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Many Oregon physicians have had experience with out death with dignity law. Those of us who have listened to our patients requests, who have deeply worked with them and their families with this kind of decision, understand that the gamechanging value of this law is that it enables communication. Unless family members and physicians are protected from the charge of assisting a suicide, patients are not able to request it without jeopardizing the legal status of their caregivers. This law has dramatically increased the depth to which we all understand the feelings of our terminally ill patients and family members. It has made both death and grief less lonely.

Our law is not about choosing whether to live or to die, it's about managing the manner of death, when death is inevitable. Since it has passed, death in Oregon has become humanized.

Many hypothetical scenarios have been raised but in terms of what has actually happened in our state over the last 16 years, it has only been positive and Oregonians by and large remain proud of it. For your state I would also wish the opportunity for more warmth and understanding for the terminally ill patient.

Sincerely your, Peter Reagan, MD

Sent from my iPad