

S RTP - Project Description Form #246

PART I:

Name of Schulich faculty member who will supervise the project George Kim

Supervisor's Schulich, Western, Hospital or Lawson Email gkim53@uwo.ca

Schulich Department Family Medicine

PART II - Project Description

Title of Project Medical Aid in Dying: Use in Long Term Care Settings

Background

Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD) was decriminalized in Canada with the implementation of Bill C-14 in February of 2016. In the ensuing months and years, a number of discussions and court challenges have clarified the approach to Medical Aid in Dying, and has resulted in a significant number of procedures being completed. Data from the Office of the Chief Coroner in Ontario, highlights that there has been 17 556 MAiD deaths in Ontario since 2016, with 3824 deaths occurring in 2023 thus far. The vast majority of these procedures have occurred in an individual's home or hospital. Data from the Ontario Long Term Care Association, highlights that 1 in 5 seniors over the age of 80 require long term care placement. The community of residents residing in Long Term Care, is growing. Though currently not well understood, the intersection of Medical Aid in Dying and Long Term Care is of great research interest. LTC homes have thoroughly trained staff to help residents with goals of care conversations, and have become quite expert in supporting residents with their palliative care needs. However, there is a lack of guidelines and policy support when discussions regarding Medical Aid in Dying are identified.

Our project will look at what LTC facilities in the Thames Valley Region (Middlesex, Elgin and Oxford County) have policies for Medical Aid in Dying. The team will also interview medical staff who work in LTC to understand their experience with Medical Aid in Dying, as a part of the care plan for their residents.

The S RTP student will help us with identifying LTC homes and medical staff who will participate in our study. They will also conduct interviews, and help with the thematic analysis. They will also be invited to participate in the write up and dissemination of the findings.

Hypothesis

With Medical Aid in Dying still representing a polarizing topic in clinical medicine, with the concern around elderly patients being ignored by families as they are seen as too burdensome, it would be very understandable that those working in Long Term Care Facilities, remain uncertain as to how best to support patients considering medical aid in dying.

Though it is a highly regulated part of healthcare, most facilities will lack proper policies and procedures around the topic of Medical Aid in Dying.

Proposed Methodology

Mixed Method. We survey Long Term Care facilities to determine which homes have policies on Medical Aid in Dying. We will seek data from the Office of the Chief Coroner, regarding the number of MAiD provisions in Long Term Care. We will use key informant interviews of physicians and nurse practitioners who work in LTC, to determine their professional experience in caring for elderly patients who have asked about Medical Aid in Dying.

Expected Outcomes

A clearer picture of the number of MAiD procedures that have occurred in LTC, the institutional supports for patients, families and the care team, and lastly the lived experiences of the providers who care for patients in Long Term Care. The student is expected to immerse themselves in the world of research through completing the following types of tasks:

- recruiting participants
- interviewing participants
- data analysis and tying back results to research questions (qualitative and quantitative)
- research project management (timelines and milestones tracking)
- manuscript writing

Research Environment - Description of the number of research personnel, primary location of research, size of lab, etc

Byron Family Medical Centre, Approximately 32 staff (physicians, nurses, administrative, pharmacists). Student will have office space if onsite.

Names and titles of other individuals who will be involved with the research project?

Dr. Tania Rubaiyyat, Assistant Professor, The Department of Family Medicine

Craig Mara-Research Coordinator, The Department of Family Medicine

Can this project be done remotely? Yes

Duration of Project One Summer

Expected Objectives/Accomplishments for Student?

The student is expected to immerse themselves in the world of research through completing the following types of tasks:

- recruiting participants
- interviewing participants
- data analysis and tying back results to research questions (qualitative and quantitative)
- research project management (timelines and milestones tracking)
- manuscript writing
- poster presentation

PART III - Certifications

If the project will require any certification - Human Ethics approvals from one or more of the following offices, please check the appropriate box below.

Human Ethics: If you have the protocol information, please enter it below (or enter the status of the approval). REB will be submitted and approved before summer 2024

Note: certification approval should be obtained prior to the start of the summer. Projects without this approval will not be a priority for funding.