



PROJECT SUMMARY FORM

Project Title	A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXAMINING SPIRITUAL CARE MODEL OF CARE FOR PATIENTS WHO CHOOSE TO ACCESS VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING (VAD)
Supervisor name	CHRIS DUDFIELD
CHS/ACTHD position	MANAGER – SPIRITUAL SUPPORT SERVICES
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Lead discipline (please select one)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Nursing and Midwifery	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Economics
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allied Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Biostatistics
<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> Epidemiology
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-clinical	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Does this project involve research led by, or relating to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Outline of the project (250 words max)
<p>Spiritual Care Practitioners (better known as Chaplains) are almost a universally embedded support service. In the last 15 years, this service has moved into a professionalised clinical practice that sits within allied health disciplines. An encounter with a spiritual care practitioner has proven health outcomes, by reducing anxiety, providing hope for the future, comfort and emotional management, amongst others. More specifically, spiritual care has been prominent in the Aged Care Sector for 20+ years as most practitioners specialise in end-of-life care for the sick and elderly.</p> <p>Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) is legal in all states except for the territories. The ACT are well underway to implement legislation after the repeal of the Andrews Bill restricting self-government as a commonwealth territory.</p> <p>With the impending legislation and noting the public divide about VAD, thought must be given to circumstances where these ‘divides’ creep into the social/relational/familial realms i.e how do we care for someone who chooses VAD and their friends/families/carer disagree with the decision, which causes existential distress for the person?</p> <p>This project is to examine the current mechanism of spiritual care and how it may change to the needs of a person who chooses VAD to address the new existential questions/issues</p>

that this may develop. The project should also advice on a balanced position on how to deal with any religious or conscientious decisions made as part of providing care, noting that some religions have moved from their traditional stances on the issue of VAD.

Proposed research methods

- Hybrid study through examination of literature and questionnaire to various community groups / religious organisations

Preferred study discipline being undertaken by the student

- Allied Health
- Health Policy, or
- Other associated discipline that can regarding the emotional, spiritual and psychological wellbeing of those who choose Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) i.e. Social Work, Counsellors or Psychologists.

Benefits to the student and to the department

- Student will potentially contribute to change in policy in CHS regarding Model of Care for Spiritual Care Practitioners
- Student will provide a unique niche study into an area that hasn't been examined previously.
- Student and department will contribute to changing consumer experience and attitude towards the health system as it related to implementation of care frameworks for those who choose Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD).

How does this project align with any or all of the three strategic objectives of *Better Together: A strategic plan for research in the ACT health system* (100w max)

Better together - A strategic plan for research in the ACT health system 2022–2030

1. Adaption of new ideas and being responsive to the ever-expanding and increasing understanding of the lived experiences of its consumers.
2. Driving change through strategic projects and initiatives

ACTHD/CHS Department where the student will be based

Spiritual Support Services / Allied Health

Will the student be in a patient facing role at any time during the project?

NO

Will the student require access to CHS and/or ACTHD network / DHR / applications / database? If yes, please identify

YES – ACTHD/CHS COMPUTER SYSTEMS TO CONDUCT STUDY AND PERFORM RESEARCH (EG PRIMO SYSTEM)

DHR ACCESS NOT REQUIRED

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Will the student require CHS / ACT Health building access? If yes, please identify
YES TCH CAMPUS

Supervisor availability across key dates	
Friday 10 Nov – Preplacement presentation session, Canberra Hospital Auditorium <i>Approximate duration 9am-12pm – supervisors are not required for full session. Possible Webex option.</i>	Yes
Placement period 10 Nov – 9 Feb Please indicate availability across this time. <i>E.g. leave over Christmas/New Year</i>	No Immediate plans for leave during the Christmas Period.
At least two face-to-face sessions with the student each week during their 6-week placement.	Yes
Friday 9 Feb – Final presentation session, Canberra Hospital Auditorium <i>Approximate duration 9am-1pm – supervisors are not required for full session. Possible Webex option.</i>	Yes

I have read and I agree to the ACT Health privacy policy which includes statements on how the ACT Health Directorate acts lawfully to collect and use data to report on activities and to plan for future events and initiatives; including that we may use your details to contact you if required for program delivery and/or evaluation and to inform you of future similar opportunities.

Please submit form to health.research@act.gov.au