

Voluntary Assisted Dying in Tasmania

Regional Access Standard

Preamble

Pursuant to section 139(1) of the *End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Act 2021* (the Act), the Secretary of the Department of Health must issue a standard (the *access standard*) setting out how the State intends to facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for persons ordinarily resident in the State (*Tasmanian residents*), including how the State intends to facilitate access by those persons to:

- the services of medical practitioners and other persons who perform functions, or exercise powers, under the Act,
- voluntary assisted dying substances for use under the Act, and
- information about access to voluntary assisted dying under the Act.

Under section 139(2) of the Act, the *access standard* must specifically set out how the State intends to facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for residents of the State who reside in a regional area (*regional residents*).

In this document:

- A person is a *Tasmanian resident* if they have been living in Tasmania for at least 12 continuous months immediately before making their first request to access voluntary assisted dying.
- A person is a *regional resident* if they reside in an area that is classified, under the Modified Monash Model, as MM 3 (large rural towns) to MM 7 (very remote communities).

Purpose

This document sets out how the State intends to facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for persons ordinarily resident in the State. It is the *access standard* referred to in section 139(1) of the Act.

Access to Services and Information

The State will facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for *Tasmanian residents*, including access to the services of medical practitioners and others who perform functions, or exercise powers, under the Act, and to information about access to voluntary assisted dying, by:

- developing and widely disseminating information and resources about voluntary assisted dying,
- developing, hosting, and maintaining education and training materials associated with the Act,
- working with health practitioners, health service providers, and facilities to support their preparedness to respond to inquiries for information from people and their families about voluntary assisted dying,

- establishing frameworks, policies, protocols, and guidelines to implement voluntary assisted dying within the Tasmanian Health Service, and
- establishing and supporting the Voluntary Assisted Dying Navigation Service (the Navigation Service).

The Navigation Service will help *Tasmanian residents* to understand and access voluntary assisted dying by:

- being a point of contact across Tasmania for the community, health practitioners and health service providers, and facilities on voluntary assisted dying,
- providing health practitioners and others with information and resources about voluntary assisted dying, including information on how people will be able to access voluntary assisted dying, and information and resources for people from diverse backgrounds,
- providing individualised, coordinated, and collaborative support for people wishing to access, or be involved with, voluntary assisted dying,
- helping to connect people who wish to access voluntary assisted dying with appropriate medical practitioners and health services, and
- delivering education on voluntary assisted dying to health services and health practitioners as required.

Access to Voluntary Assisted Dying Substances

The State will facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying substances for use under the Act by establishing and supporting a Voluntary Assisted Dying Pharmacy Service (the Pharmacy Service).

The Pharmacy Service will:

- provide specialised pharmaceutical advice in relation to voluntary assisted dying substances, including visiting people who wish to access voluntary assisted dying and speaking with them about the substances,
- supply voluntary assisted dying substances to health practitioners, once approval has been obtained for this to occur, and
- undertake research and work with other states to provide a contemporary, evidence-based service.

Access for Regional Residents

The State will facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for *regional residents* by:

- working directly with health practitioners and health service providers and facilities across Tasmania to build understanding and awareness of voluntary assisted dying and to encourage and facilitate broad participation, including within the Tasmanian Health Service, and
- operating the Navigation Service and Pharmacy Service as statewide services, which will travel as required.



Access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Residents

The State will facilitate access to voluntary assisted dying for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse residents by:

- supporting access to, and use of, accredited translators for all interactions,
- facilitating support for applicants from culturally specific community groups throughout the voluntary assisted dying application process, and
- facilitating tailored and individualised support from the Navigation Service to people wishing to access voluntary assisted dying to ensure information and support are accessible to applicants from culturally diverse backgrounds.

An *accredited translator* is a person who is accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Limited as a translator in the relevant language.