

Position Paper on Voluntary Assisted Dying – January 19, 2023

**Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)** is now legal in Queensland under the **Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021 (Qld)**. It became available to eligible Queenslanders on 1 January 2023.

VAD gives people who meet eligibility criteria, are suffering and dying, the option to ask for medical assistance to end their life.

The Act provides for and regulates access to VAD, which is defined as 'the administration of a voluntary assisted dying substance and includes steps reasonably related to that administration'.

More information about VAD is available from [Queensland Health](#).

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) to give persons who are suffering and dying, and who meet eligibility criteria, the option of requesting medical assistance to end their lives; and
  - (b) to establish a lawful process for eligible persons to exercise that option; and
  - (c) to establish safeguards to—
    - (i) ensure voluntary assisted dying is accessed only by persons who have been assessed to be eligible; and
    - (ii) protect vulnerable persons from coercion and exploitation; and
  - (d) to provide legal protection for health practitioners who choose to assist, or not to assist, persons to exercise the option of ending their lives in accordance with this Act;
- and
- (e) to establish a Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board and other mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Act.

The VAD Process is outlined on the Queensland Health website and has 3 key phases with each phase having a number of steps.

Parkinson's Queensland Inc. (PQI) acknowledges the introduction of Voluntary Assisted Dying in Queensland however our organisation, its staff and volunteers do not provide advice of any kind on Voluntary Assisted Dying.

Information on VAD and the process can be found on the Queensland Health website or by speaking to a General Practitioner.

PQI's staff and volunteers do not have the clinical knowledge and training to advise people on Parkinson's treatment options or provide any form of advice on VAD.



Any information PQI provides is intended to be general in nature. Individuals need to consult their treating clinicians on matters relating to their Parkinson's treatment or access to Voluntary Assisted Dying.

Approved by the PQI Management Committee on January 19, 2023

Signed by the Chair of PQI Professor George Mellick

*G.D. Mellick*

19/01/2023