



**Dying With Dignity Canada**  
It's your life. It's your choice.



**Chief Executive  
Officer**

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**Executive Brief**





# Dying With Dignity Canada

## It's your life. It's your choice.

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### FOR MORE INFORMATION

KCI (Ketchum Canada Inc.) has been retained to conduct this leadership search on behalf of Dying With Dignity Canada. For more information about this opportunity, please contact Sylvie Battisti, Vice-President, KCI Search + Talent or Samantha David, Senior Search Consultant, KCI Search + Talent by email at [DWDC@kcitalent.com](mailto:DWDC@kcitalent.com).

Interested candidates are invited to send a resume and letter of interest to the email address listed above by **November 29, 2019**.

*All inquiries and applications will be held in strict confidence.*

Dying With Dignity Canada is an equal opportunity employer. We welcome applications from people who identify as belonging to diverse and/or marginalized communities. Accommodation is available during the recruitment process for applicants with disabilities.



# Dying With Dignity Canada

## It's your life. It's your choice.

### Chief Executive Officer Dying With Dignity Canada

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#### THE OPPORTUNITY

Dying With Dignity Canada (DWDC) is seeking a dynamic Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is passionate about human rights to lead our national charitable organization. Headquartered in Toronto, the CEO will lead mission-based activities to advocate for, educate about, and support choice in end-of-life care and dying for people across Canada.

The new CEO will take leadership of an organization nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in the field of medically assisted dying. Dying with Dignity Canada will continue to help Canadians understand, navigate and defend their legal end-of-life choices and care. Our organization has a solid financial status, resulting from remarkable donor support in the form of recent bequests, and we are now positioned to do more than just respond in times of crisis. The CEO will guide DWDC's Board, staff and volunteers as we lay the foundation for a future in which Canadians are better equipped than ever to plan for, and realize, their end-of-life care and death. In doing this, the new CEO will become the face and voice of DWDC's values-based framework that puts the person — their rights, interests and wishes — first.

The Board is seeking an experienced non-profit sector senior leader with the required skills, knowledge and mindset to deliver on key priority areas during this exciting time in DWDC's evolution. Poised for even greater success with a new five-year strategic plan and an ever increasing demand for its advocacy and education programs, the CEO will work collaboratively and effectively with the Board, a dedicated staff team of 13, and volunteer Chapter leaders in key Canadian communities to:

- Increase organization profile and opportunities to advocate for the Canadian Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- Expand national scope by broadening activities in the areas of education and support, and focus on evolving areas of advocacy, programs and fundraising;
- Invest in organization capacity and capabilities to better support increasing demand for growth of mission based activities;
- Monitor and ensure ongoing organization effectiveness and accountability; and
- Optimize revenue streams to ensure sustainability and future growth.

The role will be based in Toronto at the national office in the Yonge and Eglinton neighbourhood.

## ABOUT DYING WITH DIGNITY CANADA

Dying With Dignity Canada is the national human-rights charity committed to improving quality of dying, protecting end-of-life rights, and helping Canadians avoid unwanted suffering.

- We defend human rights by advocating for assisted dying rules that respect the Canadian Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- We provide personal support to adults suffering greatly from a grievous and irremediable medical condition who wish to die on their own terms.
- We educate Canadians about all of their legal end-of-life options, including the constitutional right to medical assistance in dying (MAID), and the importance of advance care planning.
- We support healthcare practitioners who assess for and provide MAID.

### Background, Values & Tactics

The environment in Canada changed significantly in February 2015 when the Supreme Court of Canada issued its unanimous decision on the *Carter v. Canada* case deciding that the federal law pertaining to end of life rights violated the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The federal government responded with new legislation, Bill C-14, which allowed medically assisted dying in Canada.

However, many Canadians still struggle to receive a medically assisted death in a timely manner due to restrictions within this legislation. Dying With Dignity Canada helps ensure all Canadians are adequately protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* when accessing medically assisted death.

To this end, Dying With Dignity Canada believes:

- That assisted death should be part of an integrated health care system. We support a medicalized model and a regime that requires strict, but reasonable, eligibility criteria.
- Supports laws that allow competent adults who have a grievous and irremediable medical condition (disability, illness or disease) and who have intolerable and enduring suffering to choose MAID, subject to a regime of robust safeguards.
- Strongly believes that access to MAID must be equitable and timely. We oppose legislative and regulatory restrictions that unduly limit the class of persons who may legally access a medically assisted death.
- Considers the current federal legislation to be unconstitutional and supports legal challenges that aim to have the MAID provisions of the *Criminal Code*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C-46, reflect the eligibility criteria in *Carter*. Until those efforts succeed, DWDC acts in accordance with the requirements of the current federal legislation.

At a tactical level, DWDC focuses on ensuring the full implementation of *Carter* and facilitating rightful access to MAID through:

- Legal advocacy;
- Supporting patients and families;
- Empowering health care practitioners;
- Identifying injustice (including doctors who refuse to provide effective referrals, and hospitals, long-term care facilities, hospices, and other public health care institutions that refuse to facilitate MAID); and
- Educating Canadians about all of their legal end-of-life options, including the constitutional right to MAID, and the importance of advance care planning.



## Overview of National Operations

Dying with Dignity Canada is the largest and oldest right to die with dignity organization in Canada. Founded in 1980, DWDC was incorporated in 1982 and received its current charitable status in 2018. The national charity is mainly funded through individual donations and membership fees with more than 50,000 supporters across Canada.



All programs and services offered by DWDC are free of charge and designed to empower the public, patients, their families, and healthcare practitioners with tools to navigate and ensure end-of-life rights. At present, DWDC has 14 employees who are responsible for carrying out the organization's mission in areas such as leadership and operations support, program management, education, volunteer support, communications, fundraising and administration.

## Volunteer Network: Board of Directors, Councils, Chapters and Supporters

Dying With Dignity Canada relies on a strong network of chapters, councils, volunteers and other supporters to achieve its mission throughout the country which has created a growing national footprint. Volunteer engagement helps expand efforts in advocacy, support and education as reaching all demographics is key to the success of our work.

Volunteers are the heart of DWDC. Without them, it would be impossible for us to achieve our goals. We rely on our passionate supporters to engage with their communities, defend patient rights, and ensure Canadians are informed about their legal end-of-life options. Volunteers share in our mission by organizing events, facilitating educational workshops, advising national operations and recruiting new supporters within their communities.

### Board of Directors

The Board is comprised of 13 individuals from across Canada. They are a volunteer, member-elected Board of Directors responsible for the organization's strategic direction.

### Chapters & Volunteer Network:

Chapters form local and provincial support networks that help break down barriers for Canadians dealing with assisted dying. Currently there are 12 Chapters located in Calgary, Edmonton, Hamilton, Kingston, Lethbridge, Niagara, Nova Scotia, Ottawa, Salt Spring Island, Vancouver, Victoria and Winnipeg.

Roles of DWDC Chapter volunteers include:

- Serving as Independent Witnesses: Bill C-14 requires people who request assisted dying to get their application form signed by two independent witnesses. In 2018, DWDC volunteers provided signatures for a total of 600 requests. They also support people who are exploring a request for MAID and in some cases support the loved ones of people who died with medical assistance.
- Facilitating Peer Support Groups: For families who have experience with assisted dying.
- Enhancing Education & Awareness: Volunteers host and speak at events throughout the year including workshops and other public events on advance care planning and information sessions about MAID. These events are held on-line and in-person. Volunteers also contribute their stories to DWDC blog posts that provide comfort and hope to individuals and families.

### Advisory Councils/Committees:

- **Clinicians Advisory Council:** Comprised of dedicated doctors and nurse practitioners who have taken a stand for compassionate choice at end of life. The council brings their unique knowledge and experience to help advise DWDC on the policies and priorities of the organization. While many individuals on the council are MAID assessors or providers, this is not a requirement for membership.
- **Disability Advisory Council:** Informs our work by integrating the perspectives of Canadians with disabilities. Members of the group advise DWDC on its policies and programs, represent DWDC in the media, and engage with stakeholders in their local communities.
- **Legal Advisory Committee:** Provides an understanding of the legal landscape surrounding the right to choice. These volunteers help ensure our policies are sound, flag potential threats to the rights of all Canadians, and identify new opportunities for DWDC to defend those rights.
- **First Person Witness Council:** Includes Canadians who have supported a loved one on a journey with assisted dying and want to speak about their experiences. Members of the group dispel myths and misconceptions about MAID, provide peer support to others who have had similar experiences, and work to break down the stigma that's sometimes associated with Canadians' right to a peaceful death.
- **Patrons Council:** Includes a growing group of Canadian luminaries who endorse Dying With Dignity Canada's work and mission.

### Strategic Pillars of Work

The demand for DWDC's leadership in the assisted dying space has increased alongside its capacity for deeper investments in its strategic areas of work. Dying With Dignity Canada's leadership has identified four strategic pillars of work:

- 1) **Eligibility:** Ensuring that assisted dying legislation complies with the Canadian Constitution and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- 2) **Access:** Ensuring that Canadians can access medical assistance in dying in compliance with the Canadian Constitution and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- 3) **Support:** Supporting people, their families and caregivers and healthcare providers as they explore end-of-life options including medical assistance in dying.
- 4) **Education:** Leading education on advance care planning, patient rights and end-of-life options including medical assistance in dying.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [Newsletters](#)
- [Impact Reports](#)
- [Audited Financial Statements](#)
- [Chapter Information](#)
- [Education & Resources](#)
- [Board of Directors](#)



## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

A vibrant, articulate and experienced senior leader, the ideal candidate will demonstrate a strong commitment to human rights along with the emotional intelligence required to thoughtfully navigate end of life issues. A charismatic public speaker who is able to quickly become a subject matter expert, the CEO will be a credible spokesperson and a tenacious advocate who will shape the narrative on MAID and solidify DWDC's reputation both nationally and internationally. Determined and able to skillfully manage challenging conversations, the new CEO will espouse organization values of compassion, integrity, courage, and collaboration while methodically building DWDC's pillars, brand, and people.

Possessing strong business acumen and expertise in Canadian federalism and politics, the successful candidate will be able to capitalize on opportunities within DWDC's shifting landscape and use its desirable financial position to chart an exciting course that will further evolve mission-based activities. Innovative yet pragmatic, the new CEO will possess the humility and listening skills to lead this change in a manner that values the service and expertise of our staff and volunteers. While implementing this new vision, the ideal candidate will use the lens of social justice and model a commitment to equity and inclusivity, both internally and externally, to ensure the overarching plan is fair, equitable and accessible to all groups.

Working collaboratively and successfully with the Board to deliver the strategic plan, the new incumbent will employ both structured reporting and open communication to quickly build trust and support knowledge exchange. The new CEO will also use their expertise related to Board governance, operational planning, impact measurement and organizational risk to support strategic decision making at the Board level.



The successful candidate is a secure and approachable leader who will create an environment of collaboration and trust that empowers employees to deliver excellence. The staff team is very committed and competent and requires a leader who will celebrate their success, coach them in areas that require development and help them strive for continued results while also understanding the need for work/life balance in our dynamic and sensitive environment. Using an inclusive approach, the CEO will involve staff in relevant decision making, create role clarity and engage each member of the team based on their unique skills and role within the organization.

Employing a natural and highly developed ability to build relationships with diverse groups, the ideal candidate will create infrastructure that will enhance the connection between the national office and Chapters and also build networks with allied organizations to strengthen DWDC's central position within the cause. By leveraging their understanding of revenue development and creating targets that align with organizational goals, the CEO will also use their strategic relationship building skills to create a culture of philanthropy and support the cultivation and stewardship of major donors.

## KEY DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to the Dying With Dignity Canada Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for the successful leadership and management of the organization according to the strategic direction set by the Board of Directors.

### Leadership

- Participate with the Board to further develop the vision and strategic plan to guide the organization, and to optimize the application of major bequests towards organizational goals.
- Create a culture focused not only on passion for the mission, but on results and high performance achieved within a context of work/life balance.
- Develop an annual operating plan that translates the strategic plan to actions consistent with the vision.
- Identify, assess and inform the Board of internal and external factors which may affect the organization.
- Provide oversight to the ongoing operations of the organization.
- Act as a role model and provide leadership and mentoring to staff.
- Motivate and engage volunteers to support the implementation of DWDC's strategic plan.

### Governance

- Partner with the Chair and the Governance Committee to cultivate, recruit and retain Board members.
- Develop bylaws, policies and procedures for the governance of the organization and direct staff's implementation of those policies.
- Attend all Board meetings, providing required materials in a timely and accurate manner, including CEO quarterly reports. Provide or arrange for appropriate staff to provide effective support to the Board and its Committees.

### Operations

- Ensure the effective management of the organization and the successful implementation of the annually approved business plan.
- Lead the continued development of innovative programs that increase the organization's national reach and its impact on access to end of life choice and care.
- Ensure that programs and services offered by the organization contribute to the organization's mission and are consistent with the priorities of the Board.

### Human Resources Planning and Management

- Determine staff requirements for organizational management and program delivery.
- Develop staff members to their full potential through coaching, mentoring, on-the-job training and professional development.
- Establish a positive, inclusive and healthy work environment in accordance with all appropriate legislation and regulations.
- Establish and implement processes to recruit, interview and select staff with the appropriate professional, experiential and personal ability to further the organization's mission.
- Foster a spirit of mutual respect, collaboration, teamwork, accountability and innovation.



- Continue to build processes to ensure effective position assessment, individual performance evaluation and salary review.
- Establish strategies to integrate active volunteers across the country into the annual business plan, foster their engagement with staff and the organization, provide recognition, resources and opportunities for development that will enhance their effectiveness on behalf of DWDC.
- Collaborate with the HR Committee when developing and implementing HR policies and procedures, and with the organization's Task Force on equity, diversity & inclusion on relevant initiatives.

### **Advocacy**

- Monitor the external environment to identify opportunities to address barriers to eligibility and access, then define and implement strategies to address these (e.g. file affidavits to challenge existing legislation).
- Act as the principal spokesperson for DWDC while engaging select Board members to do so on specific relevant issues within their areas of knowledge and expertise.
- Develop and maintain positive and collaborative relations with all key stakeholders and relevant organizations that share common interests with DWDC.
- Establish and maintain relationships with key influencers at the federal and provincial level.
- Participate in public forums, conferences and other events to enhance and support DWDC's mission and brand on a national and international level.

### **Financial Planning and Management**

- Work with the Board and provide leadership to staff to prepare comprehensive annual budgets, including Human Resource plans and budgets.
- Administer the organization's funds according to the budget approved by the Board. Manage appropriate allocation of financial resources.
- Monitor and report quarterly or at each Board meeting on financial performance and institute remedial action if required.
- Maintain effective fiscal management and control systems to ensure operation within required regulations, legislation and approved budget.

### **Fundraising**

- Provide direction to fundraising officer and work with Board and other volunteers to secure funding prospects for the operation and long-term viability of the organization.
- Develop and implement effective fundraising strategies.
- Build strong relationships with key donors and supporters, participating in all aspects of the donor cycle.
- Make recommendations to the Board with respect to the application and management of significant donations.

### **Risk Management**

- Work with the Board and the Governance Committee to identify, evaluate and implement measures to mitigate organizational and financial risks.

## QUALIFICATIONS & COMPETENCIES

- An undergraduate degree with additional education or work experience in business and organizational management.
- Experience in senior leadership roles in a not for profit setting; Experience as a CEO or Executive Director preferred.
- Passion for supporting the rights of Canadians for end of life choice.
- Demonstrated ability to influence and rally multiple stakeholder groups around a cause using advanced skills in advocacy, communications and government relations.
- Experience working with and supporting Boards of Directors and Board Committees. Knowledge of concepts of good governance.
- Exceptional verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills with high motivation and aptitude for communicating with various audiences including media, health/legal professionals, senior public servants/government officials, other professional groups, donors, volunteers and recipients of service.
- Proven success creating, leading, coaching and supporting high functioning teams of staff and volunteers.
- Demonstrated ability to build credibility and trust with internal and external audiences including the Board, staff, volunteers, donors, partners and other stakeholders.
- Experience creating a culture of inclusivity, equitable treatment, mutual respect and support.
- Diverse experience implementing strategic plans and successfully managing growth, shifting landscapes and changing priorities.
- Demonstrated skills in collaborating closely with other non-profit organizations and groups with similar goals.
- Strong business and financial acumen with an understanding and interest in revenue development and donor relations.
- Ability to identify, manage and report on organization risk.
- Demonstrated competence in understanding and responding to the cultural nuances in various regions and communities across Canada.
- Ability to communicate in both official languages an asset.
- Availability for regular monthly travel in Canada and occasional travel internationally.

## LEADERSHIP BIOGRAPHIES

### James Cowan – Chair, Board of Directors



James Cowan is a veteran lawyer and retired senator from Nova Scotia.

A native and resident of Halifax, he studied at Dalhousie University where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts and a degree in law. He then attended the London School of Economics, receiving a Master of Laws degree. In 2009, Dalhousie University awarded him the degree Doctor of Laws (*honoris causa*).

Senator Cowan has practiced law in Halifax since 1967 and is a partner at Stewart McKelvey, the largest law firm in Atlantic Canada. In 1983, he was appointed as Queen's Counsel.

For many years Senator Cowan was actively engaged in the life of Dalhousie University, serving as a member of the University's Board of Governors and chairing a wide array of committees. From 2000 to 2008, he served as chair of the university's board of governors.

Senator Cowan was appointed on the recommendation of Prime Minister Paul Martin on March 24, 2005. While a senator, he sat as a member of Parliament's Special Joint Parliamentary Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying and tabled legislation to prohibit and prevent genetic discrimination by employers and insurers. In addition, he proposed legislation that would establish a Canadian Commission on Mental Health and Justice to address the criminal justice system's approach to persons suffering from mental illness.

### Isser Dubinsky – Vice-Chair



Dr. Isser Dubinsky is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Toronto, and a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Health Policy, Management, and Evaluation at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Dubinsky served as an Associate Director of Hay Group Health Care Consulting from 2004-2016, prior to which he was Chief of the Department of Emergency Medicine at University Health Network. Prior to this he was Chief of Emergency Medicine at North York General Hospital, one of Canada's busiest emergency departments.

He was member of the Medical Advisory Committee of both North York General Hospital and the University Health Network, Chair of the Medical Advisory Committee and member of the Board of North York General Hospital, Program Director of the Emergency Medicine program at North York General Hospital, and a member of the Hospital Executive at both the Toronto Western and North York General Hospitals.

Following graduation from medical school he had a range of experiences from performing mission work in rural hospitals in Africa to working in small community hospitals in Canada.

## DYING WITH DIGNITY CANADA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**The Board is comprised of 13 individuals from across Canada. They are a volunteer, member-elected Board of Directors responsible for the organization's strategic direction.**

James Cowan, Chair

Isser Dubinsky, Vice-Chair

Bradley Peter, Secretary

Susan Desjardins, Member

Bev Heim-Myers, Member

Eva Kmiecec, Member

Sherry Moran, Member

Leigh Naturkach, Member

Chantal Perrot, Member

Fancy Poitras, Member

Jonathan Reggler, Member

Derryck Smith, Member

Ryan Webster, Member



DYING WITH DIGNITY CANADA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

