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Mary Ganapol, Southern AZ Lead for:

Arizona End-of-Life Options
Your life. Your death. Your choice. 

With support from two national groups:

DEATH WITH DIGNITY 

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What will be covered today:

- Definition of medical aid in dying (MAID)
- Qualifications and safeguards of the law
- Let's do the numbers ... in Arizona

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The terminology:

Medical Aid in Dying (MAID)	Preferred terminology
or	
Death with Dignity (DwD)	“ ”

Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS)	Used by the Opposition
or	
Physician Assisted Death (PAD)	“ ”

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What about euthanasia?

Illegal in all 50 states
 Unlikely to be considered in the future
 Do **not** use interchangeably with MAID or DwD
 Button: “Let me die like a dog.”



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What exactly is Medical Aid in Dying?

A **medical practice** in which a **terminally ill, mentally capable adult** with a prognosis of **six months or less to live** can obtain **medication prescribed by their doctor** to be **self-administered** to die peacefully **if and when they choose**.

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Medical practice ...



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Terminally ill ...

- 63% cancer
- 14% neurological disorders (ie ALS, Parkinsons)
- 8% cardiovascular disease
- 7% respiratory disease (ie COPD)
- 8% other terminal diseases

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Mentally capable adult ...

Rules out people with dementia
 Adult = over 18 years of age
 (majority are over 65)
 Questionable mental capacity?
 Triggers a mental health evaluation

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6 mos. or less prognosis

90% of those who apply for MAID are enrolled in hospice.



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Medication prescribed by their doctor ...

- Combo of various drugs from compound pharmacy
- Formula fine-tuned over the years depending on availability and cost
- American Clinicians Academy for MAID leads the discussion (ACAMAID.org)



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To be self-administered ...

- No assistance from others (no coercion)
- This is why it's NOT euthanasia
- Alternatives when you can't swallow?
- Patient can change their mind *at any time* in process

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If and when they choose ...

This is *patient-driven*.
 A *patient right*.
 Some people go through all the steps to qualify but don't get the prescription filled or take the meds.

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So that's the basic definition:

A medical practice in which a terminally ill, mentally capable adult with a prognosis of six months or less to live can obtain medication prescribed by their doctor to be self-administered to die peacefully if and when they choose.

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It's **NOT** euthanasia and it's **NOT** called

ASSISTED SUICIDE or
 PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE

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Why don't we call it "suicide"?

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And American College of Legal Medicine ...

REJECTED THE TERM 'SUICIDE'
 1) In 1996 when they filed a brief before the U.S. Supreme Court and
 2) In 2008 when they adopted a formal resolution



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Why MAID is not called suicide:

Medical Aid in Dying

- Terminal diagnosis
- Mental capacity
- Patient wants to LIVE
- Planned with family
- Death is 'gentle'
- Normal grieving after loss



Vs. Suicide

- No terminal diagnosis
- Incapable (psychiatric diagnosis)
- Patient wants to DIE
- Impulsive, dies alone
- Death may be violent
- Abnormal grief (family asks "why?")



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Law specifies what MAID is *NOT* ...

- Euthanasia
- Mercy killing
- Suicide
- Assisted suicide
- Elder abuse
- Homicide

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Additional requirements:

Two clinicians confirm patient's qualifications:

- 1) attending provider/prescriber
and
- 2) consulting provider

Must confirm there is **no coercion** or undue influence

Patient must be a **resident** of the state where it's legal **

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Additional safeguards:

- Oral requests
- Written requests
 - Waiting periods (with or without waivers)
 - Written statements with witnesses

ALL of this is documented in the medical records.

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Other provisions:

Wills, contracts, insurance and annuity policies are not affected by a person choosing medical aid in dying.



And cause of death is shown as the underlying terminal illness (same as other end of life options).

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Who can 'opt out'? **Everyone!**

- Doctors, nurses, hospice workers may opt out at any time (sometimes called a 'conscience clause').
- Patients may change their mind at any time.
- All parties are protected from criminal and civil liabilities if the law is followed.

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Multiple reasons for choosing MAID ...

Oregon results after 20 years of MAID (1998-2017)

Loss of autonomy	91%
Loss of well being/QOL	89%
Loss of dignity	68%
Loss of bodily control	46%
Burden on the family	43%
Pain	26%
Cost of therapy	3%

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So where is MAID legal now?

Oregon	1997	Colorado	2017
Washington	2008	Wash. DC	2017
Montana	2009*	Hawaii	2018
Vermont	2013	New Jersey	2019
California	2016	Maine	2019
		New Mexico	2021

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The next states to pass a MAID law?

- Nearly 20 states have bills proposed every year
- Many of those states have pro-MAID grassroots organizations
- Two national groups support those efforts:
 - Death With Dignity National Center
 - and
 - Compassion and Choices

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Million Geezer March for Human Freedom and Human Dignity



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More geezers: 2006 to 2009 Many Arizona counties represented



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Polling in Arizona

Behavioral Research Center's Rocky Mountain Poll:
Oct 2015: 56% of Arizonans support MAID legislation

Survey conducted by Arizona Medical Association and Arizona Osteopathic Medical Association *
Dec 2017: 53% of Arizona physicians support MAID

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Polling in Arizona ... Jan 2022

Poll of 855 registered voters in Arizona

Jan 2022: 60% of registered voters somewhat or strongly supported MAID

Only 14% somewhat or strongly opposed

Balance: neutral or not sure



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Legislation introduced 2003 to present:

Senate bills for medical aid in dying: **8**

House bills for medical aid in dying: **12**

Number that advanced out of committee: **ZERO**

Bill called "Arizona Death with Dignity Act" or "Arizona Medical Aid in Dying Act"

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AZ group formed in 2019 to pass a law:



With support from two national groups:



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Interested in helping pass a MAID law?

- Join the efforts at Arizona End of Life Options!
- Website.. AzEndOfLifeOptions.org
- Sign up for the newsletter
- Watch a webinar
- Join an *Action Team* in your district
- Donate to the cause



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**Know a group where we can speak?
Have a tabling idea? Want to help?**

Website: AzEndOfLifeOptions.org
(see 'contact' page)



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Thank you for joining us today!



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Questions? Comments?



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