ICT  
Solution

### **Workstream 8**

Information  
Management: Data,  
reporting & research



## Workforce considerations

- **Act enables an action, a choice at end of life**
  - across the broad WA health sector
  - in a variety of settings
- **Individual contemplation re participation**
  - right to conscientiously object
- **Organisational planning**
  - preparation for how the service will respond to a person requesting VAD
- **Support**
  - VAD Community of Practice for participating practitioners
  - workplace or professional access to EAP etc





## *Keeping informed...*

### **Website:**

[www.health.wa.gov.au/voluntaryassisteddying](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/voluntaryassisteddying)

- Can subscribe to updates via link on website
- Implementation Leadership Team communiques
- Key events / milestones / releases
- Online pre-recorded presentations and fact sheets
  - Information for health and related service providers
  - Information for the general community

### **Upcoming Events:**

- Webinar series: Preparing for voluntary assisted dying
  - 19 Nov – Palliative Care providers