



Catholic Health Association of Manitoba
Association catholique manitobaine de la santé
КАТОЛИЧКА АСОЦІАЦІЯ ЗДОРОВ'Я

Mission

The Catholic Health Association of Manitoba (CHAM) serves its members in promoting Catholic values and traditions in the delivery of social and health services in Manitoba. We do this through collaboration, education and advocacy.

Vision

CHAM envisions a social and health care system that promotes and respects the well-being, dignity, and sacredness of every person.

Board

Daniel Lussier
Raymond Cadieux
Jean R. Piché
Stepan Bilynskyy

Members

- Archdiocese of Churchill – Hudson Bay
- Archdiocese of Keewatin – Le Pas
- Archdiocese of Saint Boniface
- Archdiocese of Winnipeg
- Archeparchy of Winnipeg
- Actionmarguerite (St. Boniface)
- Actionmarguerite (St. Vital)
- Centre de santé Saint-Boniface
- Centre Youville Centre
- Dr. Gendreau P.C.H.
- Holy Family Home
- Misericordia Health Centre
- St. Amant Inc.
- St. Boniface General Hospital
- St. Joseph's Residence Inc.
- St. Paul's Home, Dauphin
- Ste Rose General Hospital
- Sara Riel Inc.
- Villa Youville Inc.
- Winnipegosis & District Health Centre

October 13, 2015

The Right Honorable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

On February 6, 2015 the Supreme Court of Canada struck down Criminal Code provisions prohibiting physician assisted death stating that it infringed on the right to life, liberty and security of the person under Section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Carter v. Canada). There was an immediate suspension of the Supreme Court decision for twelve months (February 6, 2016) to give time for legislation, professional regulations and education and procedural safeguards.

The Catholic Health Association of Manitoba (CHAM) has grave concerns over the legalization of physician assisted death, in any form, in our Canadian society. It is also important to understand that Catholic faith inspired organizations in Canada will not participate in physician assisted death. CHAM would insist that the conscience and religious freedom of health care providers (individuals and organizations) be protected.

We also believe that supporting individuals who are in the dying process, their family members and healthcare workers is our privilege and moral obligation. We believe that professional palliative care makes this possible and would advocate for more investment in this area so that all Canadians have access to high-quality palliative care and hospice care that encompasses support for the physical, spiritual, emotional and psychological dimensions of the end-of-life experience.

CHAM strongly supports the notion that more time is required in responding to the decision of the Supreme Court in this matter. The one year given by the Supreme Court is too short for such a fundamental change in our society.

We are urging all candidates and all parties to support seeking an extension to the one year delay that the Supreme Court has set. Should the Supreme Court refuse, we would support the use of the "notwithstanding clause" as recommended by the Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, to allow more time to better engage Canadians in dealing with this crucial moral issue.

Wilmar Chopyk
Executive Director

cc: CHAM Members
Catholic Health Alliance of Canada
Interfaith Health Care Association of Manitoba
Manitoba Federal Election Candidates