



COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Select Committee on the Inquiry into the
Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2023

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

Asked by Suzanne Orr on 2 February 2024: Tara Cheyne took on notice the following question:

Reference: Hansard [uncorrected] proof transcript 2 February 2024 [PAGE 44]

In relation to:

THE CHAIR: Ms Castley's got a supplementary, but just jumping in there. Maybe, if it is not too burdensome, would you be able to provide on notice to the committee just what things will be considered during the implementation phase? Because we have already heard about the carers supports, and we have now heard this. I think it would just give the committee a good oversight of what was actually coming next. Your supplementary?

Ms Cheyne: I think we can absolutely do that.

Minister for Human Rights: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The ACT Government has established a taskforce across the ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) and Canberra Health Services (CHS) to implement voluntary assisted dying (VAD) in the ACT. The 2023-24 Budget Review allocated \$2.4 million for the taskforce over two financial years through to December 2024.

The experience of other jurisdictions has shown that implementation of VAD is incredibly complex. In anticipation of the passage of VAD legislation, the taskforce has commenced work to prepare the health system and health workforce to deliver VAD. The taskforce draws expertise and resources from across ACTHD and CHS to ensure this important work will result in a successful, safe and accessible model of care that meets the needs of the community and the clinicians who will be instrumental in delivering it.

Subject to the passage of legislation, the taskforce will coordinate delivery of key elements including:

- developing governance to support the move towards implementation;
- establishing care and referral pathways across the health system;

- establishing pharmacy and care navigation services;
- developing clinical guidelines and regulations;
- delivering workforce training and accreditation;
- communications and engagement with the community, key stakeholders and the health workforce; and
- establishing an independent VAD review board.

As demonstrated in other Australian jurisdictions, establishing robust governance is crucial to ensuring appropriate oversight throughout the implementation phase. The taskforce has commenced work on the governance model and will focus on health system readiness and workforce capability to deliver VAD once the law comes into effect.

A whole-of-government steering committee will provide oversight and guidance on VAD implementation and support delivery of the scheme within timeframes defined by legislation. The steering committee will be supported by consultation groups to oversee key deliverables.

Noting the extensive community and stakeholder consultations that have shaped the legislation, as well as the ongoing public interest, the ACT Government will continue to keep the community, stakeholders and health workforce informed during the implementation phase through regular communications. The taskforce will work closely with representatives from stakeholder groups, agencies and the wider community to develop community information, resources and support materials. Community representatives will be invited to participate in the implementation process where appropriate.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the Inquiry into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2023

Signature:



Date: 13/2/24

By the Minister for Human Rights, Ms Tara Cheyne MLA