



**End-of-life questions:
Perspectives from the global medical profession**

Professor Dr Frank Ulrich Montgomery
President of the German Medical Association
Vice-Chair of the World Medical Association



Hippocrates

I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but never with a view to injury and wrong-doing.
Neither will I administer a poison to anybody when asked to do so, nor will I suggest such a course.



WMA Declaration on Euthanasia

Adopted by the 39th World Medical Assembly, Madrid, Spain, October 1987
and reaffirmed by the 170th WMA Council Session, Divonne-les-Bains, France, May 2005
and reaffirmed by the 200th WMA Council Session, Oslo, Norway, April 2015

Euthanasia, that is the act of deliberately ending the life of a patient, even at the patient's own request or at the request of close relatives, is unethical. ...



WMA Statement on Physician-Assisted Suicide

Adopted by the 44th World Medical Assembly, Marbella, Spain, September 1992
and editorially revised by the 170th WMA Council Session, Divonne-les-Bains, France, May 2005
and reaffirmed by the 200th WMA Council Session, Oslo, Norway, April 2015

Physician-assisted suicide, like euthanasia, is unethical and must be condemned by the medical profession. Where the assistance of the physician is intentionally and deliberately directed at enabling an individual to end his or her own life, the physician acts unethically.



WMA Resolution on Euthanasia

The World Medical Association has noted that the practice of active euthanasia with physician assistance, has been adopted into law in some countries.

BE IT RESOLVED that:

The World Medical Association reaffirms its strong belief that euthanasia is in conflict with basic ethical principles of medical practice, and The World Medical Association strongly encourages all National Medical Associations and physicians to refrain from participating in euthanasia, even if national law allows it or decriminalizes it under certain conditions.



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Arguments

- Compassion for patients for “helping hands”
- Polls demonstrate majorities in favour of euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide
- Euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide have been legalized – physicians have to be prepared to perform these acts



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The Model Professional Code of the GMA

§ 16

Physicians must support the dying while preserving their dignity and respecting their wishes. They are forbidden to kill patients upon their request. They may not perform assisted suicide.

§ 1, Chapter 2

The task of physicians is to preserve life, protect and restore health, alleviate suffering, support the dying and participate in the preservation of the natural foundations of life with regard for their importance for human health.



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Conclusion

- Reaffirm the WMA's position
- Safeguard medical ethics without being easily swayed by
 - public opinion
 - changes in policy or new regulations
 - a misguided interpretation of “compassion”



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