



# Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

Dear Friends,

July 26, 2019

We just celebrated my 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as Executive Director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition (EPC). We celebrated this milestone by bringing together current and past leaders to discuss our accomplishments and examine our future directions. We led a “conference call” with stake-holder organizations to plan for the five-year review of the “MAiD” euthanasia law that will begin in June 2020 and we organized a free online Anniversary Conference.

On Saturday, July 20, we held a free online Anniversary Conference. On the Friday, before the event, we experienced weather problems that affected the quality of the live viewing. The conference was professionally filmed and the presentations are available, for free, on the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition’s **YouTube page**.

We are completing a **Commemorative Compilation** book of articles and stories recounting the last 20 years of world-wide developments for EPC and these issues. This is an excellent historical resource to understand how these laws and ideas came to be. You can receive the **Compilation** book from EPC by making a **\$50 (or more) donation**. Please indicate that you want the **Compilation** book when making your donation. Contact the EPC office at: 1-877-439-3348 or [info@epcc.ca](mailto:info@epcc.ca).



The five-year review “conference call” enabled us to share our common concerns with other stake-holder groups related to the euthanasia law and begin to establish a response to the five-year review in June 2020. We expect that the media and the euthanasia lobby will try to expand the euthanasia law by pressuring the government to allow euthanasia for incompetent people based on an advanced request and for people who are clearly not terminally ill.

We have been collecting stories and urging others to share their stories. We are working to prove that the euthanasia law “safeguards” are ineffective and that the law is designed to protect the doctors who are willing to kill patients. We currently have 13 stories, but we need many more to undermine the concept that the euthanasia law in Canada is working well. By working with many groups, we hope to change the narrative of the five-year review.

In the next year, EPC will focus on finding stories to challenge the narrative that all is well with euthanasia in Canada; we will continue to work with American organizers to push back on their assisted suicide laws while preventing the legalization of assisted suicide in other states and we will be working world-wide to stop the spread of euthanasia.

This year we organized a successful conference in New Mexico that became instrumental in stopping assisted suicide in that state. We also worked with several key physicians to maintain the American Medical Association’s position against assisted suicide. I have spoken throughout America and the *Fatal Flaws* film has been screened world-wide.

Recently I was asked to speak in Croatia and in India, two countries where euthanasia is being debated. These speaking engagements will require financial support from the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition.

**We have also organized a one-day conference in Rome**, in conjunction with another excellent conference, to help the European leaders prevent the further spread of euthanasia in their nations. Several European nations are debating euthanasia, including France, Spain, Portugal and Germany.

Your donations enable EPC to continue our push-back campaign against euthanasia in Canada and world-wide. Our monthly donors enable us to run an effective day-to-day organization. You can enable us to reach out to more people to provide effective arguments and stories against euthanasia.

Continued ↪

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After more than 20 years, **Oregon expanded its assisted suicide law** by removing the 15-day waiting period when Oregon's Governor Kate Brown signed Senate Bill 0579. The Oregon law had already expanded when the Oregon Health Authority widened its definition of terminal but this represents a legislative expansion.

**We mourn the death of Vincent Lambert**, the man in France who died by dehydration a few weeks ago, after the highest court upheld a lower court decision that all treatment and care would cease for Lambert, including food and fluids. Lambert, who was cognitively injured after a motorcycle accident in 2008, was the subject of a legal battle for many years. Lambert's wife wanted all treatment and care to cease while his mother, who was willing to care for him, wanted him to receive basic care, such as food and fluids.

**139,000 people signed the EPC petition** urging the President of France to protect the life of Vincent Lambert. The fact is that Vincent Lambert was a cognitively disabled man who was not otherwise dying. To intentionally dehydrate him to death contravenes Section 25f of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. To die by dehydration is a terrible way to die, even though its effects were masked by drugs to sedate him.

A study from the Netherlands that interviewed General Practitioners on their experience with euthanasia found that **doctors are being pressured by euthanasia requests**. The doctors stated to the researchers that they felt: emotional blackmail, being controlled and directed by others, had doubts about whether the deaths fulfilled the criteria of the law, felt pressured by patient's relatives and they felt time pressure and organisational pressure.

This study helps to explain why a *NEJM* (August 2017) study found that there were 431 terminations without request in the Netherlands in 2015. It is important to note that, even though physicians are being pressured to kill patients by euthanasia, some patients are being pressured to "ask" for euthanasia. Pressure is the elephant in the room.

We requested and received the **euthanasia data from the Ontario Office of the Chief Coroner** for the first six months of 2019. The data states that, in Ontario, there were 774 reported euthanasia deaths in the first six months of 2019 and 3303 reported assisted deaths since euthanasia became legal in June 2016. I write "reported deaths" because there is no way to know if every euthanasia death was reported. The *Québec Commission* report (December 2018) did not explain the discrepancy, but the data indicates that 17% of the euthanasia deaths, in Québec, were not reported.

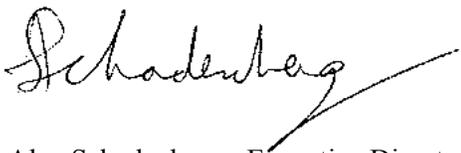
In the past month, we received two calls from **nurses who are feeling pressured to participate in euthanasia**. We told them we would help them, if necessary. Conscience rights are essential. No one should be forced to do something that they believe is wrong and we want doctors and nurses who respect our right to live.

American Lawyer, Margaret Dore, wrote that doctors require the ability to make decisions based on the patient. Dore explained that Jeanette Hall is happy to be alive, but if Dr. Stevens, in Oregon, was forced to refer her for assisted suicide, 19 years ago, she would not have had the chance to thank him for saving her life.

This fall, we will be working with many groups to lobby the government to protect conscience rights in Canada.

During the summer our donations traditionally go down leaving us with a financial difficulty. This month we have chosen to send out a letter, rather than a newsletter, to save money. This month, we will send you the *Commemorative Compilation* when you make a donation of **\$50 or more and indicate that you want the *Compilation***.

We are incredibly thankful for your continued financial support and we thank you for helping us at this time.



Alex Schadenberg - Executive Director