



## Discussion guide 1 of 5

# Introduction: what is voluntary assisted dying and how can you have your say?

The ACT Government acknowledges the many Canberrans who have experienced, or are experiencing, suffering in the face of illness, disease, and medical conditions. We also acknowledge the hardships and grief experienced by their loved ones and carers.

This Discussion Guide contains information that may be distressing or uncomfortable. If you need support, contact [Lifeline](#) on **13 11 14** or [Griefline](#) on **1300 845 745**.

## Introduction

Even with the best healthcare and palliative care, a person dying from an illness, condition or disease can experience suffering. Many Canberrans want genuine choices about how and when to end their life in a manner that aligns with their values. Voluntary assisted dying is a safe and effective medical process that gives an eligible person the option to end their suffering by choosing how and when they die.

Voluntary assisted dying is available in Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and South Australia, and will soon be available in New South Wales. It is also available in some other countries.

The ACT Government is responding to strong community support to provide access to voluntary assisted dying in the Territory. The ACT Government will introduce voluntary assisted dying legislation into the ACT Legislative Assembly in 2023.

## Our commitment to community consultation

The ACT Government will consult with Canberrans to hear their views so they can help design how voluntary assisted dying will work in the ACT.

This is one of a series of short Discussion Guides to help you provide your views on voluntary assisted dying. These Guides summarise five key themes explored in a longer Discussion Paper including eligibility, the process, the role of health practitioners and health services and monitoring and compliance.

Consultation with expert stakeholders and the Canberra community will happen in February and March 2023.

The new law will be drafted in response to community feedback and will be introduced in the ACT Legislative Assembly in the second half

of 2023. After the law has been debated and passed, voluntary assisted dying will not be immediately available to an eligible person - it will take time to build our systems, train practitioners and establish the process.

### **How can I share my views?**

To share your views on how a voluntary assisted dying model is designed for the ACT, visit the [YourSay website](#) and have your say by 6 April 2023. There are many ways you can have your say.

If you need help to access information or have your say, please call Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

**If you would like some more detailed information about these issues and why we want your views, please read the [Discussion Paper](#).**