

<b>SUBJECT:</b>		Death with Dignity Act			<b>NO:</b>		860-0067	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Policy</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Procedure</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Protocol/Pre-Printed Order</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other:</b>								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>New</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Supersedes #</b> ;					<b>Effective Date</b>		08/24/2009	
<b>Author</b>		Susan Grove			<b>Date of Electronic Distribution</b>		08/24/2009	
<b>Dept. Manager</b>					<b>Medical Director/ CAH Oversight</b>			
<b>Administrative</b>					<b>Policy Committee</b>			
<b>Committee</b>					<b>Other</b>			
<b>Audit Review:</b>		Initials:	KL	SP	TG			
		Date:	9/23/2010	8/21/12	08/24/15			

**POLICY**

1. Washington law recognizes certain rights and responsibilities of qualified patients and health care providers under the Death with Dignity Act (“Act”). Under Washington law, a health care provider, including Prosser Public Hospital District is not required to assist a qualified patient in ending that patient’s life.
2. Prosser Public Hospital District has chosen to not participate under the Death with Dignity Act. This means that in the performance of their duties, Prosser Public Hospital District physicians, employees, independent contractors and volunteers shall not assist a patient in ending the patient’s life under the Act. In addition, no provider may participate on the premises of the hospital or in property owned by the district.
3. No patient will be denied other medical care or treatment because of the patient’s participation under the Act. The patient will be treated in the same manner as all other Prosser Public Hospital District patients.
4. Any patient wishing to receive life-ending medication while a patient of the district will be referred to their Primary Care Physician (PCP).
5. Prosser Public Hospital District believes our providers have an obligation to openly discuss the patient’s concerns, unmet needs, feelings, and desires about the dying process. Providers should seek to learn the meaning behind the patient’s questions and help the patient understand the range of available options, including but not limited to comfort care, hospice care, and pain control. Ultimately, Prosser Public Hospital District’s goal is to help patients make informed decisions about end-of-life care.

**PROCEDURE**

1. All patients will receive Prosser Public Hospital districts decision not to participate in the Act upon admission.
2. If, as a result of learning of Prosser Public Hospital District’s decision not to participate in the Act, the patient expresses the desire to take medication that will result in their death, they will be informed that they must find a participating provider on their own and/or be referred to their (PCP).
3. The relevant medical records will be transferred to the physician taking over the patient’s care.

4. Nothing in this policy prevents a physician or provider from making an initial determination that the patient has a terminal disease and informing the patient of the medical prognosis.
5. Nothing in this policy prevents a physician or provider from providing information about the "Washington State Death with Dignity Act" to a patient when the patient requests information.
6. Nothing in this policy prohibits a physician or employee who is employed by or who is an independent contractor of Prosser Public Hospital District from participating under the Act when not functioning within the scope of his or her capacity as an employee or independent contractor of Prosser Public Hospital District.

### **SANCTIONS**

If a provider participates in the Act beyond what is allowed in the policy, Prosser Public Hospital District may impose sanctions on that provider in accordance with PMH Medical Center's Medical Staff Bylaws.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Prosser Public Hospital District will provide public notice of this policy in the following ways: posting the policy or information about the district's stance on the Death with Dignity Act on the hospital's web page and informing local media.

### **RESOURCES**

#### ***Laws/Regulations:***

Initiative 1000/Washington Death with Dignity Act

Washington State Department of Health Regulations Chapter 246-978 WAC (Currently at CR-102 stage)

#### ***Reference Materials:***

The Oregon Death with Dignity Act: A Guidebook for Health Care Professionals