

Is 'Euthanasia Capital' Providing Frivolous Assisted Suicides?

The commission responsible for overseeing state-administered euthanasia in Quebec has issued a stern warning to doctors regarding the strict criteria that must be met for "medical assistance in dying."

This move comes in response to reports of doctors not adhering to the established guidelines, leading to cases of euthanasia that were either unlawful or against the principles of medical ethics.

The province of Quebec has gained notoriety as the world's "euthanasia capital," with nearly 5,000 cases of doctor-assisted suicides reported last year. Shockingly, this number is estimated to account for approximately 7% of all deaths in the province by the end of the year, according to Dr. Michel Bureau, the head of Quebec's Commission on End of Life Care. Dr. Bureau expressed concern over the frequency of euthanasia practices, stating, "We're now no longer dealing with an exceptional treatment, but a treatment that is very frequent." The commission has identified cases in which ineligible patients were subjected to euthanasia against the law.

Between Spring 2021 and 2022, at least 15 out of 3,663 state-facilitated suicides were reported to be non-compliant with the established criteria. Disturbingly, some patients had not satisfied the criteria for lethal injection, while others were unable to provide consent. Alex Schadenberg, Executive Director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, has voiced concerns over the underreporting of unlawful euthanasia deaths.

The Canadian Supreme Court's decision in 2015 to permit

doctors to assist in patients' deaths paved the way for the Medical Assistance in Dying Act passed by the Canadian government in 2016.

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Originally limited to individuals with grievous and irremediable medical conditions causing intolerable suffering, the criteria have since expanded to include individuals with various health issues such as PTSD, depression, anxiety and even non-terminal illnesses.

The recent adoption of a law in Quebec permitting euthanasia for individuals with "a serious and incurable disease, such as Alzheimer's," has raised further concerns among advocates for the sanctity of life.

The Bible speaks to the intrinsic value of human life and the responsibility to care for one another. Genesis 1:27 says, "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

In response to these developments, the commission's recent memo emphasized the need for physicians to rigorously uphold the established criteria and exercise diligence in evaluating patients' eligibility for assisted suicide. The memo underscores the importance of critical and contemporaneous independent opinions from physicians confirming the admissibility of medical assistance in dying applications.

Debates around the ethical implications of euthanasia continue. The Bible's teachings, such as in Psalm 139:13-14, remind us of the divine origin of human life: "You brought my inner parts into being; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will praise you, for You made me with fear and wonder; marvelous are Your works, and You know me completely."

Critics have expressed concerns about Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) program, suggesting it echoes Nazi-era Germany's eugenics program. As reported by The Blaze, "Dr. Louis Roy, speaking on behalf of the Quebec College of Physicians, told the government last October that babies with 'severe malformations' and 'grave and severe syndromes' should be eligible for the eugenicist's needle notwithstanding their inability to consent."

The comparison arises from the potential implications of MAiD's expansion to include individuals with non-terminal conditions, such as those suffering from mental health issues or disabilities. Like the eugenicist policies that targeted the weak, the vulnerable and those considered unfit, critics argue that the broadening scope of MAiD could inadvertently prioritize a "quality of life" assessment, raising questions about societal values and the intrinsic worth of individuals.

As society engages in these discussions, it remains evident that the sanctity of life as ordained by God is a paramount consideration for many. The Bible further emphasizes this truth in Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; and before you were born, I sanctified you and ordained you a prophet to the nations." {eo}

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