



## Physician-Assisted Dying: The Case for Palliative Care and Patient Choice

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Despite a growing consensus that effective palliative care should be a core element in the treatment of all terminally ill patients, challenging questions remain about the physician's role in helping suffering patients end their lives. Physician-assisted dying remains one of the most controversial issues facing doctors, lawmakers, and patients today, and the need for intelligent and informed opinion on both sides of the debate is greater than ever.

In this volume, a distinguished group of physicians, ethicists, lawyers, and activists come together to present the case *for* the legalization of physician-assisted dying, for terminally ill patients who voluntarily request it. To counter the arguments and assumptions of those opposed to legalization of assisted suicide, the contributors examine ethical arguments concerning self-determination and the relief of suffering; analyze empirical data from Oregon and the Netherlands; describe their personal experiences as physicians, family members, and patients; assess the legal and ethical responsibilities of the physician; and discuss the role of pain, depression, faith, and dignity in this decision. Together, the essays in this volume present strong arguments for the ethical acceptance and legal recognition of the practice of physician-assisted dying as a last resort—not as an alternative to excellent palliative care but as an important possibility for patients who seek it.

Contributors: Marcia Angell, Anthony L. Back, Charles H. Baron, Andrew I. Batavia, Tom L. Beauchamp, Els Borst-Eilers, Dan W. Brock, Christine K. Cassel, Eric J. Cassel, Barbara Coombs-Lee, Linda Ganzini, Peter Goodwin, Martin Gunderson, Gerrit K. Kimsma, Sylvia A. Law, David Mayo, Alan Meisel, Robert A. Pearlman, Thomas Preston, John Shelby Spong, Helene Starks, Eli D. Stutsman, Kathryn L. Tucker, Johannes J. M. Van Delden, Herman H. van der Kloot Meijburg, Evert van Leeuwen, Jaap J. F. Visser

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