

Wednesday, April 6th, 2016

**VULNERABLE PERSONS STANDARD IS SOUND PUBLIC
POLICY, EVIDENCE-BASED, SAY LEADING POLICY
EDUCATORS**

Leading educators in Canadian public policy have today endorsed the Vulnerable Persons Standard, citing evidence of pervasive conditions of vulnerability that must be taken into account in designing safeguards for assisted death.

In announcing [endorsement by the Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship](#), Dr. Tim Stainton, Director of the Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship and Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of British Columbia, said:

"The forthcoming legislation on assisted dying is arguably the most important piece of legislation in decades. The consequences of getting it wrong has the potential of putting the lives of Canada's most vulnerable at serious, ongoing and potentially increasing risk. The Supreme Court recognized that protecting the vulnerable was a central and legitimate purpose in any such legislative regime. The Vulnerable Persons Standard presents a reasoned, efficient and effective means of ensuring such protections are in place.

Unfortunately the evidence is clear that Canada's most vulnerable have been victims of both stigma and exclusion in the health system and that the social determinants of exclusion - poverty, inferior educational and employment outcomes and a lack of sufficient and appropriate supports - contribute to and enhances their vulnerability. The VPS ensures that such vulnerability does not result in the ultimate exclusion."

Echoing these concerns, Dr. Michael Prince, Landsdowne Professor of Social

Policy at the University of Victoria, expressed his support for the Vulnerable Persons Standard:

"As Parliament and the Government of Canada prepare legislation on medically assisted death, we all have a rendezvous with human dignity and equal respect. Public policy involves making choices and balancing fundamental values, a challenge and responsibility nowhere more serious than on this profound issue. To ensure consistency and transparency of rights and protections across the country, appropriate standards must be included in federal legislation.

Evidence-based, the [Vulnerable Persons Standard](#) provides five safeguards designed to ensure that Canadians requesting assistance from physicians to end their life can do so without jeopardizing the lives of vulnerable persons who may be subject to abuse or neglect, coercion, loneliness, stigma and poverty."

The Vulnerable Persons Standard was developed by a group of more than forty advisors with expertise in medicine, ethics, law, public policy and needs of vulnerable persons. The Standard is a series of evidence-based safeguards intended to help ensure that Canadians requesting assistance from physicians to end their life can do so without jeopardizing the lives of vulnerable persons who may be subject to coercion and abuse.

To learn more about the Standard and the many Canadians and organizations endorsing the Standard, please visit us at www.vps-npv.ca.

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Stay up to date with the Vulnerable Persons Standard:

