

Monday, April 4th, 2016

THE VULNERABLE PERSONS STANDARD: A BALANCED APPROACHED TO PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DEATH

Every day, more and more Canadians are turning to the [Vulnerable Persons Standard](#), to strike the necessary balance between making physician-assisted death available to eligible persons and providing safeguards to protect vulnerable persons. The [legal opinion of Professor Dianne Pothier](#), issued on March 23rd, described in detail how "competing constitutional rights" are balanced in the Vulnerable Persons Standard. On Friday last week, Canadian sculptor Persimmon Blackbridge recalled her father's observation that "in Canada rights aren't absolute, they're always in context, in balance".

Today, author and activist David Roche reflected:

"The Right to Die issue is very real and important to me.

I lived in San Francisco during the height of the AIDS epidemic. I personally knew and loved brave people who fought for the right to live through organizations like ACT UP. I also knew and loved people who chose for the right to die. Both choices were respectfully understood and supported in the community.

I believe there is truth and merit on both sides of this issue. I believe that the Vulnerable Persons Standard reflects that balance well.

I asked myself two questions. If I chose the right to die, would the Standard respect that right? And correspondingly, would the Standard adequately protect me - and vulnerable people whom I love - from potential abuse of this right? Both answers were affirmative.

That is why I support the Vulnerable Persons Standard and urge you to do so also."

IN THE NEWS:

Trudo Lemmons, Professor and Scholl Chair in Health Law and Policy at the University of Toronto : [Balancing Access to Physician Assisted Dying with Protecting the Vulnerable](#)

The Vulnerable Persons Standard was developed by a group of more than forty advisors with expertise in medicine, ethics, law, public policy and needs of vulnerable persons. The Standard is a series of evidence-based safeguards intended to help ensure that Canadians requesting assistance from physicians to end their life can do so without jeopardizing the lives of vulnerable persons who may be subject to coercion and abuse.

To learn more about the Standard and the many Canadians and organizations endorsing the Standard, please visit us at www.vps-npv.ca.

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