



OPC Communications Bulletin

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PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE **THERE IS STILL TIME FOR YOU TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN!**

In February, 2015, the Supreme Court came to a unanimous decision in the case of Carter vs Canada, finding the current laws prohibiting physician assisted suicide to be unconstitutional. The court gave Parliament one year to legislate in the area of physician assisted suicide before laws prohibiting the practice are nullified on February 6, 2016.

The Federal Government put together an *online consultation survey* addressing hypothetical situations regarding who should be eligible and what safeguards should exist in the system. *The deadline for completing this survey* has been extended to November 15, 2015. (*the survey can be found at* <http://www.ep-ce.ca/issue-book/>)

The three member independent committee appointed by the former Conservative Government was to present its recommendations to the new Liberal Ministers of Justice and Health before the new year. The CBC has reported that the newly elected Liberal Government is expected to ask for a six-month extension to review the Supreme Court's decision.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (*The Position of the Canadian Church and the Stance of Canadian Bishops on "The Giving of Assistance in Dying"*), an Ad Hoc Committee of the Catholic Women's League of Canada (*League Ad Hoc Committee Response to the Federal Government's Consultation on Legislative Options on Assisted Dying*) and our national president (*Letter to the various political parties re: physician-assisted dying*) have all made submissions to the government regarding this issue. These can all be found on the national website (cwl.ca). Take the time to read them. They clearly state the position that we should be taking with regards to this important issue. It's not too late to take action and make your voice heard.

Our federal election is over. As a nation we have chosen a new leader and a new government. There will be times when we disagree with decisions our government makes ... the onus then falls on us to do the research on issues that are important to us, to write letters, make calls to our members of parliament, and offer suggestions for alternate ways of doing things.

You are encouraged to **write to the new Ministers of Health (Jane Philpott) and Justice (Jody Wilson-Raybould)**, as well as **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau**, urging them to exercise due diligence in reviewing this decision by the Supreme Court, and to give serious consideration and increased funding to the expansion of palliative care services as a viable and more humane alternative to assisted suicide. No postage required ...addresses can be found at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/compilations/Addresses/Ministry>.

And never forget the power of prayer!

Legislation Standing Committee