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Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention issues statement on recent MAiD developments

The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) is quite saddened and disappointed by recent developments surrounding Bill C-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Medical Assistance in Dying).

As an official witness to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs hearings on Bill C-7 in late November, CASP's Executive Director, Sean Krausert, encouraged legislators to ensure that MAiD does not overlap with what is traditionally understood as suicide and continues to protect those suffering from mental illness from a medically assisted pre-mature death that could be avoided by adequate treatment and care.

In 2020, after a literature review, CASP formulated its Statement on the Expansion of Medical Assistance in Dying to those without Reasonably Foreseeable Death, which can be found [here](#).

During its' recent review, the Senate recommended the exclusion for mental illness be removed and suggested an 18-month limit for the exclusion be imposed, while details were worked out.

While CASP maintains that mental illness can be grievous but is never irremediable (as required for MAiD eligibility in Canada), we appreciate that the federal government has responded with a two-year exclusion limit on MAiD for mental illness; and will be forming a panel of qualified experts to bring recommendations forward in a year to ensure proper protective measures are in place for those with mental illness seeking MAiD. As mental health advocates, CASP wants to ensure those suffering from mental illness are treated by medical means and not through assisted dying.

CASP feels strongly that extreme caution needs to be taken with MAiD and a thought-out, failproof, measured system of safeguards needs to be in place so that those most vulnerable will be protected in order that MAiD does not become doctor-assisted suicide.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/government-agrees-mentally-ill-should-have-access-to-maid-in-two-years-1.5320160>