



## PHARMACIST'S GUIDE TO THE WASHINGTON DEATH WITH DIGNITY ACT

The pharmacist's role is to dispense the life-ending medication and to ensure that the patient understands how to take it. The pharmacist is required to return the *Pharmacy Dispensing Record Form* to the Washington State Department of Health within 30 days of dispensing the Washington Death with Dignity Act (DWDA) medications.

### Medication Protocol

It is essential that the patient understand how to take the life-ending medication. Request End of Life Washington's medication protocol by contacting our office. When you dispense the medications, provide the patient or patient's representative with End of Life Washington's Death with Dignity Instructions.

### Holding the Prescriptions (Rx)

It is common for patients to request that the pharmacist hold the Rx until the patient is ready to have it on hand.

### Designated Pick Up

Because these patients are terminally ill, many of them are not able to get their own prescriptions. The DWDA permits the patient to designate someone else (one or more agents) to pick up the medication. If an agent(s) will pick up the medication, the physician should write the name of the agent(s) on the prescription.

### Referral to End of Life Washington

If the patient is not already a client of End of Life Washington, please provide her or him with a referral. Our volunteers provide free client support services to help the patient and family through the DWDA process and routinely offer a supportive presence at the time of death. There is never a fee for any service provided by End of Life Washington.

### Do Not:

- Accept the Rx from the patient. The Attending Physician is required to deliver or mail it to you.
- Dispense the Rx until you receive the original Rx from the patient's Attending Physician. Faxes are not permissible.
- Report the Rx to the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP). Effective June 7, 2012, controlled substances dispensed for one-day use do not have to be reported to the PMP.

The DWDA pharmacy reporting form is available at <http://alturl.com/2uzcc> or by contacting our office. Our Volunteer Medical Director is available to provide you with support. All contacts are strictly confidential.