

Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare
Clinical Programs End of Life Care Policy and Procedure

California residents have the option to explore the End-of-Life Option Act, which went into effect on June 9, 2016. This law provides adults diagnosed with a terminal illness and a life expectancy of six months or less the opportunity to request and receive a prescription for an aid-in-dying medication, subject to specific conditions.

To qualify, individuals must possess the mental capacity to make their own medical decisions, maintain California residency, submit three separate requests (two oral and one written), and demonstrate the ability to self-administer the medication.

The End-of-Life Option Act is designed for outpatient settings, and participation by hospitals is voluntary. Currently, Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare does not participate in the Act. Patients interested in learning more about this option are encouraged to discuss their questions with their personal physician.

Casa Colina physicians, employees, contractors, and volunteers may not knowingly participate in or facilitate physician-assisted death under the California End of Life Option Act. Furthermore, physicians, employees, contractors, or volunteers may not provide, deliver, administer, or assist with the administration of any medication intended for physician-assisted death, or be present when a patient ingests medications with the intent of completing physician-assisted death.

When a patient expresses intent to pursue physician-assisted death, the patient will be informed that Casa Colina will not participate or assist in that act and its physicians, employees, contractors, and volunteers will not provide, deliver, administer or assist the patient with the lethal prescription. Casa Colina staff will still provide all other requested end-of-life and palliative care and other services to patients and families.

Any request for aid-in-dying medication must be made solely and directly by the patient. The request cannot be made on behalf of the patient by anyone else, including the patient's legally recognized health care decision-maker.

For patients who request physician-assisted death, the social worker/case manager will provide the patient and family with a copy of this (End of Life) policy, along with a copy of "Understanding California's End of Life Option Act."