

# Voluntary Assisted Dying

## Chair's message

The commencement of voluntary assisted dying in South Australia is right around the corner, and it's great to be able to share the news of several key project milestones being reached in November.



Dr Chris Moy

I first want to thank the hundreds of participants who made time in their busy schedules to tune into our virtual Implementation Conference on Wednesday 16 November. We were honoured to have the Hon Chris Picton MP Minister for Health and Wellbeing and Dr Robyn Lawrence Chief Executive of the Department for Health and Wellbeing open the event and talk about what voluntary assisted dying will mean for both the South Australian community and our health system respectively.

We also heard from a range of speakers sharing their expertise and experience of voluntary assisted dying, as well as the excellent SA team who will lead service delivery in the near future. Presentations from the event are now available [here](#) on the SA Health website, so if you weren't able to make it, check them out at a time that suits you!

In other good news, the [Voluntary Assisted Dying Clinical Portal](#) was launched on Monday 28 November. Check out our "Spotlight on..." section to find out more about how this resource supports our medical practitioners to deliver safe and timely care for people accessing voluntary assisted dying while meeting the requirements under the [Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021](#).

The mandatory training package for medical practitioners has also been approved and is now available for interested medical practitioners. If you are a Medical Practitioner, you are welcome to visit the [Voluntary Assisted Dying Clinical Portal](#) to register and sign up for access to the mandatory training.

Pharmacy Service, Operations and Review Board Secretariat staff have commenced work, with their Care Navigator and LHN liaison colleagues expected to join them soon. It's been great to see such experienced and committed team members come onboard to support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Pathway as it approaches reality.

A reminder that the best way to stay up to date with the latest news is to stay tuned to [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad)

**Dr Chris Moy**  
**Chair, Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Taskforce**

# Voluntary Assisted Dying

## Spotlight on...the Voluntary Assisted Dying Clinical Portal

Navigating any new process is challenging, but the Voluntary Assisted Dying Clinical Portal will help medical practitioners quickly and securely access their mandatory training and complete all the necessary paperwork for patients on the Voluntary Assisted Dying Pathway.

The Clinical Portal is the secure online system used by medical practitioners to manage requests for voluntary assisted dying in South Australia.

Only authorised medical practitioners and SA Health employees supporting voluntary assisted dying processes can access the Clinical Portal.

Medical practitioners will be able to use the Clinical Portal to:

- access the Voluntary Assisted Dying Mandatory Medical Practitioner Training
- complete and submit forms required to access voluntary assisted dying
- apply for a permit to prescribe a voluntary assisted dying medication.

**VAD Clinical Portal**

Voluntary Assisted Dying

**Practitioner access**

Login Apply for access

Before you apply, check [whether you're eligible](#) and [what you need](#).

The Voluntary Assisted Dying Clinical Portal is the secure online system used to manage requests for voluntary assisted dying in South Australia.

Medical Practitioners use the Clinical Portal to:

- access the mandatory voluntary assisted dying training
- complete and submit forms required to access voluntary assisted dying
- apply for a permit to prescribe a voluntary assisted dying medication

The Clinical Portal has been adapted from the system already used in Western Australia to fit the needs of the South Australian legislation.

Comprehensive testing has been completed to ensure the product passes privacy and security requirements, as well as ensuring that it meets the needs of the medical practitioners who will be using it.

Medical practitioners can now register to complete the mandatory training via the Clinical Portal by heading to [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad) and following the links.

# Voluntary Assisted Dying

## Did you know?

Mandatory training for medical practitioners who participate in voluntary assisted dying is a critical safeguard embedded within the [Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021](#) (the Act).

A team from Flinders University and the Digital Learning & Design unit within the Women's and Children's Health Network led the development of the mandatory voluntary assisted dying training package which medical practitioners will be required to successfully complete to participate as a Coordinating or Consulting Medical Practitioner under the Act.

Two face-to-face training sessions have also been scheduled for early December 2022 for eligible medical practitioners to attend to complete the mandatory training.

[Eligible medical practitioners](#) can now register to access the voluntary assisted dying medical practitioner training at [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad).

## SA Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Conference

The SA Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Conference was held virtually on Wednesday 16th November 2022. The conference provided information about how voluntary assisted dying will be implemented in South Australia including an overview of the process and support services.

The team were excited to have over 1000 registrations for the event, with viewership peaking at over 450 participants.

Thank you to all of the speakers who made time on the day to share their experiences and expertise with the SA health service community:

- > The Hon Chris Picton MP, Minister for Health and Wellbeing
- > Dr Robyn Lawrence, Chief Executive, Department for Health and Wellbeing
- > Dr Roger Hunt, Member, Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board
- > Dr Chris Moy, Chair, Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Taskforce
- > Adam Monkhouse, Assistant Director, End of Life Care
- > Lauren Cortis, Lead Pharmacist, Voluntary Assisted Dying Pharmacy Service
- > Emily Pumpa, Interim Nursing Director, South Australian Voluntary Assisted Dying Care Navigator Service

# Voluntary Assisted Dying

- > Joyce White, Voluntary Assisted Dying Liaison Nurse, Northern Adelaide Local Health Network
- > Dr Jocelyn Small, Head of Risk, Compliance & Innovation, BlueCross Aged and Community Services, Victoria
- > Dr Melanie Wroth, Chief Clinical Advisor, Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission
- > Dr Claire Fellingham, Clinical Lead, East Metropolitan Health Service, WA
- > Sam Cox, family lived experience of voluntary assisted dying in WA
- > Dr Melanie Turner, Presiding Member, Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board
- > Helen Chalmers, Executive Director, Health Services Programs

And of course, thank you to our fantastic facilitator, Pam Zervas, Zed Management Consulting.

Thank you as well to all the participants who submitted questions to the implementation team. Questions and answers have been collated and are now available on the SA Health website.

Recordings and conference FAQs can both be accessed now on the [Implementation Conference](#) page.

## In the media

You may have seen some recent media reports around passing the 99 day mark to voluntary assisted dying commencing in SA.

The Hon Chris Picton was joined by Dr Chris Moy and Lauren Cortis, Lead Pharmacist SA Voluntary Assisted Dying (SAVAD-PS) at the Repat Health Precinct and here is a little of what they had to say:

Lauren Cortis, Lead Pharmacist SAVAD-PS

*“I am confident we will be able to ensure for the safe use of medicines, delivered by compassionate, qualified and appropriately training pharmacist in the SA Voluntary Assisted Dying Pharmacy Service”*

*“As a pharmacist of nearly 20 years, I feel I bring in-depth experience to this new role and I’m determined to work closely with patients, medical practitioners and the review board to ensure we deliver safe and appropriate access to VAD medications for those who meet the criteria.”*

# Voluntary Assisted Dying

Dr Chris Moy, Chair SA Voluntary Assisted Dying Taskforce

*“Our implementation taskforce has created a solid foundation for this pathway and we’re really fortunate in our state to have so many excellent personnel working across the various teams involved in allowing South Australians to access VAD.”*

*“We are conscious that we continue to engage with stakeholders right through to voluntary assisted dying becoming available in South Australia to ensure the information available meets the needs of the community.”*

## Workshops, events and presentations

### November

Eyre & Far North Local Health Network Nursing Unit Managers	2 November
Legal Services Commission	8 November
Life Care Senior Nursing Group	9 November
Yorke & Northern Local Health Network Strategic Medical Advisory Committee	15 November
SA Voluntary Assisted Dying Online Conference	16 November
Voluntary Assisted Dying South Australia (VADSA)	20 November
Royal Adelaide Hospital Grand Rounds	22 November
Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS)	24 November
Central Adelaide Local Health Network Nursing Masterclass	1 December

### Upcoming

After Hours Online Carer Support Group (Carers SA)	17 January
--	------------

## Connect with us

Stay up to date with the latest news regarding voluntary assisted dying in South Australia by visiting [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/vad) or join the mailing list by emailing us at [Health.VoluntaryAssistedDying@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.VoluntaryAssistedDying@sa.gov.au).



# Voluntary Assisted Dying

## About the team

This month, we are pleased to feature a little information about Lauren and Emily who are leading the Pharmacy and Care Navigator Service development.

Lauren (she/her) is the Lead Pharmacist of the SA Voluntary Assisted Dying Pharmacy Service (SAVAD-PS). She has experience in a variety of practice settings, including tertiary hospitals, community palliative care, aged care and home medicine reviews. Starting with the Voluntary Assisted Dying Implementation Team in January 2022, Lauren has led the development of the pharmacy service model and medication protocols, as well as contributing to broader aspects of implementation such as the clinical guidelines and clinical portal. In recent months, Lauren has transitioned from the Department for Health and Wellbeing to SA Pharmacy where she and her team are working to establish the SAVAD-PS.

Emily (she/her) is the Interim Nursing Director for the SA Voluntary Assisted Dying Care Navigator Service (SAVAD-CNS). She is an experienced health professional having spent much of her career as an intensive care nurse, including as an organ donor coordinator. As a passionate advocate for the rights of people at end of life, Emily is proud to work with the Care Navigation Service team to establish this important new service. Emily has post graduate qualifications in nursing and law, and is currently undertaking a Masters in Health Administration at Flinders University.

If you wish to connect with the team, contact [Health.VoluntaryAssistedDying@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.VoluntaryAssistedDying@sa.gov.au)

## Support services

Some people may find issues relating to voluntary assisted dying concerning or distressing. If reading the material in this communicate or thinking about voluntary assisted dying has raised some issues regarding grief and bereavement or personal crisis, the helplines and websites below provide support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- > Visit the [Lifeline website](#) or call 13 11 14
- > Visit our [Bereavement Portal](#)
- > Visit the [SA Health mental health services webpage](#) for a range of services
- > Call the Mental Health Triage Service on [13 14 65](#)
- > Call Kids Helpline on [1800 551 800](#)