

Call for Papers

**The role of medical ethics in the practices of
assisted dying
Bioethics Special Issue
Online & Print Publication 2025**

Guest Editors: Claudia Bozzaro, Ralf J. Jox, Jan Schildmann

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS: 1st May, 2024

More and more countries worldwide regulate practices of assisted dying like (physician-) assisted suicide or euthanasia. While there is a huge amount of research concerning the several ethical, legal, and social aspects of assisted dying, one aspect is noteworthy: Surprisingly, **the role of medical ethics expertise and ethics support in practices of assisted dying** has not yet been addressed in any depth.

Laws and professional codes of practice may provide a framework of legitimacy for assisted dying, but many ethical questions remain when it comes to concrete practices in the context of assisted dying. In some countries, explicit ethical deliberation has already been built into the regulations. In the Netherlands, for example, the five regional euthanasia review committees include a physician, ethicists, and a lawyer. They assess the situation ex post and decide whether the physician who performed euthanasia or assisted in suicide complied with the statutory due care criteria. At some health care institutions in Switzerland and Canada, clinical ethics consultants are called to help evaluate whether an assisted death can be granted in the institution in a given case. In Germany and Austria, where assisted suicide has recently been decriminalized, medical ethicists are increasingly being asked to help with institutional policies and training of health care professionals regarding assisted suicide.

These examples show that medical ethics expertise and support is required institutionally as a central feature of assisted dying, but these practices have rarely been systematically analysed. It is unclear what goals ethicists should pursue in the context of assisted dying, what professional role and identity they should adopt, and which competences they ought to have to fulfil their role.

This special issue focuses on the question of what medical or clinical ethics expertise means in the context of assisted dying and what exactly it contributes to these practices, addressing the following questions:

- What constitutes medical or clinical ethics expertise in the context of assisted dying?
- How can or should medical or clinical ethics expertise regarding assisted dying be acquired?
- What legitimizes the involvement of medical or clinical ethicists in assisted dying practices?
- How is ethics expertise, counseling and support currently integrated in various practices of assisted dying, or how should it be integrated and why?
- Which specific competencies, knowledges and skills are required for medical ethicists who are involved in assisted dying practices?
- What distinguishes medical ethicists from legal experts, health care professionals and others when it comes to their specific contribution in practices of assisted dying?

We welcome submissions that address any of the above questions or related ones, originating from all academic disciplines related to the topic (e.g., medical and specifically clinical ethics, philosophy, medicine, law, history, social and political sciences), as well as from practitioners in the domain.

For questions and inquiries, please contact the editors at [Claudia. Bozzaro@iem.uni-kiel.de](mailto:Claudia.Bozzaro@iem.uni-kiel.de)

The author guidelines of Bioethics can be found online at:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14678519/homepage/forauthors.html>

Manuscripts should be submitted online at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/biot>. Please ensure that you select the manuscript type 'Special Issue' and state that your contribution is for the Special Issue "The role of bioethics in practices of assisted dying" when prompted.