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Hospice Simcoe comments on Supreme Court ruling

This morning (Feb. 2) the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favor of allowing physician assisted death. Bruce Bound, Board Chair of Hospice Simcoe reports: ?The Board of Directors of Hospice Simcoe has previously considered the impact of this discussion and has adopted the stance that Physician Assisted Death is not part of Hospice Care. We will be encouraging Parliament to create legislation about physician assisted death that is separate from Hospice Palliative Care.?

The World Health Organization defines Hospice Palliative Care as: ?the active total care of patients whose prognosis is limited due to progressive, far-advanced disease. Its purpose is to relieve suffering and to help patients live as actively as possible, enhancing quality of life, neither hastening nor postponing death.?

Sandra Dunham, Executive Director of Hospice Simcoe clarifies: ?On average, Canadians live with a palliative illness for two years before they die. High quality palliative care is essential to ensure that those individuals and their family members receive care that maximizes their quality of life. Regardless of future changes to legislation, people will continue to need access to high quality palliative care.?

Kelly Hubbard, Registered Nurse and Hospice Simcoe Manager of Residential Care, agrees: ?We completely understand that individuals have very deep and personal beliefs about physician assisted death. We will care for people throughout their palliative journey and continue to support their loved ones after their death regardless of how that death occurs. Our goal is to continuously improve access to high quality palliative care for people in our region.?

Hospice Simcoe is very much in support of the Hospice Palliative Care Ontario position, released this morning: ?Access to hospice palliative care is our main focus. While the legislation and other details regarding physician-assisted death are worked out over the next 12 months, HPCO will maintain our focus on promoting awareness of hospice palliative care and the need for better access to high quality hospice palliative care in any setting where someone may be expected to die.?

For more information please visit the HPCO website at www.hpco.ca