

Quality Practice Series #2 (August 2022)

Message from the Voluntary Assisted Dying Board Chair

I would like to start by acknowledging the anniversary of the first year of Voluntary Assisted Dying in Western Australia and all that has been achieved to reach this point. The Board appreciates the time and effort of all practitioners and services involved as we have learnt to navigate this course together. As with all new processes there are always challenges and lessons to be learnt, but overall, the first year has run smoothly and this is mostly due to the collaborative and respectful relationships that have been built.

The Board has a philosophy of continuous improvement and is currently working towards delivering its first annual report, which will be provided to the Minister for Health and tabled in Parliament. The report will reflect the operation of the Act in the first 12 months and assist to guide our future direction, so we can work towards achieving a robust and sustainable model of service delivery for patients seeking VAD in WA. We look forward to sharing this information with you.

Dr Scott Blackwell
Chair - Voluntary Assisted Dying Board

Focus Area 1 – Forms

Submission of forms

As practitioners have become familiar with the large number of forms over the last 12 months there has been a marked increase in accuracy of completion. Particularly as it relates to the hard copy forms (Written declarations, Contact person appointment and Practitioner Administration forms).

Although increasing numbers of the required forms are completed accurately and submitted in a timely manner, errors are still being picked up by the secretariat staff processing them. We understand that practitioners can be busy and frequently under pressure and this is when mistakes may occur. Please continue to check all forms prior to submission, with some key points being:

- Check forms completed by patients have all necessary details prior to submission (eg. Phone number and email address for Contact Person appointments, Written Declarations are signed and dated by the patient and both witnesses).
- All certifications are ticked in Part F of the *Practitioner Administration Form*
- The *Notification of Death Form – Coordinating / Administering Practitioner* is only required if you become aware of the death of a patient that has not occurred via Practitioner Administration.
- If you need to edit a patient form that has already been submitted, add a note to VAD-IMS and then email the Board Secretariat who can assist you.
- All forms must be submitted to the Board within **two business days**.

The Board Secretariat Unit is available to assist you with any questions and can be contacted via VADBoard@health.wa.gov.au

Access to blank forms

There may be times when practitioners need to access blank forms (eg. Regional travel with uncertain IT or printer access). In these circumstances blank forms are available in MyFT or on the new Resource Hub in VAD-IMS. If you are unable to access any of the forms please email the Board Secretariat (VADBoard@health.wa.gov.au) who will be able to provide you with a blank form.

Once completed, upload the form to VAD-IMS selecting 'Other' as the file type. The VAD Board Secretariat will then process the submission in VAD-IMS. Alternatively, forms can also be faxed to (08) 9222 0399.

Focus Area 2 – VAD Process

Final Review and Administration Decision and Prescription

Under the *Act* the *Final Review* is complete when the certifications on the form are completed and this should be done before progressing to the next phase, of Administration Decision and Prescription. We understand that it's not always practical to access VAD-IMS to complete forms. Where necessary practitioners can take a blank Final Review form with them to ensure the certifications are completed prior to moving on to the Administration Decision and Prescription.

VAD activity data

On Wednesday, 22nd June 2022, in the lead up to the first anniversary of Voluntary Assisted Dying in WA, the Minister for Health provided an update in Parliament and recognised the importance of VAD legislation, and the work involved to implement it. Up until the 31st May 2022, 171 people have accessed VAD in WA. Additional information provided by the Minister can be found in the Hansard record [here](#).

Personal reflections

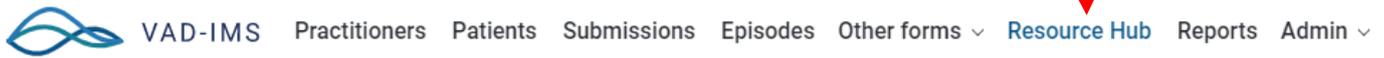
The Board would like to thank all Practitioners who have submitted personal reflections as this helps us to understand what is working well, what can be done better and what is important to you. We acknowledge this work is challenging and it can be difficult to take the time to step back and reflect. The Board encourages Practitioners to share their experiences, which can be emailed to the Secretariat Unit (VADBoard@health.wa.gov.au) and will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Focus Area 3 – VAD-IMS

In mid-June there was an upgrade to VAD-IMS. Although the basic system functionality was unchanged there are some new features that aim to improve user experience:

- Consultation referral form – when the patient's **VAD-IMS ID**, **family name** and **date of birth** are included on the **Consultation Referral** form, the system will automatically link the form to an existing patient and assign the Consulting Practitioner to the episode. The Consulting Practitioner will then be able to access the Patient episode and Consulting Assessment Form without having to wait for the Secretariat. If this information isn't available or isn't included on the form, the Secretariat Unit will continue to support practitioners by manually linking the forms

- Death Notification Panel - When a **Practitioner Administration Form** is submitted, the system will display this detail on the death notification panel (on the right-hand side of the Patient Episode).
- Data validations on First Assessment and Consulting Assessment Forms - Additional data validations have been applied to the series of eligibility determinations (Part C, Part G, Part H and Part I). A mismatch of eligibility outcomes will result in an error message prompting the Practitioner to review the relevant sections for consistency and accuracy.
- A new **Resource Hub** where practitioners can access blank forms, fact sheets and training materials



Useful Links

The Act: [www.legislation.wa.gov.au Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019](http://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/Voluntary%20Assisted%20Dying%20Act%202019)

The Act Explanatory Material (as tabled): [Parliament tabled paper 3625 \(Feb 2020\)](#)

The Board: <https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/voluntaryassisteddyingboard>

- Board membership, functions and processes
- VAD-IMS user support materials
- Contact details
Email: VADBoard@health.wa.gov.au
Fax: 08 9222 0399

Department of Health resources:

https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/U_Z/Voluntary-assisted-dying

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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