Step 3 – Waiting Period

If you are being assessed and found eligible for the track that includes those without a reasonably foreseeable natural death, Federal Law requires your assessment period be a minimum of 90 days. Those with a reasonably foreseeable natural death do not have to undergo a set assessment period. You can choose to set a date for your assisted death whenever you wish.

It is common to not make plans right away, and you can contact the Assisted Dying Program when you are ready. You can talk more about this with the assessors.

While planning for the assisted death procedure

• It may be a benefit to include your loved ones in the planning
• You will need to make plans with a funeral home before receiving MAiD
• It is encouraged that you contact your life insurance company before receiving MAiD

Remember that you may pause or withdraw your request at any time.

Step 4 – Assisted Death

Once eligible, you can decide when and where your assisted death will take place. You can choose to have your assisted death in your own home, or in a facility setting that allows for assisted deaths. If you prefer another location, it can be explored. You may also choose to have family or friends with you when you receive your assisted death.

Other care options

It is important that you have everything you need to make an informed decision. When exploring other ways to treat your suffering, your doctor or nurse practitioner are able to explain disability supports, community services, palliative care, or other medical options. You can also ask your family doctor, nurse practitioner or community health nurse for more information.

For more information about medical assistance in dying, visit:
Vancouver Coastal Health: www.vch.ca/assisted-dying
Health Canada: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/medical-assistance-dying.html

For further discussion, you, your family, doctor, or nurse practitioner may contact the VCH Assisted Dying Program:
Phone: 1 844 550 5556 (within BC)
604 875 4249 (outside BC)
Email: assisteddying@vch.ca

Medical Assistance In Dying
What is MAiD?

Medical assistance in dying (MAiD) is a process where a doctor or nurse practitioner helps an eligible person who voluntarily requests to end their life. In June, 2016 MAiD became legal in Canada. Federal law decides the processes and safeguards that have to be met for a person to be eligible for an assisted death.

Considering your options

Seeking MAiD is a deeply personal decision. It is normal to have questions. It can be helpful to talk about your wishes with your family members, spiritual supports, and loved ones. It is encouraged to consider all your options for care before deciding.

Whatever you decide, your health care team is here to work with you through this process and will do their best to honour and respect your wishes.

Who is eligible?

Not every person who requests MAiD will be eligible. To be eligible, you must:
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be eligible for publicly-funded health services in Canada
- Ask for assistance without pressure from anyone else
- Be able to give informed consent
- Have a grievous and irremediable medical condition (illness, disease or disability)
- Be suffering intolerably from this condition
- Be in an advanced state of decline that cannot be reversed

As of March, 2021 there are two separate tracks an eligible person may fall under, which this is based on whether a natural death is reasonably foreseeable or not. Each track has different safeguards, but the steps for both tracks follow are similar. Your MAiD assessors will decide which track you will be in.

MAiD Process

While you consider MAiD, it is recommended that you speak with your doctor or nurse practitioner to discuss your suffering and medical condition. Care teams should make sure you know all the ways to address your suffering. You do not have to accept any of the services that might be offered.

If you wish to go ahead with a request for MAiD please know that you can pause or even stop the process at any time.

Step 1 – Request for MAiD

If you do wish to make a request for MAiD and be assessed for eligibility the first step is to complete and submit a Request for Medical Assistance in Dying form to the Assisted Dying Program. Your doctor, nurse practitioner, or other members of your care team can help you with this. By signing this form, you are:
- Formally asking to be assessed for MAiD
- Saying you feel you meet the eligibility criteria
- Consenting to a minimum of two independent assessments to determine if you are eligible

Step 2 – Assessments

Your medical team or the Assisted Dying Program will arrange two assessments. The assessment process makes sure you:
- Are aware of all the options to treat your suffering
- Meet the eligibility criteria
- Are capable to make this decision

Two different medical professionals (doctors and/or nurse practitioners) must each do their own assessment. Each assessment will include an in-person or telemedicine visit with you. The assessors might also discuss your case with your current care team. If they are not sure whether you are capable of making the decision, or if they require a consult from an expert in your condition, a medical professional with extra expertise in these areas may also be involved.

Please be aware that if one assessor does not find you eligible you may ask for another assessment by another medical professional.