



## **Position Statement on Medical Aid-In-Dying**

February 15, 2019

The Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) defines medical aid-in-dying as the act of providing care – palliative, hospice, and compassionate – to patients at the end of life. The act of a physician writing a prescription for a lethal dose of medication to be used by an adult with a terminal illness at such time as the patient chooses, and with appropriate safeguards, will, if legalized in Connecticut, become an option in the care of the terminally ill. The CSMS recognizes a diversity of opinion exists in society, in medicine, and among members of the CSMS with regard to the act of a physician writing a prescription for a lethal dose of medication for a terminally ill patient. The CSMS acknowledges that principled and ethical physicians hold a broad range of positions and opinions on this issue.

The CSMS adopts the position of engaged neutrality, with the purpose of serving as a medical and scientific resource in policy discussions regarding patient and physician shared decision making regarding all legal medical aid-in-dying options.

The CSMS is committed to protecting its members' freedom to decide what medical aid-in-dying options to provide to patients in accordance with each physician's personally held values, beliefs and ethical standards, including the decision whether or not to write a prescription for a lethal dose of medication, if legalized in Connecticut.

CSMS asserts that the medical aid-in-dying option that involves prescribing lethal doses of medication in compliance with a patient's request, should be practiced by a duly licensed physician in conformance with the highest standards of good medical practice, if this becomes legal in Connecticut.

CSMS asserts that any medical aid-in-dying legislation that involves prescribing lethal doses of medication must contain very clear parameters and adequate safeguards for both physicians and patients.