

Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board Strategic Plan 2025-2027

Mission

Ensuring safe, high quality, compassionate and collaborative voluntary assisted dying services, delivered in accordance with the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021*.

Strategic Priorities

Priority

A sustainable voluntary assisted dying workforce

Public awareness and understanding of voluntary assisted dying

Access to voluntary assisted dying

Continuous improvement of the voluntary assisted dying system

Research on voluntary assisted dying

Objective

Promote the wellbeing and sustainability of South Australia's voluntary assisted dying (VAD) workforce to meet the needs of the community

Greater awareness of voluntary assisted dying as an end-of-life choice

All eligible people in South Australia can access VAD according to their needs, barriers to access are minimised

Voluntary assisted dying in South Australia evolves in response to evidence and practice

South Australia contributes to the voluntary assisted dying evidence base by collaborating on relevant research projects and initiatives.

Key activities

1. Increase Medical Practitioner participation in VAD.
2. Promote development and implementation of multidisciplinary models of care to utilise the skills of the VAD and end of life care workforce.
3. Systematically seek feedback from VAD clinicians and staff to inform workforce planning and wellbeing initiatives.
4. Maintain a VAD Community of practice for VAD clinicians and staff.
5. Promote and support research into barriers and enablers for engagement in VAD for health professionals.
6. Gather and disseminate evidence of VAD activity and models of care to inform workforce planning by health services.

1. Implement a comprehensive voluntary assisted dying community and stakeholder engagement framework and action plan
2. Share meaningful and accessible information and data about VAD in South Australia through regular and transparent reporting
3. Maintain and promote up to date publicly available information about VAD and end of life care for patients and families, health professionals and the community.
4. Engage with key stakeholders such as VADSA to understand community sentiment, priorities and initiatives.

1. Advocate for changes to the Commonwealth Criminal Code carriage laws to increase the use of telehealth for VAD for patients.
2. Systemically use feedback from patients, families and communities to identify barriers to access.
3. Enable Aboriginal people to be supported on the VAD pathway in a culturally sensitive way.
4. Gather evidence about people found ineligible for voluntary assisted dying and the support provided to them to inform planning.
5. Engage with private hospitals to provide support for VAD.

1. Collate legislative matters for future consideration through compliance reviews and feedback from patients, clinicians, staff and the community.
2. Learn from other jurisdictions who have completed a process to review their Act.
3. Monitor developments in other jurisdictions and alignment with community expectations in SA.
4. Use research and evidence to inform recommendations regarding changes to the operation of the SA VAD legislation.
5. Continue to monitor and address risks to the safety and sustainability of VAD in SA.
6. Identify and support opportunities to share improvement and learnings across the VAD system.

1. Promote research priorities identified by the VAD Review Board and Research Subcommittee through the VAD Research Framework.
2. Support and collaborate on priority research projects
3. Disseminate research findings to support awareness and improvement.
4. Undertake research into community awareness and perceptions of VAD.

What success looks like

1. Patients are linked with suitable participating practitioners locally and without significant delay.
2. VAD activity is well distributed amongst participating practitioners supporting sustainability and reducing the potential for fatigue and burnout.
3. VAD services experience low staffing turnover and high levels of staff engagement and wellbeing.
4. Feedback from VAD clinicians and staff about working in VAD informs service development.
5. The number of medical practitioners who are trained in VAD and who are actively participating in VAD continues to increase by at least 10 percent each year.

1. Health professionals understand their role and their responsibilities when a patient raises VAD with them.
2. Patients are promptly linked with VAD support services and palliative care, if needed, when asking about VAD.
3. Patients and families can easily find and navigate information about VAD.
4. Organisations have appropriate VAD policies and procedures in place to support compliance with the VAD Act 2021.
5. Feedback from the community demonstrates understanding of VAD in the context of end-of-life care.

1. VAD applicants reflect the demographics of the eligible South Australian population.
2. Patients can access VAD in the location of their choice.
3. Applications for VAD align with local health network catchment populations.
4. All VAD applicants are provided with information and support to receive palliative care while they are on the VAD pathway.
5. Pathways are in place for patients who are found to be ineligible for VAD.
6. All patients are aware of support available through the SAVAD Care Navigator Service or VAD Liaisons.

1. The VAD Review Board is prepared to inform key stakeholders regarding the operation of VAD under the Act in South Australia.
2. The operation of the Act, and any proposed changes to the legislation or policy, are informed by contemporary practice, research and evidence.
3. Voluntary assisted dying in South Australia evolves in response to community expectations.
4. Risks inherent in the operation of VAD under the Act are minimised in response to evidence and practice.
5. The efficiency of VAD processes for patients, clinicians and staff continues to improve.

1. Effective local, and national research partnerships are established and maintained.
2. Data and information from South Australia is included in national research.
3. Research findings are shared with the community and health practitioners to inform practice improvement.
4. Research undertaken in South Australia addresses research priorities identified in the VAD Research Framework.
5. Research findings inform engagement approaches to improve awareness and understanding of VAD.

Enablers

Governance and Accountability

Stakeholder engagement and communication

Robust data collection and analysis

Technology integration