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**SENATE BILL 5919**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Angel, Padden, and Miloscia

AN ACT Relating to informed decision making for death with dignity decisions; and amending RCW 70.245.010, 70.245.040, and 70.245.220.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 70.245.010 and 2009 c 1 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Adult" means an individual who is eighteen years of age or older.

(2) "Attending physician" means the physician who has primary responsibility for the care of the patient and treatment of the patient's terminal disease.

(3) "Competent" means that, in the opinion of a court or in the opinion of the patient's attending physician or consulting physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist, a patient has the ability to make and communicate an informed decision to health care providers, including communication through persons familiar with the patient's manner of communicating if those persons are available.

(4) "Consulting physician" means a physician who is qualified by specialty or experience to make a professional diagnosis and prognosis regarding the patient's disease.

(5) "Counseling" means one or more consultations as necessary between a state licensed psychiatrist or psychologist and a patient for the purpose of determining that the patient is competent and not suffering from a psychiatric or psychological disorder or depression causing impaired judgment.

(6) "Health care provider" means a person licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized or permitted by law to administer health care or dispense medication in the ordinary course of business or practice of a profession, and includes a health care facility.

(7) "Informed decision" means a decision by a qualified patient, to request and obtain a prescription for medication that the qualified patient may self-administer to end his or her life in a humane and dignified manner, that is based on an appreciation of the relevant facts and after being fully informed by the attending physician of:

(a) His or her medical diagnosis;

(b) His or her prognosis;

(c) The potential risks associated with taking the medication to be prescribed;

(d) The probable result of taking the medication to be prescribed; and

(e) The feasible alternatives including, but not limited to, comfort care, hospice care, ((~~and~~)) pain control, treatment for the purpose of cure, and treatment for the purpose of extending the patient's life.

(8) "Medically confirmed" means the medical opinion of the attending physician has been confirmed by a consulting physician who has examined the patient and the patient's relevant medical records.

(9) "Patient" means a person who is under the care of a physician.

(10) "Physician" means a doctor of medicine or osteopathy licensed to practice medicine in the state of Washington.

(11) "Qualified patient" means a competent adult who is a resident of Washington state and has satisfied the requirements of this chapter in order to obtain a prescription for medication that the qualified patient may self-administer to end his or her life in a humane and dignified manner.

(12) "Self-administer" means a qualified patient's act of ingesting medication to end his or her life in a humane and dignified manner.

(13) "Terminal disease" means an incurable and irreversible disease that has been medically confirmed and will, within reasonable medical judgment, produce death within six months.

**Sec.**  RCW 70.245.040 and 2009 c 1 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The attending physician shall:

(a) Make the initial determination of whether a patient has a terminal disease, is competent, and has made the request voluntarily;

(b) Request that the patient demonstrate Washington state residency under RCW 70.245.130;

(c) To ensure that the patient is making an informed decision, inform the patient of:

(i) His or her medical diagnosis;

(ii) His or her prognosis;

(iii) The potential risks associated with taking the medication to be prescribed;

(iv) The probable result of taking the medication to be prescribed; and

(v) The feasible alternatives including, but not limited to, comfort care, hospice care, ((~~and~~)) pain control, treatment for the purpose of cure, and treatment for the purpose of extending the patient's life;

(d) Refer the patient to a consulting physician for medical confirmation of the diagnosis, and for a determination that the patient is competent and acting voluntarily;

(e) Refer the patient for counseling if appropriate under RCW 70.245.060;

(f) Recommend that the patient notify next of kin;

(g) Counsel the patient about the importance of having another person present when the patient takes the medication prescribed under this chapter and of not taking the medication in a public place;

(h) Inform the patient that he or she has an opportunity to rescind the request at any time and in any manner, and offer the patient an opportunity to rescind at the end of the fifteen-day waiting period under RCW 70.245.090;

(i) Verify, immediately before writing the prescription for medication under this chapter, that the patient is making an informed decision;

(j) Fulfill the medical record documentation requirements of RCW 70.245.120;

(k) Ensure that all appropriate steps are carried out in accordance with this chapter before writing a prescription for medication to enable a qualified patient to end his or her life in a humane and dignified manner; and

(l)(i) Dispense medications directly, including ancillary medications intended to facilitate the desired effect to minimize the patient's discomfort, if the attending physician is authorized under statute and rule to dispense and has a current drug enforcement administration certificate; or

(ii) With the patient's written consent:

(A) Contact a pharmacist and inform the pharmacist of the prescription; and

(B) Deliver the written prescription personally, by mail or facsimile to the pharmacist, who will dispense the medications directly to either the patient, the attending physician, or an expressly identified agent of the patient. Medications dispensed pursuant to this subsection shall not be dispensed by mail or other form of courier.

(2) The attending physician may sign the patient's death certificate which shall list the underlying terminal disease as the cause of death.

**Sec.**  RCW 70.245.220 and 2009 c 1 s 22 are each amended to read as follows:

A request for a medication as authorized by this chapter shall be in substantially the following form:

REQUEST FOR MEDICATION TO END MY LIFE IN A HUMAN [HUMANE] AND DIGNIFIED MANNER

I, . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ., am an adult of sound mind.

I am suffering from  . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ., which my attending physician has determined is a terminal disease and which has been medically confirmed by a consulting physician.

I have been fully informed of my diagnosis, prognosis, the nature of medication to be prescribed and potential associated risks, the expected result, and the feasible alternatives, including comfort care, hospice care, ((~~and~~)) pain control, treatment for the purpose of cure, and treatment for the purpose of extending my life.

I request that my attending physician prescribe medication that I may self-administer to end my life in a humane and dignified manner and to contact any pharmacist to fill the prescription.

INITIAL ONE:

 . . . . . I have informed my family of my decision and taken their opinions into consideration.

 . . . . . I have decided not to inform my family of my decision.

 . . . . . I have no family to inform of my decision.

I understand that I have the right to rescind this request at any time.

I understand the full import of this request and I expect to die when I take the medication to be prescribed. I further understand that although most deaths occur within three hours, my death may take longer and my physician has counseled me about this possibility.

I make this request voluntarily and without reservation, and I accept full moral responsibility for my actions.

Signed: . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Dated: . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

DECLARATION OF WITNESSES

By initialing and signing below on or after the date the person named above signs, we declare that the person making and signing the above request:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Witness 1Initials | Witness 2Initials |  |
|   |   | 1. Is personally known to us or has provided proof of identity; |
|   |   | 2. Signed this request in our presence on the date of the person's signature; |
|   |   | 3. Appears to be of sound mind and not under duress, fraud, or undue influence; |
|   |   | 4. Is not a patient for whom either of us is the attending physician. |

|  |
| --- |
| Printed Name of Witness 1:  |
| Signature of Witness 1/Date:  |
| Printed Name of Witness 2:  |
| Signature of Witness 2/Date:  |

NOTE: One witness shall not be a relative by blood, marriage, or adoption of the person signing this request, shall not be entitled to any portion of the person's estate upon death, and shall not own, operate, or be employed at a health care facility where the person is a patient or resident. If the patient is an inpatient at a health care facility, one of the witnesses shall be an individual designated by the facility.

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