1. **SCOPE:** All providers who are eligible to serve as an attending, consulting, or psychiatric provider for patients requesting end of life medication per the Washington State Death with Dignity Act.
2. **PURPOSE:** To ensure that all providers understand SPMC’s stance on their participation in the Washington State Death with Dignity Act and their responsibilities whether or not they participate in the program. In addition, ensure participating providers follow all the requirements of the Death with Dignity Act if they choose to be an attending, consulting, and/or psychiatric provider for patients requesting end of life medication per the Washington State Death with Dignity Act.
3. **DEFINITIONS:** Eligible Provider: A Physician licensed under chapter 18.57 RCW or 18.71 RCW, a Physician Assistant licensed under chapter 18.71A RCW, or an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner licensed under chapter 18.79 RCW.
4. **POLICY:**

All providers at SPMC are expected to respond to any patient’s query about life-ending medication with openness and compassion. SPMC believes our providers have an obligation to openly discuss the patient’s concerns, unmet needs, feelings, and desires about the dying process. Providers should seek to learn the meaning behind the patient’s questions and help the patient understand the range of available options, including but not limited to comfort care, hospice care, and pain control. Ultimately, SPMC’s goal is to help patients make informed decisions about end-of-life care.

Summit Pacific Medical Center (SPMC) understands there are significant ethical and clinical considerations associated with the Washington State Death with Dignity Act. Each SPMC provider and each SPMC patient is a unique individual with their own beliefs about what represents an acceptable quality of life and their moral values regarding the Death with Dignity Act. SPMC does not mandate that any provider participate in the “Washington State Death with Dignity Act,” nor encourages any provider to do so.

An SPMC provider may choose to participate in the Washington State Death with Dignity Act. Providers who choose to participate in the program will determine based on their clinical judgment whether or not a patient is a candidate for life-ending medication. While participating in the act, any provider at SPMC must ensure the appropriate standard of care is followed.

A participating SPMC provider may perform the following functions as defined by the Washington Death with Dignity Act:

• Perform the duties of an attending physician;

• Perform the duties of a consulting physician;

• Prescribe life-ending medication;

• Provide counseling in connection with the provision of life-ending medication;

• Perform other duties as provided for in the Act.

SPMC administration may provide oversight and may review records to the extent necessary to ensure all the safeguards of the law have been followed and the required documentation completed and submitted to the Department of Health.

Life-ending medication is generally intended to be taken outside the hospital setting. While SPMC allows its providers to participate, it prohibits patients from taking the medication at any SPMC location including the hospital. SPMC has decided for patient safety reasons not to stock life-ending medication. While patients may receive a prescription from SPMC providers, it must be filled elsewhere.

1. **PROCEDURE/REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY:**
2. SPMC and its providers will comply with the most current RCWs, laws, and regulations associated with the Washington Death with Dignity Act and any changes in such RCWs, laws, and regulations will supersede the below qualifications.
3. A qualified patient must meet the following requirements:
	1. At least 18 years of age.
	2. Competent - in the opinion of a court or in the opinion of the patient’s attending qualified medical provider or consulting qualified medical provider, psychiatrist, or psychologist. A patient has the ability to make and communicate an informed decision to health care providers, including communication through persons familiar with the patient’s manner of communicating if those persons are available.
	3. A resident of Washington State. (Common documents that prove residency in Washington State include, but are not limited to: a driver’s license, voter registration, a mortgage or rental agreement, or a utility bill.)
	4. Diagnosed with a terminal disease - an incurable and irreversible disease that has been medically confirmed and will, within reasonable medical judgment, produce death within six months.
4. Attending Qualified Medical Providers’ responsibilities:
	1. Determine whether a patient is qualified under the Death with Dignity Act.
	2. Ensure the patient is making an informed decision.
	3. Refer the patient to a consulting qualified medical provider.
	4. Refer the patient for counseling if appropriate.
	5. Ensure all requirements under the Death with Dignity Act are met before prescribing medication.
	6. Immediately notify their Senior Medical Director or their Senior Medical Director’s proxy if the Senior Medical Director is unavailable when initiating the Death with Dignity process for a patient.
	7. Ensure the correct procedures are followed and the correct documentation is completed in accordance with the Death with Dignity Act and SPMC policy.
	8. Ensure the steps included in the attached checklist are followed carefully and documented appropriately.
	9. Submit the following completed forms to the Department of Health within 30 calendar days of writing a prescription for a lethal dose of medication.
		1. Request for Medication to End My Life in a Humane and Dignified Manner form (DOH 422-063), or in substantially the same form as described in the Act;
		2. Attending Qualified Medical Provider Compliance form (DOH 422-064);
		3. Consulting Qualified Medical Provider Compliance form (DOH 422-065);
		4. Psychiatric/Psychological Provider Compliance form (DOH 422-066), if an evaluation was performed.
	10. Certify the patient’s death certificate within 5 calendar days from the date of death if the patient chooses to take the life ending medication.
	11. Complete and submit the attached Attending Qualified Medical Provider’s After Death Reporting Form within 30 calendar days after the date of death.
	12. Complete SPMC assigned Death with Dignity learning module prior to participating as Attending Qualified Medical Provider, Consulting Qualified Medical provider or Psychiatric/Psychological Provider and every 2 years hereafter if provider continues to want to participate in Washington’s Death with Dignity Program..
5. Consulting Qualified Medical Provider’s responsibilities:
	1. Examine the patient and their medical records to confirm whether a patient is qualified under the Death with Dignity Act.
	2. Refer the patient for counseling if appropriate.
	3. Complete and submit the attached Consulting Qualified Medical Provider’s Compliance Form and send it to the Attending Qualified Medical Provider immediately after examination. Do not send the form to the Department of Health directly.
	4. If the patient’s Attending Provider is not a SPMC employed provider, immediately notify their Senior Medical Director (or their Senior Medical Director’s proxy if the Senior Medical Director is unavailable) after consultation.
	5. Complete SPMC assigned Death with Dignity learning module prior to participating as Attending Qualified Medical Provider, Consulting Qualified Medical provider or Psychiatric/Psychological Provider and every 2 years hereafter if provider continues to want to participate in Washington’s Death with Dignity Program.
6. Psychiatric/Psychological Provider’s responsibilities
	1. Examine the patient to determine if they have a psychiatric or psychological disorder or depression causing impaired judgment.
	2. Immediately after examination, complete and return the attached Psychiatric/Psychological Provider’s Compliance Form to the medical provider who referred the patient to you, either the Attending Qualified Medical Provider or Consulting Qualified Medical Provider.
	3. If the patient’s Attending Provider is not a SPMC employed provider, immediately notify their Senior Medical Director (or their Senior Medical Director’s proxy if the Senior Medical Director is unavailable) after consultation.
	4. Complete SPMC assigned Death with Dignity learning module prior to participating as Attending Qualified Medical Provider, Consulting Qualified Medical provider or Psychiatric/Psychological Provider and every 2 years hereafter if provider continues to want to participate in Washington’s Death with Dignity Program.
7. Death with Dignity Process
	1. The qualified patient must make two oral requests in addition to a written request for life-ending medication.
	2. The written request must be the Medication to End My Life in a Humane and Dignified Manner form (DOH 422-063), or in substantially the same form as described in the Act
	3. The qualified patient must wait at least seven days after the first oral request to make the second oral request.
	4. A patient must be seen by a participating attending and consulting provider prior to being prescribed life-ending medications. (At minimum, one of those providers must be a physician.)
	5. When the qualified patient makes the second oral request, the attending qualified medical provider must offer the patient an opportunity to change their mind.
	6. A qualified patient must wait a minimum of 7 days before receiving the prescription.
	7. All required forms must be completed in the required timelines and submitted to the Department of Health.