

Media Release

The Hon Jill Hennessy MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services



Getting Things Done.
Making Things Fair.

Thursday, 22 March, 2018

WORLD'S EXPERTS HELP GUIDE VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING

Victoria will partner with world-leading experts in cancer and end-of-life care in Seattle to support the implementation of Victoria's historic voluntary assisted dying laws.

As part of a visit to the USA, Minister for Health Jill Hennessy today announced the new partnership with the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance.

Last November, Victoria became the first state in Australia to pass voluntary assisted dying laws. The laws will come into force in Victoria on 19 June 2019.

Our new collaborative partnership with the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance will help us utilise the expertise of clinicians who are part of its successful Death with Dignity Program.

Laws introducing voluntary assisted dying in Washington were passed in November 2008.

As well as learning about the provision of voluntary assisted dying in healthcare, the partnership will help build on resources for a program that ensures the quality of patient care, is safe and adhere to all the legal and reporting requirements.

Victoria's laws give people at the end of their life, with six months or less to live (12 months for people with neurodegenerative disease), access to a safe and compassionate voluntary assisted dying system. With comprehensive safeguards and rigorous protections, the system is the safest and most conservative in the world.

The Andrews Labor Government is establishing a partnership with the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance that will also set up a new research and educational exchange program to work together on voluntary assisted dying implementation projects.

Ms Hennessy is leading a delegation to the USA to strengthen international ties between Victoria and some of the world's most prestigious health and medical research institutions.

The Labor Government's *International Health Strategy 2016-2020: Partnering for a healthy and prosperous future* outlines our vision to grow Victoria as a global exporter of goods and services in health, health education, aged care, and health and medical research.

The healthcare sector contributes more than \$30 billion to the Victorian economy a year and employs more than 130,000 Victorians.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jill Hennessy

"Voluntary assisted dying has been legal in Washington for nearly 10 years now. That means there is a wealth of insights we can gain from Seattle's top experts as we work to implement our historic laws back at home."

"By sharing knowledge, skills and world's best practice, more Victorians will get better access to high quality, compassionate end-of-life and palliative care that gives them the support they need to die in their place of choice."